

# Conservation Committee Minutes—April 5, 2016 - DRAFT

**Attendees:** Cherry Payne, Jim Daniel, Mary Clark, Bob Sandlin, John Parker, Tom Bredenberg, Jerry Gulseth, Rob Egemeier, Tom Brimacombe

1. **Guests:** None

2. **March minutes:** The minutes were reviewed. They need to be corrected: Jim Daniel will walk and map the Los Alamos Canon trail (not all the Greenbelt trails). The minutes were approved with that one change. Tom Bredenberg moved to accept the minutes with the change. Jerry seconded. They were unanimously approved.

3. **Update on PNM easement agreement:** Both the Board and PNM have approved the agreement. It needs to be signed.

3a. **Best Landscaping Practices:** Jerry reported that the committee has been meeting and is looking at existing materials such as a Xeriscape Plant Guide, and a Weed Identification Guide to use to assemble an informational packet. They are discussing the best means to distribute the materials (pamphlet or web site). They are working on categories such as soil amendments, natives, perennials, etc.

Jim noted that Jan-Wilem Jansens is interested in helping with the committee, particularly in firewise landscaping.

There is also an herbarium that ECIA has.

4. **Status of Library Trail Project:** In March, Steve Griego contacted Jim and Cherry for a meeting with county staff about the Trail. The county is gung-ho about getting the project done, but thinks the only way it will get done in a timely manner is if ECIA does the work with the Kubota. Jim subsequently contacted Dag who indicated that it would be approved if liability is waived. Steve drafted an agreement between the County and ECIA which has been sent to Mark. John noted that this is not a great time to do this work because the soil is rock-hard and it is windy.

Jim spoke to Brenda about using the Kubota who is amenable to it. We will also need to communicate with the adjacent homeowners. Jim will draft an article for the Vistas explaining the rationale in using the Kubota.

5. **Discussion of Greenbelt trail standards drafted by John:** There was a discussion of what the trail standards should be. Greg had suggested that there be tiers of trail standards, but that seemed somewhat complicated. A few years ago there was an assessment by a former committee member whose assessment determined that most of the trails were in fair to poor condition.

Maintenance needs to be added to the SOP. There was a fair bit of discussion about use of lawnmowers at last month's meeting. It was suggested that mowing could be one element of maintenance on an as-needed basis. John will add maintenance to the SOP. There was also discussion about having homeowners champion trails near their homes and to participate in an "Adopt a Trail" program. Tom Bredenberg has spoken to some folks on the western end of Gallinas Park about their interest in such a program.

Jim Daniel mapped the trail through Los Alamos Cañon to create an example of what we could come up with. It raises the question of which trails to fix and in what priority? Cherry suggested

that trails that connect to community facilities or are more heavily used be a higher priority. The priority also might depend upon neighborhood champions.

John will continue to amend and polish it and get it back to the committee. There was a discussion about whether or not to get community comments first or to take it to the Board for final approval. Perhaps the Board will want to solicit comments from the community. We set a target of finalizing it at the next meeting.

**6. Work projects for April:**

**a) April 20th, 9:00 am at Trailhead #3:** Jim will ask Mark to send out a call for volunteers. Everyone should bring hat, gloves, sturdy shoes, and lunch and water. The project will end about 3:00 pm. Jim will coordinate with Mark about tools, etc.

**b) April 27th:** review the feasibility of a 101/105 connector trail. Meet at Trailhead #1 at 9am.

**7. Report on wildlife camera and efforts to publish photos:** Tom Brimacombe talked about shots that he has gotten: coyotes, the tail of a Swift fox, a dog's nose. Tom will email the photos he has to Jack Arnold to post on the web. Jim feels that we don't need to wait to get a mountain lion or other dramatic photo before we post to the web as any photos we post will whet people's appetite.

**8. Report on COLTPAC Meetings:** There are new members on the committee. The next phase of the Rail Trail has still not commenced. There have been some public outreach meetings regarding trails at the Thorton Ranch—no members of the public were in attendance. There were tribal members there who were concerned about maintaining the sacredness of some sites. There has been some other work about trails in the US 285 corridor that would be a part of a Grand Unified Trail System (GUTS), a trail network that would surround Santa Fe with town as the hub. This is a concept conceived by the mountain biking community.

Tom Bredenberg mentioned the new County interactive trail maps.

**9. Clarification of YTD budget expenditures:** Two 2015 expenditures have been charged to 2016: \$113.00 for trail tools, and \$235.40 for development of new electronic files for Trail #1 trail junctions.

**10. Other Business:** Cherry announced that she is resigning from the committee. It was agreed that Mark would take minutes at future meeting (although Mark was not in attendance to concur).

**11. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:20

Next meeting: May 3rd, 7:00 pm