

**Workshop on Corridors and Open Space
Arizona State Conference on Trails, October 6, 2007**

Definition of “Open Space:” Since the concept of “Open Space” is not well defined, we need categories to describe it. This concept needs more work, and a common language might be useful.

<u>Developed</u>	<u>Undeveloped</u>
Agricultural	National Area?
Military	
Greenways	<u>could also include, but did not discuss:</u>
Engineered drainage	Wilderness
Municipal parks	Preserves
Non-Motor Corridors	Conservation Areas

1. What is the best thing about open space in Arizona? -- Generally, that Arizona still *has* open spaces and a large amount of “open space” still exists in the state. There is a great diversity of species and landforms. Opportunities still exist to preserve habitat, viewsheds, and biodiversity.

- ▶ “Ant Hill Syndrome:” denser development?
- ▶ Vistas
- ▶ Plant life
- ▶ Species diversity
- ▶ Natural habitat – Again, definitions of “natural” and “habitat” needed!
- ▶ There’s a lot of it (open space in Arizona)

2. Regarding corridors and open space, what is the biggest challenge facing Arizona now? The group’s discussion immediately started with “sprawl,” – then moved to policies and attitudes that generate sprawl. How do we understand the relationship(s) between community understanding of open space and the political will to preserve it? This needs to be translated into municipal codes that reflect the community’s need and desire to maintain open space. This is true on the larger, state-wide scale as well. To accomplish this, we will need a common vision, understanding, and will.

- ▶ Sprawl; fragmented lands and habitat;
- ▶ Connecting communities
- ▶ State Trust lands are open to development; public land management limits
- ▶ Political Will – Community Understanding – Community Will
 - ▶ No Common Vision i.e., “develop” vs. “open space”
 - ▶ Municipal codes – old, out-of-date; codes vs. plans
- ▶ What about the water supply?

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3. Regarding corridors and open space, what uses are compatible? The group decided that it is a matter of (1) who is the primary user – wildlife or humans; and (2) that managing the intensity of use is a key consideration here. At low intensity of use, humans and wildlife may be able to coexist; at higher intensities, this becomes unlikely or impossible.

Primary Consideration: Wildlife	Primary Consideration: Humans
Preserve washes	Flood mitigation
Linkages	Air quality
Natural state	Water quality
Refugia	
Large core areas	

In addition to determining who or what the primary stakeholder would be and managing the intensity of use, other factors mentioned included educating and informing users about wise (and ethical) use of open space – informed users would likely have less impact. Finally, timing could be a very important factor in terms of the successful coexistence of wildlife and humans. This would be very dependent upon knowledge of the ecosystem(s) and wildlife in question regarding the human use intended.

4. Regarding corridors and open space, what do we want? And how will we know we've been successful?

What do we want?	How will we know we're successful?
Benefit species	Maintain biodiversity; maintain and enhance habitat
Environmental education	Human impacts lessened; fewer violations and fewer tickets issued
Fiscal – Political will to actively manage	Codification of conservation statutes and ordinances; changes to plans and less water use
More public involvement; reconnect all people with the natural world	Less "germophobia;" kids can ID snakes and other wildlife
Quality recreational opportunities	National park attendance increases
Healthy humans	Obesity statistics decrease
Clean air and water	Direct measurement
Transportation alternatives	More people taking the bus; availability of rail; Commitment to Pedestrian Infrastructure
Distributed alternative energy sources (e.g., housetop PV systems)	Lowered demand on grid?

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5. What are some examples of successes we can refer to or use as a model?

- ▶ Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan <http://www.pima.gov/cmo/sdcp/>
- ▶ Alt. Energy Farms (?)
- ▶ Armory Park Del Sol in Tucson <http://www.armoryparkdelsol.com/>
(commercial website) (want more of these but affordable)
- ▶ Irvine Ranch <http://www.irvinecompany.com/>
- ▶ (Google on "Irvine Ranch California" – lots of sites about this)
- ▶ Boulder (+ and – on this one)
- ▶ Ballot Box
- ▶ City of Phoenix Commitment to open space purchase
<http://phoenix.gov/sustainability/>
- ▶ (North Phoenix Preserve) <http://phoenix.gov/PARKS/hikemain.html> (and others)
- ▶ Cape Area of S. Africa

Some other links that may be of interest:

Dept of Commerce Growing Smarter info:

<http://www.azcommerce.com/CommAsst/GrowSmart/>

MAG's Growing Smarter implementation project:

<http://www.mag.maricopa.gov/project.cms?item=703>

6. Which stakeholders need to be at the table?

- ▶ Tribes
- ▶ Private Landowners
 - ▶ Ranchers and Farmers
- ▶ Youth (see <http://www.cnaturenet.org/>)
- ▶ Education – AZ PTA
- ▶ Business
 - ▶ Industry
 - ▶ Developers
 - ▶ Non-Profits
- ▶ Agency practitioners
- ▶ Elected Officials (All)

7. What are the major obstacles to success?

- ▶ Lack of common vision
- ▶ Lack of common language
- ▶ Out-of-date ordinances/zoning
- ▶ Railroad and mining – antiquated laws governing extractive industries
- ▶ ASLD – uncertainty of lands being sold
- ▶ Increasing land values
- ▶ "Not Diverse" economy based on homebuilding

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8. Who are our “Adversaries?” What will they say?

Adversaries	What will they say?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ ‘Good Ole Boys’ (has +/- aspects)▶ Ourselves – Apathy▶ Education (on State Land issues)▶ AZ PTA (State Land issues)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Housing costs skyrocket▶ Hunting education▶ Someone else▶ I’m okay right now▶ Nimby▶ “Desert is a myth”▶ “It’s a free country”▶ It’s my land

9. What data do we need to make better decisions and to get better support?

- ▶ Community based data

- ▶ What to expect (?)

- ▶ Look at SCORP (Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan):
http://www.pr.state.az.us/partnerships/planning/SCORP_2008_Final.pdf

- ▶ Recreation inventory and analysis (Gov’s Cabinet)

- ▶ Social values / Quality of life

- ▶ Core area size for sustainable biodiversity (connectivity)

- ▶ Use/habitat degradation threshold

- ▶ Intensity level

- ▶ Open space element success?

- ▶ Edge treatments

- ▶ Striking a balance

- ▶ What means to most effectively communicate? What message?

- ▶ Long range data for wildlife viability movement and interaction

- ▶ Ground and surface water – taking impacts

- ▶ Invasive species mapping and effective control

- ▶ Locations - watershed

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10. Implementation: How do we make this happen?

- ▶ Government and Agency
 - ▶ Engage in-office elected officials
 - ▶ Commitment of agencies/gov't to focus on open space, meeting recreational needs

- ▶ Legislation – Regulation
 - ▶ Ordinance changes
 - ▶ Ballots
 - ▶ Motorized regulation/opportunities

- ▶ Education
 - ▶ Land management opportunities in college
 - ▶ Charter schools focused on these issues
 - ▶ Practical as well as theoretical scholars from schools

- ▶ Funding
 - ▶ Broad-based advocacy: unfunded mandates
 - ▶ Capture federal money sources; i.e. through obesity, “No Child Left Inside”
 - ▶ Land & Water Conservation Fund shift priorities to open space/recreation
Business incentives and subsidies
<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/>

- ▶ Engage people
 - ▶ Neighborhood watch; H.O.A.'s as site stewards
 - ▶ Surveys – ask people (to engage them) what they would like to see happen

- ▶ Media involvement and attention
- ▶ Patience and perseverance
- ▶ Retrofits are tough

Other web sites that may be of interest:

ASU Global Institute of Sustainability: <http://sustainability.asu.edu/gios/index.htm>

Sustainability Partnership at ASU:
<http://sustainability.asu.edu/gios/engagement/sustainability-partnership.htm>

CAP-LTER (Central Arizona-Phoenix Long Term Ecological Research:
<http://caplter.asu.edu/>

Draft Pinal County Open Space & Trails Master Plan:
<http://www.co.pinal.az.us/PlanDev/Trails/pdf/DRAFT%20Open%20Space%20&%20Trails%20Master%20Plan.pdf>