

## **Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes**

**August 6, 2019**

**Attending:** Carol Beidleman (recording secretary), Tom Bredenberg (Chair), Tom Brimacombe, Paul Butt, Mary Clark, Bernardo Monserrat (alternate ECIA Board Liaison), John Parker, Mike Rogers (representative of HOAMCO).

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tom Bredenberg at 7:01 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda:** Approved on motion by Paul Butt, John Parker second (as amended with dog policy per Carol Beidleman).

**Appointment of Recording Secretary:** Carol Beidleman.

**Approval of July Minutes:** Approved on motion by John Parker, Paul Butt second.

**Excused Absences and Introduction of Guests:** Elizabeth Maclaren excused. Guests: Jim Shaklee, Nancy Kittredge, Paul Fink.

### **Report from the Board Liaison:**

Bernardo Monserrat reported on the ECIA Committee Roles and Responsibilities document, which is still under revision [note the latest version is 12/18, not 2/09], which includes the definition of roles and committee structure. A final copy will go to Board members and Chairs of Committees. The Board has incorporated the Conservation Committee's (CC) comments on the 12/18 version, which were reflected in the January 8, 2019 CC Meeting Minutes.

Bernardo Monserrat said website recommendations go through the Board Liaison. The final selection of website designers has not yet been made; it's on hold, but the CC can work on content in the interim. The Chair said we already have trail standards and SOPs on the website, and a botanical survey in the Preserve done a long time ago; he thought that Cliff Chetwin's Greenbelt wildfire report he did for us in 2011 might be interesting to add. Any standards or studies approved by the CC should be posted. John Parker suggested including pictures of work days etc. to help with recruitment.

### **HOAMCO report:**

Mike Rogers gave the pool update. They had to get the system for kiddie pool working, and will install system for main pool tomorrow. The inspector wants the chemicals right. Mike has operation certification. ECIA hopes to have the pool open through October, weather dependent. The Chair asked about the possibility of pool attendants being available to help after pool season, for 404 work etc. The 400 Southeast Gate is up and locked.

### **New Business:**

#### **2020 Budget:**

Paul Butt prepared a draft budget for 2020 (see handout dated 8/6/2019). Re Greenbelt trail restoration, the Chair said there was no interest until maybe November; the CC is not in favor of doing that. Re 101&104: Paul Butt said the \$1,200 work won't get done this year. John Parker said we were planning on hiring a bobcat contractor. Paul Butt said the \$1,000 for Preserve signs is for replacement for faded signs; we need a waypoint for 404 (\$500; John Parker asked if that's enough), and we can take \$500 from Glorietta and move it to the 404. Paul Butt left items 3-6 as Ecotone plus labor and pulled materials out; item 9 is for additional projects. We need to use hand tools money (\$500), need to do inventory, and get an electric chainsaw this year (Paul Butt requested specs); we will send through Mike Rogers. Tom Brimacombe thought the old gas chain saw is decent, we should keep. John Parker said the bow saws we have are pretty bad; we should get 3-4 of those; an electric chainsaw is \$500 plus extra battery. Paul Butt would like to get safety gear, including Kevlar chaps, gloves, face guard, and helmet. An

electric chainsaw is lighter, more convenient, easier to maintain in the field, and quieter; it does not bother those who come out with dogs. John Parker said for regular trail maintenance a hand saw is better, although there are times when a real chain saw is nice to have; he wants more hand tools, and safety items. The CC should send Paul Butt a safety gear list to go with the chainsaw we have, and asked John Parker to get him specs on the hand saws. Paul Butt wants to get one more Pulaski and shovel. We have McLeods, pick mattocks, and rogue hoes, but need decent shovels, one more Pulaski, and hand saws. The Chair and John Parker will send list to Paul Butt. Tom Brimacombe needs to get the tool shed key to Anna at ECIA. The Chair can update the inventory, with condition and size information. John Parker would like smaller pick mattocks. Re education programs, Paul Butt will leave \$500 in the budget; he said other entities entice with swag, like REI's work day at Galisteo Basin Preserve. We need giveaways to thank volunteers; pizza was good for youth on work days. We need to get printed maps and brochures done this calendar year. Tom Brimacombe, who has Adobe Desktop, said Mark Young sent big digital files for that, and will check their condition. Paul Butt said we should get professional design help to get them done, same with the website, as it's important. Tom Brimacombe said David King has the original artwork for some of waypoint signs; we should have the same fonts/colors so look consistent. We need to get a pdf version of the big map done, then can do printing and signs.

Overnight parking, possible encampments on the 400:

Mike Rogers said the illegal dump site on the east side of 51 (where you turn around by the cattle guard) was cleaned up. The berm has filled in so it might be good to do fencing. The black GMC Jimmy (Arizona plates CFA2360) which has been illegally parked overnight at TH4 for several months will be towed. It was still there last night, but ECIA was waiting to get the "no overnight parking" signs posted which are up now. Several members had seen the Jimmy in the same place, but Paul Butt and Tom Brimacombe said it has been in different spots (so the owner is coming and going). John Parker said we need a tractor to do a tank trap near the dump. Mike Rogers asked about the fencing, whether it was designed to be high enough for coyotes to go under and deer to go over; John Parker agreed we don't want to impede wildlife. John Parker had previously mentioned drone surveillance, as we don't want to contact the perpetrator and the Sheriff won't. John Parker knows people who provide drone services, and Paul Butt knows some in Eldorado who have a drone service for archeological site work. If the perpetrator vacates and stays gone we don't care, but if they stay we have unspent money from the survey (\$2,000), not for the 400 parking lot but the other side of road. Paul Butt said for a private drone use you don't need a license, but for commercial use you do.

Jim Shaklee thought we should attempt to reflect and mimic wilderness practices and align with USFS/NPS, if the Preserve is being treated like wilderness (with emergency exceptions). The Chair explained that at one point it was called a Wilderness Area (or Wilderness Preserve, per John Parker), then became the (Community) Preserve. John Parker said there is no attempt to conform with federal designation; it is more a common open space. Mike Rogers agreed as there are no armed rangers, no policing. Paul Butt thought it would be useful to put a notice on the CC website.

Dog policy: Carol Beidleman raised the discrepancies between the Vistas articles about dog rules for the Preserve (July 2019, pg. 2; August 2019, pg. 7) and the Preserve brochure. The Chair asked Bernardo Monserrat to have the Information Committee consult the CC regarding articles about Preserve rules. The Chair has seen people walking seven dogs, likely doing dog-walking. People out in a wilderness need to have dogs under voice control. Carol Beidleman asked why the Preserve had a lesser restriction on dogs, being concerned about wildlife harassment and impacts. Paul Butt thinks the discrepancy in dog policy between everywhere

else and the Preserve is a question for the Board, and asked what would be a reasonable procedure to make the restriction in the Preserve. Santa Fe County does not define voice control. Carol Beidleman said we need better education and outreach. John Parker thought a good person to partner with is Joe Newman, who does wildlife rescue. Carol Beidleman will talk to Joe Newman/Pam Henline re the dog policy.

Natural history information, Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) guidelines, related to trail work: Carol Beidleman had shared with the CC by email guidelines regarding the MBTA and trail work which is potentially impacting migratory birds during nesting season. We should amend the developing standards/protocol to include/address this. Carol Beidleman said we could do this and field surveys as appropriate in-house.

Recruiting and maintaining volunteers and members: We need email address for Jim Shaklee so can contact for next work day [see below]. John Parker said having other than work days would be good, like nature walks (Carol Beidleman offered to try this next summer), as it might net new members. Mike Rogers agree that if folks know about it, they care about it. John Parker will help out with walks. The 201 has an interpretive sign at kiosk; such signs are nice, but expensive.

### **Old Business:**

Project status updates. 404 Meadow (Logistics: gate, material, staging, construction), 401 Gully:

Re the 404 Meadow project, the gates are up so we can get material and get it staged. The intention is to get the materials ¼ mile beyond the road behind the locked fence. We already have rocks on 101, as you get to the dam where the old tank/pond is. Mike Rogers said there is riprap on 201; the Chair said we need to get it to support coconut mats. Tom Brimacombe said the truck is 8 yards. Once we have the rock there, we need to have the Chair contact Jan-Willem Jansens (JW) to see what to do next on the 404; we should invite JW to the September CC meeting. JW's options for volunteer work days include: 9/14, 9/21, 10/12, 10/19 and 10/26. John Parker said we may need to do the 401 with JW in October; we would procure the operator services but he would direct the operator (Jeremiah Kidd). Can we get Jeremiah out on a workday? The subject for the September meeting with JW is the priority to have rock at end of the road by the end of this month, then coordinate with JW and move the rock in September. John Parker envisions two steps, to have the truck dump it and one of ECIA guys come out with tractor and move it into place; we can't drive all the way back. Paul Butt said if we could prepare a turnaround at the fire ring that would help; we could pay Ken (with Dirtworks) and he could be in and out in 30 minutes. John Parker will call Jeremiah, and the Chair will call Ken.

Library Trail: We don't need to discuss. We want to extend the surveying into autumn, until complete.

101-104 braiding:

We will get this work done in 2020, and JW could do an evaluation of it. The Chair asked how to get equipment in there. Paul Butt went up on 101 and thought possibly the road that touches the fenceline (which non-Eldorado people are using as access); we could try to get permission to stage there. WE could get in at 1D. John Parker could get in through Apache Springs subdivision (via Camino Valle, into development); we have gotten permission from them in the past. We need to be mindful of Obie's Santa Fe cactus planted along the trail.

Greenbelt Social Trails: Horses, warning signs, mowing and trimming:

Carol Loewy contacted the Chair, wanting to ride horses from Glorieta Road to Ave. Torreon. It's a social trail, and there's no law prohibiting horses from going into Greenbelt. Mike Rogers did some trimming at the entrance and exit. The Chair said there is an 18' wide bridle path near western part of Eldorado. Regarding warning signs on social trails, the Chair thought it was not out of line to have trail hazard signs (like at the far west end of the Gallina Park greenbelt, which has 4-6' drop-offs). Paul Butt said it was an impossible situation re the social trails, that we should have the Greenbelt map list that the only developed/maintained trails are the Pueblo Cañon, Melado(?), and Library trails, and the rest are social trails (at your own risk). We should do a Vistas article, but wait until the Library Trail is done. Tom Brimacombe asked if the pilot trail, library trail, and Melado trail could be mowed; it needs it again even though was mowed. However, we should wait to mow until September after flowers have gone to seed.

Weed Management (did not talk about fire mitigation):

John Parker still wants to get the landscaping practices posted. Carol Beidleman's weed article for the August Vistas will be in the September issue instead. She talked to the Master Gardeners encouraging them to help residents with weed identification, but did not get a response. Mary Clark said Master Gardeners have done something like weed identification, as well as encouraging residents to have more appropriate plantings.

#### **Open Forum:**

Jim Shaklee spoke about weed management. He is a new Eldorado resident as of May 2019. He volunteered in Fort Collins, Colorado, where he created and led a weed crew focused on County-listed noxious weeds. He is maintaining a list for Eldorado, and has surveyed 18 sites and hand-pulled the noxious weeds found, which included musk thistle, scotch thistle, and dalmation toadflax. He felt some weeds were too widespread to deal with, like Russian thistle and cheatgrass, however Carol Beidleman felt those and other invasive weeds not listed are still important to remove to maintain healthy wildlife habitat. Jim would like to see the CC explore the possibility of a weed crew, to clean up "our own house." We discussed a budget to purchase the work of contractors or participants, to survey properties in early spring. The Chair thought a group could start up like the elm pruning crew; he suggested holding a workshop in the spring and using Vistas for a series of articles. We need photos of each weed species. Jim Shaklee is trying to get copies of free weed identification booklets (like the Noxious Weeds of Colorado by the Colorado Weed Management Association), which could be distributed to Eldorado residents; he feels this falls within this CC's responsibilities, and thinks we're at a point where we could win the battle for a lot of these noxious species. Jim Shaklee's contact information is: 970-484-8002, [jbsgenetics@gmail.com](mailto:jbsgenetics@gmail.com). The Chair will send CC Jim's email and handout.

**Adjournment:** John Parker moved to adjourn, Paul Butt second; meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.