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NEXT COPP MEMBER MEETING

February 12, 2001 at 7:00 pm

Legend Trail
Community Center

Guest Speakers

Jan Dolan, Scottsdale City Manager
Carla, Executive Director
McDowell Sonoran Land Trust

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Public Testimony Set for Scottsdale's Preserve Application

Mark Your Calendars and Plan to Attend!

One of the most important preservation meetings in this region's history will be held on Thursday, February 15, 2001, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Desert Canyon Middle School, 10203 East McDowell Mountain Ranch Road.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will hear from Mayor Manross and Carla, Executive Director of the McDowell Sonoran Land Trust about the importance of this hearing, and the importance of a huge turnout and display of public support for our preserve effort.

We call on all our members and other interested citizens to stand up and be counted. Your participation is essential

if we are to convince the State Land Department to approve the City's application to reclassify this land as suitable for conservation.

Parking at the school is limited, so we are urging our members to carpool. If you need transportation to the hearing or wish to participate in carpooling, please call the COPP Hotline at (602)-230-5233 and leave your name and phone number.

Directions to Desert Canyon Middle School: From Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd go north on Thompson Peak Pkwy to McDowell Mountain Ranch Rd. Go east on McDowell Mountain Ranch Rd to the school which will be on your right.

COPP Web Site – Relunched!

The COPP Web Site has been significantly upgraded, and we hope that you will find it to be interesting and easier to use. Keep up to date with the latest information about what is going on in the community. Visit <http://www.coppeak.org> today.

Also, if you want to contact a Board Member, just e-mail. The Board Member's e-mail addresses are listed on the left.

Important Dates to Remember

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| February 6 | City Council hearing on Foothills Academy Use Permit |
| February 12 | COPP Member Meeting |
| February 15 | State Land Department public hearing on Preserve lands |

COPP's mission is to educate residents and hold government officials accountable to the public on any issue that poses a threat to neighborhoods, the environment, and fiscal responsibility.

A Message From Mayor Mary Manross

Preservation - The time to be heard is now!

As I mentioned in the recent State of the City speech, it is time to voice our strong support for preservation.

As you know, in 1995 Scottsdale voters approved a local sales tax increase to fund the acquisition of lands in the McDowell Mountains for preservation. Today, in just five years we have acquired more than 80 percent of the lands originally targeted for preservation in the McDowell Mountains. However, more work needs to be done.

In 1998, Scottsdale voters approved expanding the preserve by 16,600 acres to include not only the McDowell Mountains but also the unique Sonoran Desert. Those 16,600 acres of state trust lands are absolutely critical to our city's future. These lands generally north of Dynamite and Dixileta, and east of Pima to 136th Street are precious open spaces that will link our existing McDowell Sonoran Preserve with the Tonto National Forest and the county's McDowell Mountain Regional Park. We can preserve a complete ecosystem, ensuring that healthy populations of wildlife roam these lands for generations to come.

On the other hand, if those lands develop, they'll literally become another city, bringing in thousands

Legend Trail Community Center directions:

North on Pima Road past Lone Mountain (1.5 miles)

To Legend Trail Parkway on right – then 1.5 miles on right to Community Center.

of new people, pollution, traffic congestion, school over-crowding, and more stress on our resources. Is this something we need – or want? The answer is no!

To achieve our preservation goals – action is needed!

We must mobilize as never before. We must make every effort to acquire these lands!

Next month is an important step in the process. Our community has applied to the state to have those 16,600 acres of state land designated as conservation lands under the Arizona Preserve Initiative. If we achieve this designation, we will have an opportunity to acquire the land and to determine our own future.

I call upon each of you to make your voice heard on this critical issue. A public hearing with the State Land Department is at 6 p.m. February 15 at Desert Canyon Middle School. Officials from the State Land Department will take public testimony on whether or not the 16,600 acres of state lands in northern Scottsdale will be reclassified as "suitable for conservation".

Please join me and voice your support for preservation at this important meeting!

Your support is critical! Stand up and be counted! Let's work together and seize this dream!

Together we can achieve our goals and leave a legacy of preservation for generations to come.

Thank You

Mary Manross, Mayor
City of Scottsdale

Do You Want to Help Save Our Desert?

The majority of land left to protect for the planned McDowell Sonoran Preserve is state trust land, which by law must be auctioned to the highest bidder – which is usually development interests. Scottsdale has applied to have these 16,600 acres of state lands in northern Scottsdale reclassified under the Arizona Preserve Initiative (API) process as "suitable for conservation" and then auctioned as such. A key part of the API reclassification process is the ONE public hearing where State Land Department officials take testimony on reclassifying the land.

Thursday, February 15, 2001 at 6:00 pm
Desert Canyon Middle School (cafeteria)
10203 E McDowell Mountain Ranch Rd.
Scottsdale

You do not have to speak if you attend (but it would be helpful) however your presence will be CRITICAL. We need a huge crowd to get the attention of the media and – most importantly – send a message to the State Land Department and the Governor (who appoints the State Land Commissioner) that all of the 16,600 acres should be reclassified. A decision will NOT be made that evening – so we need to make an impression that is not easily forgotten as the process goes forward!

Some key "TALKING POINTS" are:

- As noted in the reclassification criteria, the State Land Commissioner must determine why the API petition is in the "best interest of the Trust". The beneficiaries of the state Trust are mainly the public schools, however under the current system very little money actually goes to them from the sale of state lands - it instead goes into a "permanent fund" held in trust for

(see "Save Our Desert" on page 3)

Save Our Desert *(continued from previous page)*

the schools. But they (and some would say therefore –we- as the taxpayers who support the schools) are the legal beneficiaries. So we must show how conserving this land actually helps this broader Trust.

- Stress the REGIONAL benefit wherever possible – it can't look like this is just for "rich, north Scottsdale" which is something many folks in the rest of the state don't like.
- Stress the overall economic benefit – from keeping our tourism industry strong; from the recreational sales tax dollars; to the increase in adjoining property values and therefore the property tax base AND anything else you keen business minds can think of!
- Note that developing this land will put an unbearable burden on our already overcrowded school system (the beneficiaries). If anyone can help get the Cave Creek Unified School District to officially support this reclassification – that would be GREAT!
- Stress the importance of conserving large areas such as this to maintaining

native habitat WITHOUT fragmentation. This connection to the Tonto National Forest is critical for healthy wildlife movement/populations.

- How this is critical to completing the full McDowell Sonoran Preserve vision – which has broad community support as evidenced in 1998 when 69% of Scottsdale residents voted to expand the Preserve to include these 16,600 acres.
- Teachers/students who can come and talk about how having this natural classroom to learn from in the future is an immeasurable asset to them, the beneficiaries.
- Following that, talking about the importance of this area for future scientific research and habitat restoration projects –especially as the rest of the Valley is built upon.
- Stress the long history of public recreational access (trails) in this area and how it will disappear if these lands are developed. BE SURE to note that this passive recreation (equestrian, hiking, mountain biking, climbing, etc) can be compatible with conservation.

- Note the need to protect archaeological and historic sites in the area.
- Note the unique geologic features in the Granite Mountain area.
- Note how developing this area will negatively impact the entire floodplain.
- Stress the importance of regional open space systems to maintaining the quality of life for us all!!

Most of all – talk about what is in your heart when it comes to saving this land. If everyone gets up and runs through the same points, it doesn't have as much power as taking the items you can relate to and sincerely making your case. There is no set time limit, however state staff has said if there is a large crowd they will ask folks to keep it to 3 –5 minutes each. So please come prepared for that.

Your Voice Counts! This is your chance to speak for the land!

By Carla, Executive Director
McDowell Sonoran Land Trust

The Desert Greenbelt is History

By a vote of 7 - 0 the City Council voted to terminate the Desert Greenbelt project. Thanks to the hundreds of letters, e-mails, faxes and member turnout at various hearings, the Mayor and Council members finally heeded the will of the residents and decided the project was ill-conceived and too costly to go forward as planned.

Instead, the Council agreed to reexamine localized neighborhood areas that may be subject to extreme flooding to see if much scaled down and less costly measures can mitigate the problem. This is what COPP had recommended to the Council and we were obviously pleased with the outcome.

While the hearing was solely focused on the Desert Greenbelt, it was, perhaps, a watershed event that may mark a decided turn in the

direction of city governance. In the past, we were all frustrated by an administration that pretended to listen, but had already made up its mind on the subject at hand. Growth oriented decisions were paramount and supported much of what was legislated at City Hall.

What we witnessed on January 9th, was a classic example of citizen participation in government, but more importantly, a City Council clearly demonstrating that the residents of Scottsdale really count in the process.

It's too early to say that all is well and that civic organizations like COPP can relax, but it certainly bodes well for the future.

This feeling was further reinforced when the Mayor gave her State of City message a day later. In that speech,

Mayor Manross acknowledged that, in retrospect, the unbridled rate of growth of the past, was not a good idea and that we must manage the future with greater care and foresight. She was equally concerned about the preservation of land in the north and asked all residents to support this important objective. Mayor Manross also recognized the wisdom and need for citizen participation in the legislative process to avoid unnecessary conflict with decisions that affect all of us who live in Scottsdale.

Not a bad two days. Let us hope that this feeling of goodwill and the expectation of a developing representative government will continue.

The Board of Directors



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**Are you a current member of COPP? Please renew promptly to show your support.
 Tell your friends and neighbors to join. Membership is still only \$50.**

COPP is a volunteer organization that serves the Scottsdale community. To maintain a high level of communications with our members through our monthly newsletter, our web site and, from time to time, by engaging outside professional services, we need your contribution. Basic Memberships are \$50 per family; additional contributions are greatly appreciated.

Enclosed is my check (payable to COPP) for \$ _____ for: New Membership Renewal
 Family (\$50) Additional Contribution (Please be generous)

Name _____ Neighborhood association (if any) _____
 Address _____ Where do you vote? _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Email _____
 Phone () _____ Fax (dedicated lines only, please) () _____

Summer address, if different from above:
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Dates _____ Phone () _____

Make checks payable to COPP and mail to 8912 E. Pinnacle Peak Road, PMB 275, Scottsdale, AZ 85255.

**Questions? Need information or a speaker for your association? Changes to your address/phone/fax/email?
 Keep us updated so we can keep you updated!
 602-230-5233 • www.COPPeak.org • COPPeak@coppeak.org**

COPP is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(4), civic organization. Contributions are not tax deductible as a charitable expense.