

ARIZONA RIPARIAN COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1986

This newsletter serves as an introduction to those of you new to the mailing list as well as an update on the activities underway for those previously on the list. The past activities of the Arizona Riparian Council are reviewed from its first organizational meeting in April 1985 to the present. Future activities and organizational news are also outlined.

At the First North American Riparian Conference held in Tucson, Arizona on 16-18 April 1985, a group of about 50 individuals concerned with the health of riparian systems in the state of Arizona debated the feasibility of an organized riparian advocacy group in Arizona, and the methods to be taken to work toward understanding and conserving riparian resources. Although there was little agreement on organizational matters, most were enthusiastic about forming an effective organization and working out the details later.

A letter sent in May 1985 solicited comments and suggestions on problems besetting riparian systems that should be addressed by an Arizona riparian group. The replies were numerous and enthusiastic about the formation of such a group. Many individuals included detailed descriptions of the problems they felt were of the highest need of resolution. The comments fell into six basic categories: (1) land use, (2) water resources, (3) classification and inventory of riparian habitats, (4) protection and enhancement of riparian habitats, (5) education of the public, and (6) policy and legislation affecting riparian systems.

The first formal organizational meeting was held on 21 November 1985 in Phoenix, Arizona. The first part of the meeting consisted of a review of the initial need for such an organization and how it should be structured. Duncan Patten, Director, Center for Environmental Studies, Arizona State University, was selected to serve as interim President and Chuck Hunter, Center for Environmental Studies, Arizona State University, as interim Secretary-Treasurer. Six committees stemming from the needs earlier identified were established. It was decided that a smaller group, to include the interim officers and committee chairs, was needed to formalize a proposed Constitution and Bylaws for the Arizona Riparian Council. The second part of the November meeting was devoted to setting goals and objectives for the six committees. Discussion of five of the six committees are summarized below. If you are interested in any of these committees, please contact the Committee Chairs.

Land Use Committee (Sarah Vetault, Chair, 1715 N. Treat, Tucson, AZ 85705)

Grazing was identified as a primary influence on riparian habitat quality, and one of the most difficult to deal with. Other land uses potentially affecting riparian habitat quality are off-road vehicular (ORV) use, mining, and real-estate development. The grazing issue became the main focus of the Committee. Representation from mining, real estate, and ORV interests are needed on the Council. There was unanimous interest in information exchange on current research and state-of-the-art management techniques. Primary goals are to (1) identify missing interest groups and make contact with them; (2) identify different management techniques, particularly success stories and state-of-the-art; and (3) compile information on current research, particularly applied research, on grazing management.

Water Resources Committee (Marty Jakle, Chair, Bureau of Reclamation, P.O. Box 9980, Phoenix, AZ 85068)

Priority was given to setting goals, which are: (1) determine what water quality and quantity (stream flow) information is available and where it is stored; (2) contact the various management agencies to determine if the individual agency has an established policy covering riparian habitat, if the agency collects water quality or stream flow data and where these data are published, if the agency has made instream flow recommendations, and what techniques were used or recommended; and (3) based on acceptance by the various management agencies and the expertise of Council members, recommend a technique or perhaps several techniques to use in making recommendations for instream requirements. To accomplish these goals a letter was drafted to be sent to the various management agencies asking the questions outlined in (1) and (2) above.

Classification and Inventory Committee (Bill Bayham, Chair, Arizona State Land Department, 1624 W. Adams, Phoenix, AZ 85007)

The general consensus of this Committee was to work towards developing a standard classification system for riparian habitat that could be used by all land management agencies. The Committee wants to (1) establish criteria for designing a classification system to meet planning, management, and research needs; (2) compile information on existing classification systems or databases that are currently being used or have been used in the past; and (3) review each system and evaluate the merits of each towards incorporating key elements into the design of a standard classification system. Several specific items discussed were (1) the use of the State Land Department's ALRIS system as a clearing-house for riparian inventory in Arizona; (2) the use of a digitized system (such as Brown and Lowe 1975); and (3) the need for quantifying abiotic factors in describing potential riparian processes.

Protection and Enhancement Committee (Carole Hamilton, Chair, Bureau of Land Management, 3707 N. 7th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85254)

Committee objectives are to (1) identify riparian areas needing protection or enhancement; (2) provide agencies and organizations with state-of-the-art riparian revegetation and management techniques; (3) pool organizational efforts for riparian revegetation projects; (4) recognize and assist agency and organization efforts to enhance, rehabilitate, protect and manage Arizona riparian areas for the most appropriate uses; and (5) support agency and organizational efforts to acquire, preserve, and manage the best riparian systems in Arizona (e.g., San Pedro). These objectives would be met by (1) compiling unpublished and published information on revegetation and management techniques; (2) developing an annotated bibliography of revegetation techniques; (3) developing a management "cookbook" on how to revegetate riparian areas; (4) identifying a compendium of mitigation efforts; (5) assembling and reviewing all agency and organizational riparian policies to determine specific agency direction; and (6) identifying and approaching potential sources for funding and logistical support.

Education Committee (Tanna Baldwin, Chair, Arizona Association for Learning In and About the Environment, Arizona State Parks, 1624 W. Adams, Phoenix, AZ 85007)

The primary goal of this Committee is to disseminate information to the public on the values of riparian systems and on the best management techniques to conserve these resources. This objective can be accomplished through a variety of media including slide shows, video programs, interpretive nature trails, and educational pamphlets. A slide show is presently being developed and several model video programs are being reviewed. Environmental educators throughout the state are being asked to present material to classrooms on the values of riparian systems.

Policy Committee (Andy Laurenzi, Chair, Nature Conservancy, 3750 N. Country Club, #34, Tucson, AZ 85716)

This Committee did not meet in Phoenix. However, a riparian policy initiative meeting was held in Tucson and is described later in this newsletter. Efforts to develop a committee concerned with policy, legal needs, and commentary on proposed management plans will most likely be based on the Tucson initiative meeting.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING, FEBRUARY 27, 1986

The Steering Committee, to date composed primarily of the Committee Chairs and the Executive Committee, met at Arizona State University on 27 February. The objectives of the meeting were to review and refine the draft of the Constitution and Bylaws, to review and modify the initial committee structure, and to plan for future meetings of the Council.

The updated draft of the Constitution and Bylaws accompanies this Newsletter. It is sent to all interested in riparian the Arizona Riparian Council for comment. Final approval of the Constitution and Bylaws will be at the first annual meeting in the fall.

The active standing Committees are presently placed as an appendix to the Constitution and Bylaws. Until it is determined that these are the appropriate committees, they should not be included in the Bylaws. Again, we should know more about the role of the committees by fall.

The Steering Committee suggested a first annual meeting of the Arizona Riparian Council in October 1986. The date and location are tentatively set for October 3-4 at the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff.

MEETING AT UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA MARCH 19, 1986

Duncan Patten and Chuck Hunter visited with interested people from the Tucson area on the University of Arizona campus at an informal meeting organized by Frank Gregg, Director of the School of Renewable Resources, University of Arizona. Although it was spring vacation for the University of Arizona, the turn out was good and the discussion of directions for the Council was enthusiastic. The Tucson group emphasized the need to become involved with policy, thus one of the committees has been modified to include this. The Tucson group briefly described a riparian policy meeting held in Tucson on 21 November which was the same night as the organizational meeting in Phoenix. Other committees were also discussed and objectives of some committees were broadened. It is obvious that the Council has support from throughout the state. An information meeting will also be planned for the Flagstaff and Colorado River areas.

MEMBERSHIP

The Constitution establishes membership categories. Invitations will be sent to all interested people within the next two months. This will formalize the membership although there are many who are already "members" through their activity and interests. At this time, anyone who is interested in riparian issues in Arizona should consider themselves members of the Arizona Riparian Council until a formal membership is developed.

FUTURE PLANS

A Steering Committee Meeting has been set for April 22, 1986 in Webster Auditorium at the Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix, at 7:30 pm, others interested are invited. Tentative agenda includes a report on committee activities, review of revised committee structure, and initiation of planning the annual meeting.

Introductory meetings are planned for the Flagstaff and Colorado River areas, but the times and places are not yet set. The dates will probably be in May for Flagstaff and June for the Colorado River.

The Annual Meeting of the Arizona Riparian Council has tentatively been set for October 3-4, 1986, at the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff.

For More Information, Contact:

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