

EXPANSION OF SONORAN PRESERVE UP 1,139 ACRES

Recent auction by the Arizona State Land Department adds over a thousand acres to the City of Phoenix preserve system.

Beginning with South Mountain eight decades ago, the mountain and desert preserves now represent voter approved efforts to purchase state owned plus private lands to preserve Sonoran Desert landforms, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities near the growing metro region.

The most recent purchase, by the City of Phoenix, is located between Seventh and 24th Streets, and Dove Valley and Lone Mountain roads. The plan for this part of the Sonoran Preserve calls for a connected multi-use path.

In 1999 and 2008 voters continued the tradition of purchasing undeveloped lands first started by PMPC members in the early 1970's.

However, 301 ballot measure threatens the final phase of the north Phoenix purchases by sweeping the Growing Smarter funds into the State general fund.

Growing Smarter covers half the cost of purchases while communities like Phoenix, Scottsdale, and Flagstaff have to cover the other half of funding. If Proposition 301 passes; the legislatures promise of Growing Smarter matching funds will end.

Not only will this 'sweeping' severely impact the funding of future purchases, especially by small communities, but it also will impact the funding for construction of new trails and maintenance of existing trails.

(From The Republic, October 22, 2010)

Meeting Location CHANGED

Note: Location changed for next PMPC Board Meeting.

Monday, 7:00 p.m.
November 1, 2010



Nina Mason Pulliam
Rio Salado Audubon Center
3131 South Central Avenue

LOOKOUT

Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council, Inc.
P.O. Box 26121
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The *LOOKOUT* is published by the Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council
Craig Weaver, *Editor*

Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council is dedicated to protecting our Phoenix Mountains Preserves.

www.phoenixmountains.org



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TO:



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NO on 301

The Arizona Land Conservation Fund Transfer, also known as Proposition 301, will appear on the November 2, 2010 ballot in the state of Arizona as a legislatively-referred state statute. The measure would transfer \$123.5 million from a land-conservation fund to the general fund.

Over four decades, Arizonan's have voted time and time again in favor of buying critical parts of our great state for preservation. Voting NO on 301 is now needed to allow completion of this phase of the City of Phoenix Sonoran Preserve.

Every day, the long-term commitment that produced the Phoenix Mountains Preserve provide benefits to our community and is recognizable around the world. To address explosive growth and expansion north, citizens again recognized the need for protected lands and approved the state-wide Land Conservation Fund.

Phoenix Sonoran Preserve is just one of many community efforts; some of which will end abruptly, and completely, if 301 passes.

Both City of Phoenix and Scottsdale have worked on long-range, voter approved, plans that are achieving protected public lands near where growth is occurring. Finishing the last year (2010-2011) of this successful 'Growing Smarter' program is supported by the Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council.

Those against 301 includes PMPC, Arizona Education Association, League of Woman Voters, and the Sonoran Institute. Vote No on 301.

**As Arizona's
centennial fast
approaches, vote
for our legacy, by
voting "No" on
Proposition 301.**

Preserve Parking Lot Fees Being Reconsidered in March

By Robin Salthouse

During the October PMPC Board Meeting, City Councilman Bill Gates, said that the two-dollar (\$2.00) parking fee at a few of the preserve parking lots would be tabled until March. Councilman Gates, as Chariman of the Efficiency and Innovation Subcommittee, feels that it would be better to address all the fees being considered during the yearly budget review rather than when they arise. The parking fee has been studied and approved by the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Board.

During Parks and Recreation Board public hearings, several recreational groups and individual citizens, in addition to PMPC voiced their support for the fee. Several issues need approval next spring to help the Phoenix Preserves.

The City of Phoenix Council must approve the two dollar daily fee (\$75 yearly or \$50 for six months), but also approve the ability of the rangers to enforce the fees and ensure fees collected

are not swept into the city's general fund. Revenue received from the parking fees could provide greater ranger presence, allow re-opening of closed educational centers and provide much needed maintenance.

The briefing by Councilman Gates covered his families activities at Lookout Mountain. Additionally, he defined the Preserves as 'unlike anything else in the country' and that hiking helps 'clear his head' after a busy day. Discussion covered preserve issues like fees, possible SR51 billboard(s), and future funding options. Member Tom Chapman invited Councilman Bill Gates to the October PMPC Board Meeting.

Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council (PMPC) continues to support the two dollar parking fee only if it is used for the preserves and is not directed to the City of Phoenix General Fund. Board members have concerns that these proceeds could be swept from the parks department budget if the City Council feels the money could be better used elsewhere. Other members are concerned that too much of the ranger's time could be spent enforcing the parking fees rather than being out in the preserve. Phoenix Parks and Recreation administration do not foresee ranger's time being monopolized by fee enforcement.

While some Phoenix residents feel the parking fee is another unnecessary fee imposed by the city, several PMPC members have voiced their fear that the preserve's maintenance has been neglected for years. Like a slow leak in a building the damage is growing and the cost will only become more expensive if not dealt with now.

Member and Park Steward volunteer, Shelley MacDonald, has seen the damage to flora and fauna left after indigents abandon illegal camps in the North Mountain area. She has also seen more graffiti showing up in the preserves with the reduced ranger presence. Unauthorized or spider trails are also growing within the preserves. We need the rangers in the preserves to educate users and to monitor trail preservation. Fees for other park amenities are already collected including golf courses, recreation classes and aquatic facilities.

Members of PMPC, along with family, neighbors, and friends should keep in touch with their City Council between now and the spring to support the creation and enforcement of these fees.

Also, let staff know that the fees should only be used for preserves.

Use the following link: <http://phoenix.gov/mayorcouncil/> or call City Hall at (602)262-7029 to contact your council representative and the mayor.



Illustration above was provided by Joel Broder, developer of former Bell Property. However it fails to show the sloping land that his grading waiver request will damage.

The lot boundary was determined by Mr. Broder. Now there are significant changes to his facility concept. However, drainage could be possible without utilizing the +10% hillside slope which is linked directly to the Mountain Preserve.

But at the PMPC September meeting, Mr. Broder stated he supports everything Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council is about and respects it. "You [PMPC] have zero tolerance (of waivers to Hillside Ordinance)". "I got it and I support that" he said.

Then he contradicted his comment by flatly stating that even though he choose the boundary between the Preserve and development site, 'it wasn't working' for the newest development concept. This concept and its drainage system needs to cut into the hillside sloping terrain, he said.

Adjusting the footprint for this concept makes drainage and on-site retention possible without damaging the areas sloping hillside. This understanding gives PMPC Board the opinion that this grading waiver should be denied.



Yards being converted to desert landscapes can aid wildlife, especially native birds.

While converting to desert landscapes can include low water consuming plants from Australia, and other deserts of the world, now Sonoran Desert plants are becoming more available.

Several nurseries in Phoenix specialize in native plants with options like ironwood, mesquite, palo verde, along with a wide variety of cacti.

Brittle bush is an easy addition to a desert landscape and often appears as a volunteer in areas of well draining soil. A cluster of brittle bush makes an environment that attract insects, rabbits, and birds - who like the bugs!

Transition of a yard to Sonoran Desert plants is an effective way to expand the natural environment we love in the Preserves.

If you live near a Preserve, converting a yard to native plants is another way to expand the boundary of the Preserves - at least for birds.