

Conservation Committee Minutes—May 5, 2015 -FINAL

Attendees: Jim Daniel, Mark Young, John Parker, Cherry Payne, Rob Egemeier, Mary Clark, Jerry Gulseth, Tom Brimacombe, Greg Colello (Board Liaison)

1. **Guests:** Arnold Atkins, Bob Blanchet, Jan-Willem Jansens (Ecotone)
2. **April minutes:** reviewed, corrected and approved unanimously. COLPEC changed to COLPAC
3. **Status of Greenbelt Work-VGPL to Rail trail:** Jim contacted Steve Griego about this trail and its status. The committee has determined that we will not use the Kubota on this segment and that the trail will be 2 feet wide. There will be a work day on May 13th. Jim Daniel will send an email to committee members with the time and location. The committee agreed that only the worst locations would be addressed.
4. **Report on April 25th Work Day:** 18 people helped with the work day at Trailhead 3 and the arroyo crossing. There was also a Scout in attendance. There were several groups: a tamarisk removal team; a group that armored a berm with wood; and another that built a large rock structure to stabilize a slope. Another group re-routed the trail between 2E and 2D. Some more work needs to be done to better define the new trail.

The county has cleared out the Bar Ditches according to Tom who was out there today. There is still a place where water is running toward the trail. This issue could be put on the back burner.

5. **Crossvane Repair:** Jim went to the ECIA board to appeal for funds to repair the cross vane damaged in the monsoon last September. The board approved an additional \$5000 for this work. One board member suggested we build a bridge across the arroyo. Because the funding level was \$5000, the project falls just below the level requiring the project be bid out as Greg noted when reviewing ECIA's procurement policy (\$1-\$5000 do not require bids). Craig Sponholz, who did the work originally, will need to provide some documentation to ECIA regarding his business status and insurance, but we plan to proceed with him completing the reconstruction.

6. **Quivera Coalition Grant (Trail 401):** Jan-Willem recently became aware of in-kind support offered by this organization to landowners to help them achieve greater land health. Eldorado Preserve would be eligible for their support. They have partnered with another organization to offer workshops for technical assistance on projects. The 401/403 trail, which is eroding out, requires planning and design and engineering to complete a rehabilitation/repair due to some existing structures. Quivera can help with permitting, mapping, etc. We will propose that Jan-Willem be a part of their team which would take care of planning and design, logistics and a workshop. PNM does have a ROW through this area.

The workshop would be open to the public. There is an informal constituency on the Canoncito Mesa that uses trail 401, and some of these folks might be interested in participating in the workshop. The deadline for the grant application is June 15. Jan-Willem is willing to put together an application on behalf of ECIA for the project. The CC would need to contribute about 10 tons of rock, in-kind work, and the use of the ECIA's Kubota and crew as a match.

It was moved by John that Jan-Willem volunteer to write the grant to the Quivera Coalition on behalf of the ECIA; it was seconded by Cherry and unanimously approved by the committee. Mark will let Dag Ryen know that the committee is pursuing this.

Jan-Willem noted that if the trail became public, the Trails Alliance would be interested in assisting with the project. [That led to an informal discussion as to whether or not the deed to the Preserve directs that its use be restricted to ECIA members only; Jon Parker has a copy of the deed and noted that the only restriction is that the area remain undeveloped.]

7. June Work Day, Trail 101: It was suggested that we postpone this work until the fall. There had been some discussion about making this an Eagle Scout project; however, John got some feedback that several of the Eagle Scout candidates have helped with other Eagle Scout projects in the Preserve and would prefer a new challenge for their projects. We can appeal to the many residents that helped with the April workday for this effort in the fall. It was agreed to defer the work until then.

8. Rock in place near start of Greenbelt Pilot project and ready to be used (See #11): The rock has been staged at the work site by ECIA staff adjacent to the Greenbelt Pilot Trail. There is some runoff that would come straight across the trail tread. The construction of some one-rock dams would slow the erosion. In addition, we need to harden some areas. Mark will put something on the website to let people know of the upcoming work. We tentatively scheduled a workday at 8:30 on Wed., June 3rd. We estimate it will take about 2 hours. We will rendezvous at the Rail Trail Parking area on Ave. Vista Grande. ECIA will bring shovels, McClouds, steel rakes. Others should bring gloves, water, sunscreen, etc.

9. COLTPAC: John reports that Phase 4 of the Rail Trail will start relatively soon. This is the section that will come through Eldorado. This Saturday is the Arroyo Hondo Cactus Hike which is a part of the County's Get Outside initiative. The County has budgeted quite a bit for repairs of the Rail Trail following damage to phase 1 from last summer's storms.

10. Installation of remaining Trail Signs: All new trailhead signs have been installed. However, the old plexiglass was put back up at Trail head #3 which has trail junction stickers on it. Mark volunteered to remove the stickers this week.

Jim looked at the marsh area and it appears that it has been cleared out by the rains. There is still more work to be done farther south of that location.

We still await three locator signs for 1J and 1G, and another at 3F. Mark will follow up with Lee, the sign vendor.

11. Update by Arnold Atkins re. erosion control near greenbelt trail (see #8): Mr. Atkins had come to the January CC meeting and talked about the increased erosion in the greenbelt west of the Rail Trail. In April, about 3 yards of rock, purchased by the CC, was delivered to Mr. Atkins' property. He has built 3 small dams along a drainage by Vista Grande Dr. to slow down water flow. He feels that he can put all of the rock to good use and regrets his "slow start." He brought photos of his work to show the committee. He has also built some grade reversals to disperse water. He has notified all of his adjacent neighbors of his work. His efforts will help to protect the Greenbelt Pilot Project trail and the committee is thankful for his interest and efforts on behalf of us all.

Mr. Atkins was commended for his efforts. There is still a load of rock in place upstream from Mr. Atkins' location. John suggested we let Mr. Atkins know when we do that work. (See #8).

12. May 23rd-Obie Oberhausen will be doing a Cactus Talk at the ECIA building at 10:00.

13. June 6th-Jim will contact Ted Brown about giving a herpetology talk here on that day.

14. Other Business: Steve Griego, who is the Rail Trail steward, is making recommendations to the county regarding the Rail Trail improvements. John feels that ECIA and the CC should have a voice in this as well.

Mark reported that cattle are getting onto ECIA property near the meadows at Trail 401. He did not find the break in the fence.

The annual homeowners' meeting was last night. Cherry presented a report on last year's activities and planned events for this year. During the question and answer period, Claudia Daigle asked why the CC was spending \$15,000 in the Preserve (it is not nearly that much) and suggested that money be used to repair the monuments at the first entrance. She said that "no

one” went to or cared about the Preserve.” Fred Raznik countered that statement by noting the appeal that the 4000 ac. Preserve has with prospective home buyers.

Jan Willem talked about the possibility of another workday in the Canoncito wetlands. Some rock needs to be removed to better channel the water. Also a small rock dam in the area of an S curve that was built a couple of years ago needs work, including the removal of a tree. This work could be done by a smaller team and completed in a couple of hours. May 29th was selected. We will gather at ECIA at 8:30.

Jan-Willem submitted a partial bill for his some of his work.

Greg brought up a question about placing a picnic table in one area of the Los Alamos Greenbelt trail. We deferred to next year.

The ECIA Board will be making liaison assignments to committees. Cherry and Jim will send a request to Dag asking Greg continue to be our liaison.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Next meeting: June 2 at 7:00 p.m.

Upcoming workdays: May 13th-Rail Trail to Library Trail work; Jim Daniel to send info to committee

May 29th: Trailhead 2 and Canoncito arroyo work, meet at 8:30 at ECIA

June 3rd, 8:30 am, Vista Grande Rail Trail parking area