

**Lower San Pedro Watershed Alliance Organizational Meeting  
Adelante Juntos Coalition, 101 S. Avenue B, San Manuel, Arizona  
Saturday, March 9, 2013**

**I. Attendees**

The meeting was attended by 31 people and moderated by David Omick of Cascabel with assistance from Peter Else from Mammoth. Notable attendees included Mammoth Town Council member Joe Brewer, Marie Roybal of San Manuel's Coppertown Days, and Betty Chavez of the Adelante Juntos Coalition.

**II. Presentation on the ecological importance of the lower San Pedro watershed by Daniel Baker of Cascabel**

- Coalescence of four Eco Regions
- High biological diversity
- Keystone transition zone
- Independent water flow
- High bird diversity, recognized by NAFTA
- Unfragmented landscape
- Future population growth and development destined to greatly affect the valley

**III. Essential Elements of the Mission**

*Introductory Letter Statement:*

“The purpose of the Alliance is to unite various conservation-minded individuals, groups, and agencies in the lower San Pedro region to protect a threatened riparian ecosystem and its supporting watershed. The Alliance will promote conservation initiatives and educational programs, foster a resilient local economy, and resist large scale or inappropriate development proposals that will cause ecosystem fragmentation, degrade wildlife habitat, devalue conservation investments, and threaten sustainable rural lifestyles.”

- Organization at watershed level important
- Need greater outreach, with an energetic awareness program
- Importance of educating others and earning their support
- Involvement with upper San Pedro groups, NRCs, Oracle Land Trust
- Consideration of how conservation can create jobs, foster ecotourism, community unity
- Involvement with the Copper Corridor Economic Development Coalition
- People are motivated to be involved by personal sustainability; need to appeal to that
- Work to create a culture that values the valley's character and its long-term value

**IV. Incorporation and bylaws**

- Need to first incorporate in Arizona as a 501(c)(3), with board of directors, officers
- File with the federal government second
- Need bylaws for our own function

- Articles of incorporation are separate from bylaws. A year's worth of paperwork is involved.
- Federal form requires eight months work, much bureaucracy

### **Request for additional members for the Steering Committee**

*Current steering committee members:*

Aravaipa Area: Peter Else, Phil Hedrick, Cathy Gorman

Cascabel Area: Mick Meader, David Omick and Pearl Mast, Daniel Baker, Anna Lands, Bob Evans, Barbara Clark, Elna Otter

*New members added to steering committee:*

Karole Skeen, Aravaipa area, and Scott Wilbor, UA School of Natural Resources and the Environment

### **Additional notes:**

- Want to connect with others outside the valley but not be overtaken by them. Keep as grassroots as possible.
- Bylaws to focus on people living or owning land here and concerned about the watershed. These are the people having the most vested interest in the organization. Want to include municipalities. Focus on sustainability.
- Board structure and decision making: Cascabel Conservation Association policy is to always seek consensus first. If consensus not possible, a decision requires a 75% majority of the board members. This seems like a good model to follow.
- One vote per landholder entity.

A subcommittee of the steering committee will work on drafting bylaws and articles of incorporation.

## **V. Discussion**

- Rancher involvement is important, a challenge to include them. Most ranchers are better caretakers of the land because they need to sustain it for their livelihood.
- Suggestion to develop a subcommittee around rancher relations
- Reach out with cooperative projects
- Need to avoid cliquishness on the board
- Importance of reaching out and working with other groups, being fully inclusive
- Have subcommittees to address particular issues or areas of interest
- Have rotation in committees, taking of responsibility
- Seek representatives from other areas
- Send out frequent updates
- Need paradigm shift in economic focus away from large, transient corporations toward more sustainable businesses based in the area
- Expand interest to include Oracle

- Seek assistance from Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (National Park Service, <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/index.htm> (Celeste Andresen suggestion)
- Importance of Native American involvement, San Carlos Apache Reservation

### **Upcoming Projects/Events**

- San Pedro Eco Fest on Saturday, April 13, at Aravaipa College. Exhibitors allowed. We will want to have a table there.
- Valley video project involving Light Hawk, an independent group of pilots that offer free services for conservation purposes, <http://www.lighthawk.org/> Gilbert Urias and Ralph Waldt of Cascabel will be working with Light Hawk to photograph the valley from the air. Jim Bergstrom (husband of Celeste Andresen) offered to narrate flights and guide pilots because of his extensive knowledge of the valley.
- The Sky Island Alliance is seeking volunteers and landowners to help with a San Pedro Valley wildlife tracking and photography project. Peter Else took names of those interested. Maria and Gene Troutner volunteered.

The meeting adjourned around noon, followed by lunch and additional discussion. Minutes from the meeting will be sent to all individuals on the sign-up list.

*Respectfully submitted by Mick Meader, March 11, 2013*