

Wickenburg Summit Meeting Notes—October 30, 2009

Meeting Attendees

The following agencies were represented in this meeting. Specific names are available on the meeting sign-in sheet:

Town of Wickenburg	Wickenburg Horsemen's Association
Wickenburg Police Department	Maricopa County Department of Transportation
Bureau of Land Management	Maricopa County Sheriff's Office
Maricopa County Board of Supervisors	Yavapai County Sheriff's Office
Yavapai County Board of Supervisors	Yavapai County Trails
The Nature Conservancy	Wickenburg Chamber of Commerce
Arizona State Lane Department	
Wickenburg Conservation Foundation	

Welcome and Opening Comments

Teresa Makinen introduced herself to help manage the group's time today, and then welcomed the participants. She asked each of the participants to introduce themselves and with whom they are affiliated. A sign-in sheet was distributed for contact information.

The Partnership: Bureau of Land Management and Maricopa County Parks

Teresa Makinen then introduced Chairman Max W. Wilson of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors and Mike Taylor, Deputy State Director for the Bureau of Land Management. They opened the meeting by explaining their enthusiasm for the project and for the partnership.

Meeting Administration

Teresa Makinen then reviewed the meeting administration, agenda for the day, and the meeting's objectives. She stated that Steve Cohn, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Hassayampa Field Office Manager, and RJ Cardin, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department (MCPRD) Director, would like to introduce the concept of the BLM and County working together for planning this area, and once they have completed their presentation, we will take some time to have a discussion and an activity for you to provide input into the project and the process.

The Concept: A Coordinated Effort to Plan Recreation and Trails

Steve Cohn, BLM Hassayampa Field Office Manager, provided a powerpoint presentation which explained the grant and how the Wickenburg Trails fits into

this planning process. He further explained that there are multiple land owners in this area and we're starting this process with all of you today. We've also contracted with Southwestern Environmental Consultants who will be conducting the trails planning process for BLM. They will take the existing plan in which many of you have already provided input, and supplement that with this meeting and the next steps. Today we want to know what you want to do with your public lands, where you want to go, and what facilities you may need.

RJ Cardin, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department Director, then presented the Parks component of the planning process. He explained other examples of the BLM/Parks partnership and that they have some general funding from the Board of Supervisors and some funding from BLM for Vulture Mountain. Their mission is stewardship and developing and managing quality parks, and their vision is connecting people with nature. They are currently creating a System Strategic Master Plan, and other similar examples of this area may be Utery Mountain Regional Park and the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

A Vision for the Future: Wickenburg's Role in Planning

Teresa Makinen then explained that it's time for the group to participate. She stated that she has a series of questions she'd like to ask of the group and then we have a mapping exercise. She then provided the following questions, and participant comments directly follow:

1. Steve Cohn and RJ Cardin have mentioned several uses of the area, but are there other uses that you know of which we need to consider in our planning?

Mine access

ATVs/OHVs – 2 & 4-wheel

Hunters

West side of Vulture Mtn. Road – sandrails, rock crawlers, rhinos

Rock Hounders

Gold prospectors

Target shooting

Party

Full-time snowbird camping area (boon docking)

Vulture mine trail

Walkers

Hikers Equestrians

2. When you think of this area, is it high use or low use area? On a scale of 1 to 10; 1 is no activity and 10 is very active, how would you rate the area?

Vulture Mountains – Overall a 5; however, on weekends the area is an 8

Overall (larger area) 9 near the trailhead in the fall

3. How many of you use the area?

10 people – most use takes place in the fall/winter

Teresa then explained that we're going to do something of a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of the project, and she asked the following:

4. What is good about planning the area for the Town? What are the benefits?

Yavapai County is looking at regional trails – this helps jump start the process (trails plan) – land use plan – will use this as a model – will help start process for this area.

Monetary benefit for the Town of Wickenburg

Town is now updating their general plan as well

Organized growth of the area

Protecting the area

More structure – Park rangers – resource management

We can identify uses that we do and do not want

Community ownership – buy-in

Additional source of funding

Mitigate encroachment

5. What, if any, are potential disadvantages of this project?

Trash

Impact of growth

Lack of current access

Safety

Liability

Traffic

Misuse

Rules and regulations

Management of the area – enforcement (O&M – operations and management funding)

Conflict between uses

User fees that could drive folks to other locations

6. What future opportunities could come of this project?

Improved access

Bring recreation to the community – that equals tax revenue

Additional partnerships

Education experience for children/school groups

Access to a beautiful area

Public awareness (mining, history, protection of wildlife)
Model for other agencies

7. What might be some potential negative future implications with this project?

Time it takes to get through the process – need to set time frames (schedules)
Public perception of government regulation
The “Tsunami of Phoenix” taking over beautiful Wickenburg
We don’t want to be like Utah, they were fishing for a little tourism and caught a whale
People think, it’s public land, so “we already paid for it!” ... so it has to pay for itself
Cost for partners – all components... public perception = reality. Why are we spending money on this when there are other important?
Liability
Increased impact to the environment and species

8. What is your vision for the future of the area, and the mountain?

Differentiate trails – well-marked. Some of the trails are too steep.
We don’t want a trailer park – not Quartzite!
Trailer camping for equestrians and others
A place I can take my grandkids – and see what I saw!
Enhance Wickenburg as a destination and image as a Western community
Tranquility
All Non-motorized
Designated motorized areas
Trailer parking for equestrians and non-equestrians
Improved relations with emergency services
Emergency communications – there are dead zones in the area
Shooting and archery facilities
Yavapai county Loop – Yavapai County is very supportive!
Hiking/riding loop around Wickenburg – non-motorized
Wickenburg is the trail/ride capital of the west
Trails are being closed elsewhere
Getting entities to agree on a trail system
Need public information that is easily accessible – where are trails? – there aren’t many publications available that tell you where you can ride.
Facilities that park staff can manage from, include a meeting room area

Teresa then asked the group to break up into 4-5 person groups at various tables that were set up with two maps, one of the overall BLM area, and one with the Vulture Mountain area. She asked the participants to have a discussion about how the area should be developed and to mark up the maps. Once

completed, each group would explain their discussions and map information to the overall group today. That was done and each of the maps were provided to BLM and Maricopa County for use in the planning process.

Teresa then asked the group to consider their discussions and we have a few more questions to ask you regarding the project, and the following questions were asked:

9. Of all the discussions we've had today, what do you think should be considered as part of the plan for the projects to really become a community asset for the area?

Entrance closer to Wickenburg so that the area is identified with Wickenburg
Come through the Town to Vulture Mine road – to help the Town economically

Residents exempt if it's fee-based (will have to define, what is a resident?, some are not annexed)

County Park geographical boundaries – needs to be smaller portion than the overall area

Keep with the theme of Wickenburg

Expand Partnerships

10. In looking at who participated today, who are missing? Who should have been here as part of the discussions, or certainly should be included as we move forward?

John Saltzman (largest mining claim)

Rusty Gant (Flying E)

Andrea Taylor (manager of Flying E)

Roy Williams (Guest Ranch)

Dee Steed (KL Bar)

Age diversity – youth

Off Highway Vehicle

AZ Game and Fish

AZ State Parks

Residents from Congress, Yarnell, and Morristown

Border Patrol

Environmental Regulations (ADEQ)

Army Corps of Engineers

APS

MC Flood Control District

ADOT

10. Regarding the planning process, what is the best way to engage or communicate with the local community?

Town Website
Chamber of Commerce Website
Town does a monthly newsletter
Local Newspaper (monthly)
Wickenburg Horsemen Magazine, monthly from September through May
Rotary /Kiwanis
Media – PSAs
School District

Next Steps for the Process

Teresa Makinen stated that there will be a community meeting regarding the projects, possibly in January, and that the BLM and Maricopa County Parks will work to coordinate their efforts so that your time and energy will be used efficiently to plan the areas. She asked if there were any further questions or comments, and the following were provided:

Just want to let you know, on Vulture Peak Road, there is an alluvial gold area.

For BLM trails, will you be using UTM or Lat/Long? It is believed that UTM will be used.

When you determine the facility that you would like to manage from, be sure to consider power, and possibly have discussions with APS. Maybe consider solar.

If you keep the motorized on the southwest, which is the most thought was a good idea, how do you see it managed? It was responded that might be a good use of user fees at a campground area.

Closing Comments

Teresa Makinen then thanked everyone for their time and great participation today and she turned the meeting over to Chairman Max Wilson and Mike Taylor for closing comments. The meeting ended.