

Conservation Committee minutes

July 3, 2018

Attendees: John Reynolds (Chair), Carol Beidleman, Tom Bredenberg, Tom Brimacombe, Paul Butt (Secretary), Jim Daniel, Rob Egemeier, Jerry Gulseth, Pam Henline (ECIA Board Liaison), John Parker

Excused Absence - Cecil Rich

Guests: Mary Clark, Eddy Dry, Teri Micco, Betsy Walker, Jan Willem-Jansens

1. 1. Minutes approved with spelling corrections. (Jim Daniel motion, Paul Butt second)
2. 2. Agenda approved by consensus
3. 3. Pam Henline gave a report on recent ECIA Board activities relating to the Conservation Committee:

A.) review of Conservation Committee justification for leaving the Community Preserve open during current conditions of heightened fire danger. Board consensus was to concur with the Committee's recommendation

B.) additional signage relating to fire danger and providing notice of prohibited activities, to be developed and posted under the guidance of the Committee, was recommended

Committee discussion of above resulted in consensus to prepare and post "Trail Closed for Restoration" notices as part of the sign development and posting project

the Board recommends that if closure of the Preserve becomes necessary, that the parking lots somehow be cordoned off. Pam Henline will convey the Committee's recommendation to use the "yellow tape" on hand from the Goat project, if necessary, to the Board.

Jan Willem Jansens recommended that the Committee make proactive contact with county and state resources to obtain information regarding what to do in the event there is a fire in the preserve.

C.) the Board is aware that there are ongoing, unacceptable delays in reimbursing Committee members, and contractors hired by the Committee, for authorized expenditures. Pam requested that Committee member problems with obtaining reimbursement be documented and forwarded to her for further action.

4. 4. Greenbelt Topics

The mechanical clearing for the "Library" trail should be complete by 7/09. Thanks to Pam for ensuring that the work is completed by Hoamco staff. John Reynolds reported that he anticipates no issues with area residents when maintenance of the Cuesta Lane greenbelt access point is performed as part of the Library trail project. Committee consensus is to complete the project in September, depending on soil moisture conditions. Pam requested that Committee members assess the Library trail in its current condition before school starts in mid-August to ensure that there are no safety problems for returning students using the trail. John Reynolds suggested establishing liaison with the Eldorado school "Fun Run" committee, as the committee uses sections of what will become the Library trail.

Jim Daniel recommended that the Committee notify Santa Fe County Commissioner Ed Moreno when the Library trail project is complete, and request that the County complete the trail segments on county property near the school, library and senior center.

John Parker pointed out that trail work in the spring, particularly when clearing brush, should be done with sensitivity to the fact its nesting/pupping season for wildlife.

5.) Preserve Topics

John Reynolds indicated that the primary focus for the Committee's Preserve-related activities is to finish trail 404.

A project to reroute a section of trail 401 to get hikers off of the old ranch road where it is badly eroded and the existing tread is compromised by an advancing head-cut from an adjacent arroyo. This area was flagged previously, but the proposed reroute needs to be reevaluated. Depending on budget and other resource availability, the possibility of initial remediation of the head-cut will be evaluated. Jan Willem-Jansens' assistance will be requested during the planning phase of this project.

There was a brief discussion of the need for additional armoring on the west bank of trail 203 in the "experimental" remediation area, as well as the need to mobilize for trail repairs in the event there is heavy rain in the area. Reseeding in the experimental area and other areas of the 200 series trails was mentioned, but the consensus is that this may be premature.

Jan Willem-Jansen mentioned the poor condition of the southwest quadrant of trail 401. Jim Daniel referred to this area in highlighting the need for additional wayfinding signs on trail 401, trail 404 and elsewhere as needed.

John Parker reported on the current status of the "Cactus Rescue" project in the Preserve. Committee recommendation is to keep the transplants at least 25 feet from any trail.

A new project to develop a formal trailhead and Preserve entrance on Vaquero Road was discussed. There are existing social trails that are used by equestrians, which connect to trail 105.

6.) Public Comments

Teri Micco requested time to speak about the damage caused to the Eldorado landscape by lawn mowing. She contacted Tom Dominguez of Santa Fe County Extension Services, who confirmed that mowing damages the local plant and animal community. He also recommended that where mowing is considered necessary, to set the blade height at a minimum of 6 to 8" from the ground to minimize damage. Carol Beidleman mentioned that the Committee prepared an article on "The Negative Consequences of Mowing," which appeared in the July 2018 issue of the Eldorado Vistas newsletter. Pam Henline recommended that the Committee continue its educational outreach, and said that she would contact ECIA/Hoamco to request that current operating procedures be modified to minimize environmental damage from mowing on the Community Center grounds and along the paved hike/bike trails.

7. 7. Motion to Adjourn by John Parker. Second by Tom Bredenberg. Motion approved.