

Fall 2022

TUCSON MOUNTAINS ASSOCIATION Newsletter

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Photo Courtesy of D. Wilson

From the President's Desk

The past several months have been eventful for the Tucson Mountains region and the Tucson Mountains Association. We were involved in a fight to stop a change in the City of Tucson zoning that would allow a high-density development to be built near 36th and La Cholla in beautiful desert land that was adjacent to the rural part of Kennedy Park, and also, Tucson Mountain Park. We were unable to stop the rezoning but extracted an agreement that the Southern half of the parcel would not be developed and be transferred to the City for open space. This was important because the Enchanted Hills Wash runs through this area and is an important wildlife corridor.

TMA was involved in trying to hold the City of Tucson's feet to the fire in upholding their own scenic corridor ordinance along Silverbell Road. The ordinance would require the undergrounding of power lines during the widening of Silverbell north of Goret Road. Unfortunately, TEP was granted a variance not to underground because of archeological concerns of Hohokam sites in the area. But due to the hard work of Board Member Steve Dolan,

TMA was able to have the culverts for the major washes along the widening of Silverbell to be redesigned to be more animal friendly. This was very important in preserving the wildlife corridors from the Tucson Mountains to the Santa Cruz River, the Rillito River and Canyon del Oro Wash. These corridors connect the Tucson Mountains with the Catalina Mountains and the Tortolito Mountains. Great job Steve!

Lastly, we are part of the Sonoran Desert Coalition, which along with three other environmental groups have filed a lawsuit to stop the planned Interstate 11 from routing around the Tucson Mountains, threading between Saguaro National Park and Ironwood National Monument to reconnect with I-10 near Marana. This planned interstate is an existential threat to the ecological health of Tucson Mountain Park, Saguaro National Park, Ironwood National Monument and the Tucson Mountains region in general. With this freeway will come development which would surround the Tucson Mountains and slowly kill off our beautiful desert that we all cherish in

the Tucson Mountains region. Economically, it would be a disaster for Tucson in general because of the loss of tourism to the region. People all over the world travel to this community to see our beautiful desert and its wildlife.

We need to stay vigilant and protect the environment that makes the Tucson Mountains special. Please join as a member and tell your friends and neighbors to join as well. We need to band together to protect what we all cherish here in the Tucson Mountains, the desert with its majestic saguaros and all the varied wildlife it supports.

Paul Eckerstrom,
President of the TMA Board



Photo Courtesy of K. Leavey

Join TMA!
Memberships make great gifts!

For membership information go to:
TucsonMountainsAssoc.org

TMA Member Voting

This year several items are appearing on the TMA ballot. First, as we do yearly, we have elections for membership on the TMA Board. Second, the Board is recommending changes to our by-laws and our articles of incorporation. Further details are below.

Board Election

Board elections are conducted yearly, coinciding with the annual meeting. The board consists of people who engage with residents and local governments to help keep the Tucson Mountains environmentally healthy and a great place.

If you would like to help our mountains, please consider joining the Board. Please let us know if you are interested (email us at tma@TucsonMountainsAssoc.org). It can be very rewarding to be part of the solution to our many problems.

Please vote for board membership. We have four candidates for the board and write-ins are welcome. The candidates are either new applicants, board members appointed by the Board during the year to fill vacancies and now seeking confirmation, or board members who are at the end of their current terms of two years and seek re-election. Biographies of candidates are included on page 3.

Proposed Changes to Bylaws & Articles of Incorporation

The TMA Board is recommending changes to our bylaws and articles of incorporation. The bylaw changes would allow modifications in the board membership and further clarification of the use of electronic communications with the membership. The proposed changes in the articles of incorporation would expand the area for TMA membership to include the greater Tucson Mountains area. Details are included on page 4.

How to Vote

The ballot appears on page 5.

To vote, either:

- print out the ballot, fill it in, and mail to: TMA, PO Box 86117, Tucson, AZ 85754-6117;
- fill out and copy into an email message to send to: tma@TucsonMountainsAssoc.org;
- print out, fill out, and bring ☐ to the annual meeting on October 23, 2022; or
- ballots will be available at the annual meeting.

All ballots are due by 4:00 pm on October 23, 2022.

Bios of Board Candidates

John Coinman

I have been captivated by the Tucson Mountains since I was a boy. My family would come from New Mexico to visit my grandparents, who built three adobe houses here in the 1940s on land they bought near Sweetwater Drive and Camino De Oeste. Now my wife, Jo Andersen (an artist), and I (a musician/songwriter) are fortunate to live on that land. Our son, Will, and his family live just across Sweetwater Wash from us in one of the original adobes. Our grandson, Atlas, is the 5th generation of our family to live here, so I have a stake in this land that reaches far beyond the physical boundaries of the Tucson Mountains. I've been excited to be a member of the board, trying to make meaningful contributions to the ongoing work of TMA, and hope to remain on the board.

Paul Eckerstrom

Paul grew up in the Tucson Mountains on Painted Hills Rd and lived in the Tucson Mountains most of his life. He has been a vocal activist for many causes in our community but is most passionate about preserving the rural character and the beautiful Sonoran Desert of the Tucson Mountains. That is why he has been a board member for TMA since 2003, including currently serving as president of the board, and wishes to remain on the board.

Ed Hendel

I grew up in California and fell in love with the Sonoran Desert when I moved to Tucson for college at the University of Arizona in 2009. I knew I wanted to be here for the rest of my life and do everything I could to protect the desert. I moved to Boston in 2013 to get my Master's in Systems Biology from Harvard, but the whole time I was there I knew I wanted to come back to Tucson as soon as possible. I moved back in 2016 and began pursuing my career in healthcare data science while simultaneously volunteering as a ranger at Saguaro National Park on weekends and learning as much as possible about the political scene in Tucson in order to find ways to plug in and help ensure Tucson remains habitable and beautiful for future generations in the era of climate change, drought, and urban sprawl. Mayor Romero named me to be her representative on the Citizens' Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) in 2020, where I have led the charge for water conservation and assistance for low income families. I have also been a member of TMA and the Community Water Coalition of Southern Arizona for years, and I helped lead efforts to preserve the desert at La Cholla & 36th St and to stop the construction of Interstate-11 in Avra Valley with numerous speeches and organizing. A few years ago I founded [Our Water Tucson](#), a coalition that quickly grew to 17 different organizations and political candidates which successfully advocated to implement differential water rates (in order to fight sprawl and incentivize sustainability) and to use the revenue for climate resiliency and low income debt relief. As a result of our organizing, \$2 million of water bill debt for low income families has been erased and Tucson's water policy has become more sustainable and fair. We faced fierce opposition from the developers who wanted cheap water to continue converting our beautiful desert wilderness into lucrative construction, but together we were victorious. I look forward to working with the membership of TMA as a board member to fight back against the powerful developers and preserve the desert that makes this place so unique and special.

Chris Stidley

I've been a member of the TMA board for almost a year and feel privileged to work with a board and membership dedicated to preserving the Tucson Mountains. I moved to Tucson six years ago after retiring as a professor of biostatistics at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine. My career included research in environmental health, addressing human health problems caused by environmental exposures. But now I am happy to expand my focus to the health of the environment. TMA is a wonderful group with which to pursue that goal. For example, during my short time on the TMA board, our work has included land preservation and wildlife crossings, among much more. I am an avid hiker who appreciates the beauty of the desert and our Tucson Mountains. I hope to continue to work for the Tucson Mountains through membership on the TMA board.

Photo courtesy of J. Kotas

Proposed changes to TMA's Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation

Items to be deleted are struck through and additions are in red.

Bylaws

Article III, Section 3:

Special meetings may be called by the president when s/he deems it in the best interest of the organization. At the request of twenty percent (20%) of the members of the Board of Directors or upon the petition of twenty percent (20%) of the members of the organization, the president shall cause a special meeting to be called, but such request must be made in writing at least twenty (20) days before the requested scheduled date. Notices of such meeting shall be mailed **or electronically mailed** to all members at the addresses as they appear in the membership roll book at least ten (10) days before the scheduled date set for such special meeting. Such notice shall state the reasons that such meeting has been call, the business to be transacted at such meeting and by whom it was called. No other business but that specified in the notice may be transacted at such special meeting without the unanimous consent of all present at such meeting.

Article IV, Section 1:

The business of this organization shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of not less than ~~seven~~ **five** nor more than eleven members. Each year at the general Association meeting, the membership shall elect Directors by the vote of a majority of the ballots submitted, in sufficient number so that there will be at least ~~seven~~ **five** members and at most eleven members of the Board. The new members of the Board shall take office the following January 1. Board members are elected for two-year terms. Vacancies in the Board of Directors shall be filled by a vote of the majority of the remaining members of the Board of Directors for the balance of the term.

Articles of Incorporation

Article IV, Section 1:

The general nature of the business to be transacted and the purposes for which this corporation is organized are as follows: To promote and provide for the general WELL-BEING of the area bounded on the north by Twin Peaks Road, on the east by ~~Silverbell Road~~ **the Santa Cruz River**, on the south by ~~THE 22ND STREET ALIGNMENT/STARR PASS BOULEVARD~~ **Valencia Road**, and on the west ~~BY SAGUARO NATIONAL PARK AND TUCSON MOUNTAIN PARK~~ **by Sandario Road**; to provide for scenic QUALITY of the area and the establishment and maintenance of park areas to promote and provide for the general cleanliness and maintenance of the area; to promote and provide for recreational facilities for the area and manage and maintain the same; to act on behalf of the area, to CONTROL its development; to promote, assure and facilitate public services to and for the area; and to do all other things necessary or desirable to protect the health and well being of the members AND OF THE NATIVE FLORA AND FAUNA, AND TO PROTECT THE NATURAL HABITAT OF THE AREA SO AS TO PRESERVE THE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF THE AREA.

TMA Ballot, Fall 2022

Board Election

Vote for up to six of the following candidates:

- ☐ John Coinman
- ☐ Paul Eckerstrom
- ☐ Ed Hendel
- ☐ Chris Stidley
- ☐ write-in: _____
- ☐ write-in: _____
- ☐ write-in: _____

Changes to Bylaws

- ☐ Yes, I support changes to the Bylaws.
- ☐ No, I do not support changes to the Bylaws.

Changes to Articles of Incorporation

- ☐ Yes, I support the changes to the Articles of Incorporation.
- ☐ No, I do not support the changes to the Articles of Incorporation.

TMA Community Meetings

Annual Meeting: October 23

In person! Potluck!

TMA's annual meeting will be held on October 23, 2022, in Christopher Columbus Park, Ramada 5 from 1:00 to 4:00.

Bring a dish to share. TMA will provide drinks.

VOTE! Don't forget to vote -- either before the meeting or at the meeting.

Come celebrate a year of TMA activities with your TMA friends.

RSVP to:
tma@TucsonMountainsAssoc.org



TMA Spring Picnic: A Celebration of Community

The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.

Coretta Scott King

Tucson Mountains Association picnicked with fellow neighborhood organizations at Kennedy Park on Sunday afternoon, April 24, to celebrate our community and recent victory in preserving land. We had worked together to protect a 60-acre parcel at 36th and La Cholla, north of Kennedy Park. While the city granted zoning changes for development purposes, approximately two-thirds of the land has been set aside, preserving a wildlife through Enchan

Denise Baldwin, TMA vice president, organized and led a community-themed celebration. Approximately 40 people, TMA members and community guests, enjoyed pizza, games and take-home gifts. We heard from our fellow neighborhood associations, Gates Pass Area Neighborhood Association and Westside Neighborhood Association, Frank Staub, whose photography has supported multiple conservation efforts, and Steve Dolan, a TMA board member who discussed ongoing actions. Abreeza Zegeer, co-chair of the Westside Neighborhood Association, announced that Councilmember Keven Dahl nominated her to the Tucson Planning Commission, enhancing the voice of our Tucson Mountains neighborhoods.

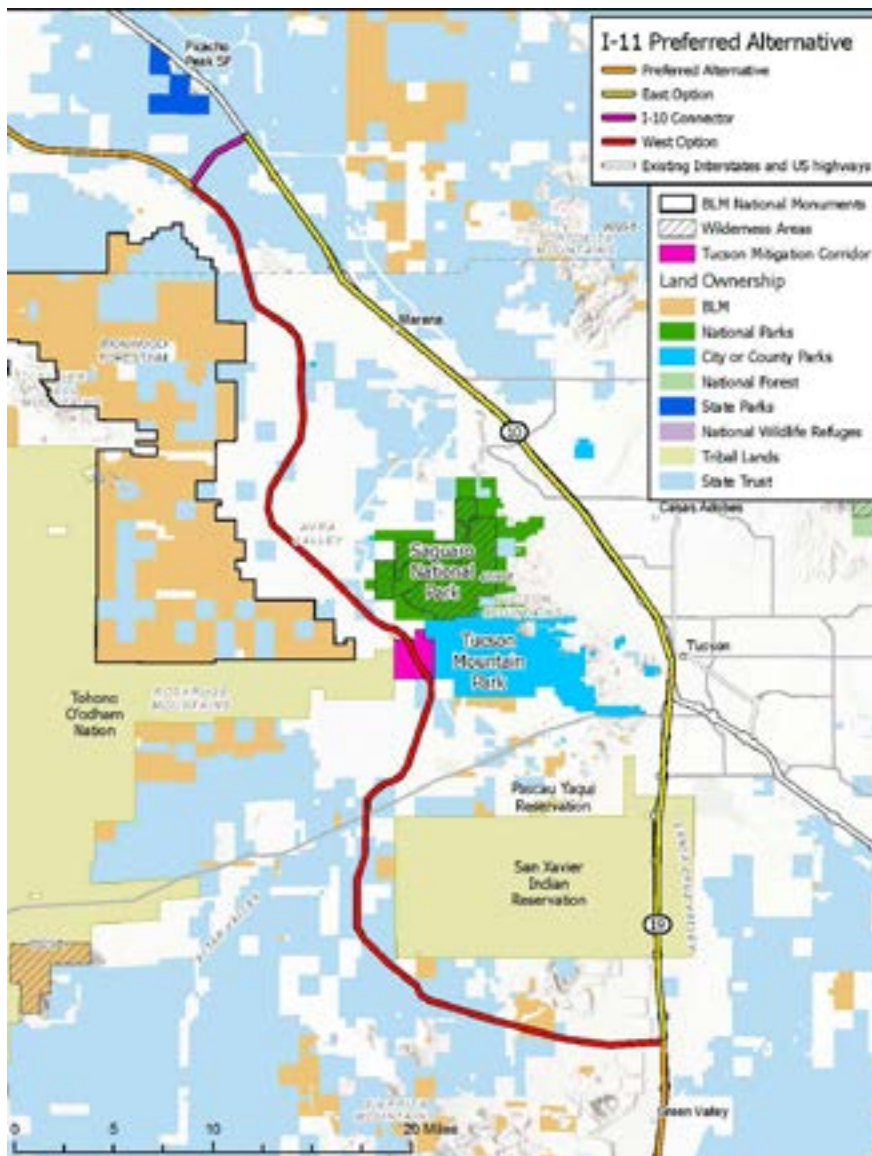
The Battle over I-11 Continues

The fight over I-11 rages on. On April 21, 2022, the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, Center for Biological Diversity, Tucson Audubon Society, and Friends of Ironwood Forest filed a lawsuit challenging the approval made by the Federal Highways Administration last year.

More details can be found in the [news release](#) from the Center for Biological Diversity. As Carolyn Campbell, president for the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, wrote:

This is an egregious assault on 100 years of efforts by local, state and federal land agencies to protect important desert lands forever, for species to survive and move through the landscape. There is overwhelming opposition by residents, tribal entities, public agencies and elected officials here in the Tucson area and we won't stop until we've blocked this destructive and unneeded freeway that will harm our wildlands and wildlife.

TMA is a member of the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection and will work with them in this fight.



Map of proposed routes for I-11. Curt Bradley, Center for Biological Diversity



Part of the West Option for I-11.
Russ McSpadden, Center for Biological Diversity

Recent Success Stories

Silverbell Road Widening & Wildlife

While TMA failed to secure undergrounding for the TEP lines along Silverbell Rd when the road is widened, Steve Dolan worked tirelessly for the wildlife, securing appropriate culverts. These culverts enhance safety for wildlife as they cross the Silverbell Road area, traveling between the Tucson Mountains and the Santa Cruz River.

Silverbell Road Wildlife Crossings

Have you thought about wildlife crossing the future Silverbell Road widening project? Tucson Mountains Association has been concerned about wildlife impacted by the project that will have many improved drainage crossings. TMA was successful in getting the Tucson Department of Transportation and Mobility to change narrow box culverts for drainage to wide arch culverts at Sweetwater, Roger, and Trails End Washes. Camino de Oeste Wash will be a future bridge.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department helped TMA explain how arch culverts are better for wildlife passage, like coyote, javelina and bobcats at Silverbell Road. TMA thanks AGFD and City Ward 3 Councilmember Kevin Dahl and his Chief of Staff, Katie Bolger. Ward 3 was very instrumental in getting City Transportation to change the Silverbell Road culvert design for wildlife crossings.

TMA has known for years about the future widening project from Goret Road to El Camino del Cerro. To date, there has been one public meeting about the project on November 20, 2021 at Columbus Park. According to the City there were over 100 people who expressed their concerns and gave input to the Project Team. TMA's top priority was the wildlife crossings.

Silverbell Road preconstruction work continued through the summer. TMA does not know the road construction date for the City project funded by the Regional Transportation Authority. The project is planned for RTA 2023 funding.

-- Steve Dolan--



Example of a wildlife culvert that has been installed in Marana for their Twin Peaks Road Project. Crossings must be large enough for wildlife to use them.

Photo: Sal Boenzi, P.E., Collaborative crossings: Precast arches solve drainage and wildlife crossing design challenges and speed construction in the Sonoran Desert. CE News, August, 2011.

36th & La Cholla

While TMA and other neighborhood associations worked to prevent the rezoning of a 60 acre parcel at the SW corner of 36th & La Cholla, the city decided to move forward with development. However, approximately 2/3rds of the land is to be left as open space. The open space includes the wash and all land south of it, thus protecting the Enchanted Hills Wash and maintaining a crucial wildlife corridor.



Volunteer Activities

Santa Cruz River Cleanup

Our Recent Accomplishments!

Tucson Mountains Association has participated in four river cleanups, with coordination by Tucson Clean and Beautiful. TMA, TCB, and other volunteers removed trash and debris on December 5, 2020 & March 19, 2022 near Columbus Park/ Silverbell Lake and on March 7, 2021 & October 23, 2021 north of El Camino del Cerro bridge.

Thank you to TMA members and volunteers! TMA is focusing on the Santa Cruz River near Columbus Park where a future river restoration project is planned by Pima County Regional Flood Control District.

Over the years TMA has participated in other cleanups at Painted Hills and Feliz Paseos Parks. Future cleanups in parks, rivers, washes, or roadsides will be advertised by TMA and we welcome suggestions. Cleanups are a valuable volunteer opportunity for TMA members, young and old, especially families to work together and improve the environment in the Tucson Mountains.

-- Steve Dolan --

Our Next Steps!

Come join TMA and other volunteers to participate in a Santa Cruz River cleanup. TMA will be joining Tucson Clean and Beautiful, who is organizing a clean-up on October 22, 2022, from 9:00 to noon. Come join other TMA members and community members in cleaning the Santa Cruz!

ONE GREAT DAY OF CARING
SANTA CRUZ
RIVER
CLEANUP

SATURDAY
OCT. 22, 2022
9AM - 12PM

JOIN US!

SCAN QR CODE
TO RSVP >>>

PIMA COUNTY
TUCSON CLEAN & BEAUTIFUL
United Way
REI
TUCSON WATER
CITY OF TUCSON
SONORAN INSTITUTE
Trashy Dicks
Tucson Mountains Association
PARAGON

Animals with Whom We Share Our Lives in the Tucson Mountains



Last year I was so excited to see a grey bushy tail squirrel, the kind you see in the mountains, running up pine trees. I feed the birds, and have seen the squirrel in my feeder. How does he fit into that tiny space? It was annoying and interesting at the same time. Recently something dug up the dirt under my cement slab in front of my tack room where I tie up horses. Early in the morning, I now saw two squirrels sitting on the dirt mound. When I opened the back patio door, they dove into the hole under the slab. Unfortunately, there started to be damage to my plants, quail eggs, and digging more holes under structures. I decided to call "Animal Experts" who trap and relocate wildlife. Over the course of three days, we trapped not one,

not two, not three, but five rock squirrels. Eric said they were all females, and one looked pregnant. He made two trips to Agua Caliente park, at the base of the Rincon Mountains. We decided that location, because there would be minimal opportunity to interact with people, and adequate food and water. For a day, I felt sad, but the holes are filled in, and the birds don't have to share their food.

-- Suzanne Polzin --



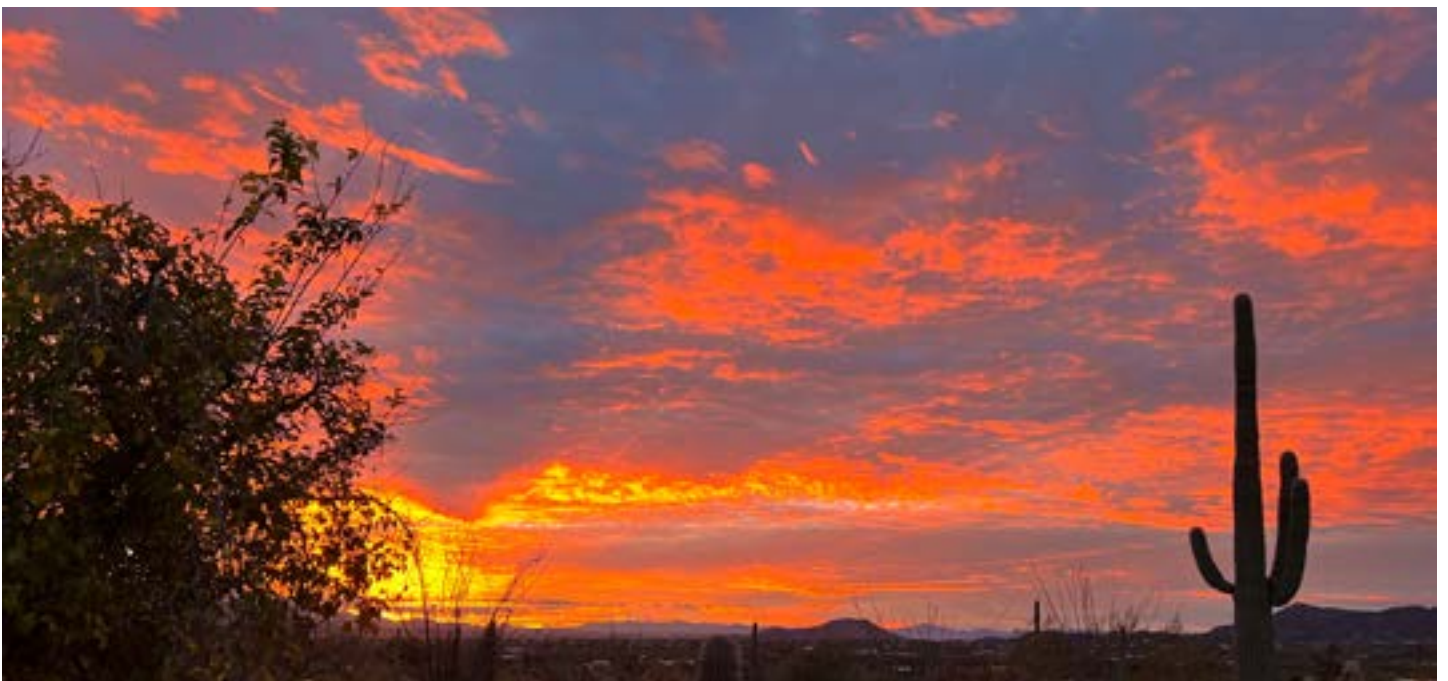
Photos clockwise from top left, courtesy of K. Leavey, K. Leavey, J. Coinman, K. Cohen

More Photos from Members and Send More In!



Send your nature photos for inclusion in the TMA newsletter!

Email to: cstidley@gmail.com



Photos clockwise from top left, courtesy of K. Leavey, J. Kotas, J. Kotas and J. Woodman