

**ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATED**

Belated congratulations to long time PMPC Board Member L.V. Yates and his wife Edith on their 60th Wedding Anniversary last month! The Yates Sporting Goods Stores were synonymous with enjoyment of the outdoors for over 30 years. The decades of contributions L.V. has made to conservation continue today through involvement in many issues and serves as an example to everyone who values the Arizona outdoors.

NEXT PMPC BOARD MEETING

October 2, 2006.
Desert Botanical Garden, 7:00 p.m.

IF YOU HAVEN'T DONE SO ALREADY - PLEASE RENEW YOUR 2006 PMPC MEMBERSHIP. WE APPRECIATE YOUR PAST SUPPORT.

PLEASE NOTE THAT DUES ARE ONLY \$20 AND WILL HELP US CONTINUE THE WORK NEEDED TO PROTECT THE PRESERVES.

*Thank you!
Maxine Lakin
Membership Committee*

RENEW YOUR PMPC MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State: _____
Zip Code: _____
Phone(s): _____
e-mail address: _____

MAIL TO:
PMPC Membership
P.O. Box 26121
Phoenix, AZ
85068-6121

Check if you wish to receive the PMPC newsletter via e-mail.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY (please circle)

Family / Individual \$20.
Organization \$30.

ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT (please circle)

Slope Protector \$50 - \$100.
Cliff Protector \$100 - \$500.
Peak Protector \$500+

AREA OF INTEREST or EXPERTISE

(please circle)

Communications Membership

Special Events Research / Archives

Trail Maintenance Legislative Action

LOOKOUT

Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council, Inc.
P.O. Box 26121
Phoenix, Arizona 85068-6121

Executive Board:

Leslie Spencer-Snider, *President*
Tice Supplee, *Vice President*
Robin Salthouse, *Treasurer*
Jean Anderson, *Recording Secretary*
Susanne Rothwell, *Corresponding Secretary*

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

<http://www.phoenixmountains.org>



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TO:



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PMPC Speaker Series

INVASIVE PLANTS A SERIOUS THREAT TO SONORAN DESERT, STATE, & PRESERVES

The variety and invasive characteristics of some exotic plants here in Arizona have reached the point that native ecosystems are threatened with displacement or replacement is the conclusion of researcher Travis Bean, the keynote speaker at the Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council Annual Dinner.

Using photographs and long term mapping of portions of Tumamoc Hill (University of Arizona research facility) Bean is the latest in a series of researchers that have catalogued changes at the site for nearly 100 years. His recent analysis shows the trend of buffelgrass invasion is continuing and the rate is increasing.

This tenacious grass out competes native plants with serious consequences for other native plants and wildlife, Bean said. Since the Sonoran desert did not evolve with fire, the ability of this grass to spread scorching fires makes it even more dangerous. Additionally, over time buffelgrass may deplete the top soil so greatly that an area may become completely barren. Research at Tumamoc Hill carefully documents what is being seen in other parts of the Sonoran Desert including portions of the Phoenix Mountains Preserves.

The threat of invasive plants is very real in the Preserves and already buffelgrass and fountain grass have gained a foothold in some areas. In that regard, Travis Bean pointed to the need for cooperation between professionals, homeowners, and businesses like nurseries. He also provided practical methods for turning around invasions of exotic plants. Since some invasive plants that affect the Preserves were planted by homeowners, Travis Bean added another cautionary note regarding the growing use of new xeriscape plant materials from around the world. These naturally drought tolerant plants may adapt to life in the desert and some might become future invasive plants, he said.

President Leslie Spencer-Snider provided members and guests with a recap of major agenda items for PMPC during the past year. That list included the success on the water line routing that avoided Preserve land near I-17 and the Carefree Highway, the Sonoran Parkway Alignment, Edge Treatment Guidelines, South Mountain Freeway alignment, and the Mercer Lane abandonment case. Special note was made of past PMPC President Terry Horne and his work on the water line route as well as the volunteer contributions made by Wendy Hodgson on the Annual Dinner and Tice Supplee on Spring Trek. The Desert Botanical Garden graciously hosted the 2006 PMPC Annual Dinner.

Some Issues Affecting Preserves Resolved - Others Remain

EDGE GUIDELINES UPDATE

By Susanne Rothwell

Jean and Ferrell Anderson and I attended the last Parks Board Meeting and announced the PMPC support of the latest Sonoran Preserve Edge Treatment Guidelines. The edge guidelines are to control development adjacent to the planned Sonoran Preserve.

The proposed Sonoran Preserve is roughly 20,000 acres of natural desert land spread over much of the north Phoenix area. The revised guidelines will become part of the Zoning Ordinance for the City.

As a synopsis here are some of the more critical issues covered in the guidelines, and I would also strongly suggest that you obtain a copy of the June 8, 2006 Guidelines and read them as well.

1. Encourages development below the 10% slope line.
2. Allows for public access to the Preserves at designated trailheads, at no more than a quarter mile intervals.
3. Prohibits gated developments adjacent to the Preserves, except under special circumstances.
4. Encourages commercial development to take advantage of the views that the Preserves allow, rather than having development back to the Preserves. It also encourages appropriate adjacent development.
5. Uses the washes as trails, view corridors and a system of access into the Preserves, and encourages keeping the washes in their natural state.
6. Encourages the development of "paseos" or walkways at the preserve

edge, so that there will be a more heavily utilized area available for people that will be paved, for those who wouldn't want to walk on the usual desert trails. These paseos will provide an intermediate zone to enjoy the preserves, and can be tied into light commercial areas.

7. Encourage walls along the preserve edge to be varied and landscaped, and see though, rather than block fences.

8. Developers will have to identify all areas of interest; geological, archeological and plant wise and keep these pristine for all to enjoy.

The underlying intent of the Edge Guidelines is to ensure that the public amenity of desert preserves, the purchase of which has been made possible by public funds, is available at many levels for the enjoyment of the public.

These guidelines have gone far to ensure that this will happen, and have given the City control over developers who will buy the adjacent tracks of land.

For more information visit: <http://phoenix.gov/PLANNING/sonindex.html> or contact Jordon Feld, at jordan.feld@phoenix.gov.

CONSERVATION MEASURE(S) FOR STATE TRUST LANDS

The conservation of State Trust land is a key part in the planned Sonoran Preserve in North Phoenix and will affect protections of open space near other urban communities statewide.

A ballot measure crafted by the Sonoran Institute (SI) would preserve

about 690,000 acres of State Trust lands including the 11,000 acres of the proposed Sonoran Preserve. The Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council supports the "Conserving Arizona" ballot measure.

Sadly, the State Legislature added a second initiative in the final hours of the 2006 session. This competing State Trust land measure has been described as a "spoiler" and some claim it is intended to confuse voters into saying no to both measures.

The SI ballot measure "Conserving Arizona's Future" has received the endorsement of many organizations (including PMPC) and organizers have announced they believe they have collected enough signatures for the measure to be approved for the November ballot. To learn more about **"CONSERVING ARIZONA'S FUTURE"** at: www.sonoran.org & www.conservingarizonasfuture.com

EAST SONORAN PARKWAY

By Jean Anderson

The East Sonoran Parkway, connecting the I-17 to Cave Creek Road, has been in the works for many years. With all of the development expansion in the Phoenix North Valley, the parkway has been put on the "fast track" for the last few years.

A 12 person committee was chosen made up of varying peoples; The chair being Clancy Jayne; other committee members came from Tatum Highlands, Tatum Ranch, Desert Ridge, Dove Valley, Parks Boards, and north east



Phoenix. The committee's main goals were the following: Improving Traffic Flow, Distribute Traffic Equitably, Achieve Consensus, and Minimize Social and Environmental Impact. With input from effected communities, in 18 months the committee reached a concensus on all four issues.

Clancy Jane presented the East Sonoran Parkway Alignment Proposal to the Parks Board on May 25th, 2006, at the Pinnacle Peak Community Center; PMPC members Jean Anderson, Susanne Rothwell, and Ferrell Anderson attended.

Board Member, Phil Richards, should be commended for many of his efforts while sitting on this committee and representing the Phoenix Parks Board. His input was invaluable. One such effort resulted in the posted speed limit being reduced from 65 miles per hour to a speed limit of 45 mph.

Members of PMPC spoke in favor of this East Sonoran Parkway proposal.

It is worth noting too that electrical power that is going to be coming onto the Preserve land must be done in a way that "leaves no trace". The flora and fauna must be protected as much as possible. It would be nice to have electrical going underground along the parkway. If you wish to have more information on the East Sonoran Parkway, you may visit the Phoenix City web site at: <http://phoenix.gov/ESPA/index.html>.

FREEWAY ROUTE CHOICE MAY NEGATIVELY AFFECT SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARK

After months of public meetings and input from various communities the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) decided on June 29th to stick with their original plans (from the 1980's) and recommended the 55th Avenue alignment for the proposed route for the South Mountain Freeway (SR202).

This route could have a significant on South Mountain Park.

The Citizen Advisory Team, representing a variety of community and business organizations suggested an alternative route yet ADOT after all these meetings and community input rejected all other alignments in favor of the original 55th Avenue routing.

The following recaps the steps in this lengthy process and contains excerpts from the ADOT web site.

Both ADOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are evaluating alternatives for the South Mountain Freeway.

ADOT has now completed the first part of the process by selecting a "preferred" route for a South Mountain Freeway connection with I-10 in the southwest Valley.

In early 2007, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the South Mountain Freeway will be released to detail the options considered in the southwest Valley and describe the reasons why the original route was selected as a preferred option. The draft report also will detail the Pecos Road option being considered in the eastern area of the study.

The draft report will be made available for 45 days for the public to review.

During that 45-day comment period, a public hearing will be held on the contents of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

In late 2007, the public will have another 30-day opportunity to comment on the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

The comments received during both 45-day and 30-day comment periods will be used by ADOT and FHWA in making their decision about the project. That final choice will be presented in the Record of Decision by FHWA.



Fire danger remains high in all Phoenix Preserves.

One member of the ADOT Citizen Advisory Team was PMPC board member Mike Goodman.

He said the undecided portion (the eastern part) of the route is where South Mountain would be impacted if the original alignment is also used there.

How this portion of the route will be decided has not been announced by ADOT. However, based upon the politics of the recent western segment decision, ADOT will likely push for the alignment that goes through South Mountain and down Pecos Road. If that proves to be the case, then PMPC would probably want to consider supporting the "no build" option, he said.