

Volume 9, Number 2

Arizona

Summer 2000

Conservation Voter



Habitat Fund Volunteers plant grass seedlings on the BANWR

INSIDE

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- 3 * Legislative Considerations
- 5 * Citizens Growth Management Initiative
- 6 * CGM Files Suit Against Legislature
No on Proposition 100
- 8 * Court Upholds Clean Election Law
Ecosystem Restoration - SW Forests
- 10 * Forum 2000 - Sonoran Desert
Protection Event
- 11 * Public Service of New Mexico
Meets Resistance in Arizona
- 12 * News From the Habitat Fund 

**WORK TO ELECT
A PRO-ENVIRONMENT CANDIDATE**

Arizona League of
Conservation Voters
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Tucson, AZ 85717

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Dear Member:

As we approach another election season, the importance of ensuring the success of pro-environment candidates continues to increase. Open space continues to decrease to make room for sprawl, making farsighted elected officials the last barrier between what remains of our natural heritage and unfettered, destructive development.


When we fully understand that elected officials make ALL the rules under which natural systems exist, we begin to appreciate the connection between "politicians" and those irreplaceable, natural areas we love. Add to this, the quality of the air we breath and water we drink and it should not surprise any candidate why so many voters find their position on "the environment" of paramount concern when deciding which candidate to vote for.

To those of us who value wild places and the life forms that live there, each succeeding election becomes more critical in light of what has been lost in the preceeding interim between elections.

At the AZLCV we continue to work for the election of pro-environment candidates and for pro-environmental legislation. The latter has little chance without the success of the former.

Your financial support, as always, is both necessary and valued. However, without your participation, for example, calls to legislators concerning pending bills, or staffing a pro-environment candidate's phone bank, the environmental integrity we all seek may not be realized. Therefore, we ask that you consider budgeting more of your time to work for a pro-environment outcome. There is no better time than at the beginning of the campaign season, to get to know a pro-environment candidate and contribute your time to ensure their election.

Sincerely,



Bob Beatson
Director

ARIZONA CONSERVATION VOTER

The *Arizona Conservation Voter* is the new sister of the **Arizona League of Conservation Voters**. The *Arizona Conservation Voter* is published four times annually: January, April, July, and October. Entire contents are copyrighted, but articles may be reprinted provided credit is given to authors and the AZLCV. The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the AZLCV or its staff or Board of Directors.

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Arizona House of Representatives					2000
	HCM2003	2610	1319	1508	Environment Voting Score
Allen R-28	-	-	+	-	47
Anderson R-29	-	-	-	-	0
Avelar D-23	+	+	+	+	71
Binder R-1	-	-	+	-	59
Blewster R-1	-	-	-	-	0
Brimhall R-4	-	-	+	-	5
Brotherton D-20	+	+	+	+	100
Burns R-17	-	-	+	-	5
Cardamone D-11	+	+	+	+	100
Carpenter R-19	-	-	+	-	12
Carruthers R-5	+	-	+	-	24
Chevront D-25	+	+	+	+	100
Clark D-7	+	+	+	+	100
Cooley R-21	-	-	+	-	5
Daniels R-6	-	-	+	-	5
Dunbar R-13	-	-	+	+	50
Flake R-4	-	-	+	nv	6
Foster D-20	+	-	-	+	82
Gardner, M. R-27	-	-	nv	nv	0
Gardner, W. R-29	-	-	+	+	21
Gerard R-18	-	-	+	nv	59
Gleason R-15	-	-	+	-	7
Gonzales D-10	+	+	+	+	100
Gordon R-3	-	-	+	-	5
Gray R-16	-	-	+	-	5
Griffin R-8	-	-	-	-	0
Groscost R-30	-	-	+	-	5
Hart R-2	-	-	+	-	5
Hatch-Miller 26	-	+	+	+	68
Horne R-24	-	-	+	-	35
Horton D-14	+	+	-	-	71
Huffman R-12	-	-	+	-	39
Jarrett R-21	-	-	+	-	5
Johnson R-30	-	-	-	-	0
Knaperek R-27	-	-	+	nv	6
Kyle R-6	+	-	+	+	68
Landrum D-23	+	+	+	+	100
Laughter D-3	-	-	+	-	12
Leff R-24	-	-	+	-	47
Loredo D-22	+	+	+	+	100
Maiorana D-8	-	-	+	-	12
Marsh R-28	-	-	-	-	0
May R-26	-	-	+	-	50
McGibbon R-9	-	-	-	-	0
McGrath R-17	-	-	-	-	0
McLendon D-5	+	-	-	-	29
Miranda D-22	+	+	+	+	100
Nichols D-13	-	+	+	+	88
Norris D-11	nv	+	-	+	93
Overton R-15	-	nv	-	-	0
Pickens D-14	+	+	+	+	91
Preble R-9	-	-	+	-	35
Rios D-7	+	+	-	-	79
Schottel R-12	-	-	+	-	5
Valadez D-10	+	+	+	+	100
Verkamp R-2	+	-	+	+	83
Voss R-19	+	-	-	-	24
Weason D-25	+	nv	-	+	94
Weiers R-16	-	-	-	-	0
Wong R-18	-	-	+	-	6

+ Indicates a pro-environment vote

- Indicates an anti-environment vote

nv Absence (no vote recorded)

EXC Excused absence (no vote recorded)

LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

To the left you will find votes recorded for bills not included in the Spring issue and an environmental voting score for the whole session. While the bills whose votes are recorded here were summarized in the Spring issue, we repeat them below and any updates concerning them, for your convenience.

The environmental voting scores reported to the left are for all bills reported on, in both this and the Spring issue. The procedure used to determine the environmental voting scores for legislators was as follows: A total of 8 bills (3 Senate bills and 5 House bills) were ranked in order of potential environmental impact on a scale of 1-10 (a rank of 10 being of most significant potential impact). All votes on bills used to determine a legislator's environmental score were reported in either the Spring issue or the current issue of the *Arizona Conservation Voter*. A record indicating an absence (not voting) was ignored for purposes of scoring. To arrive at a raw score, ranks were added together for all bills on which a legislator voted pro-environment. The raw score was then divided by the total number possible (34 in both the House and the Senate) resulting in a percentage (0-100%). A score of "100" is the best environmental score possible. Conversely, a score of "0" is abysmal. The ranks assigned to the bills used to compute the environmental scores are available on request.

The determination of rank for each bill is, admittedly, subjective. We believe this scoring pro-

see *Legislature* page 4...

Arizona Senate					2000 environment voting score
	HCM2003	2610	1319	1508	
Aguirre D-23	+	+	+	+	62
Arzberger D-8	-	+	-	-	12
Bee R-9	-	-	-	-	0
Bennett R-1	-	-	+	-	6
Bowers R-21	-	-	+	-	6
Brown D-4	-	+	+	-	26
Bundgaard R-19	-	nv	-	-	0
Burns R-17	-	-	-	-	0
Cirillo R-15	-	-	+	-	6
Cummiskey D-25	+	+	+	+	100
Cunningham D-13	+	+	+	+	100
Day R-12	+	-	-	-	68
Freestone R-30	-	-	-	+	16
Gnant R-28	+	-	-	-	47
Grace R-24	nv	-	+	-	50
Guenther D-5	-	-	+	-	6
Hamilton R-16	-	-	+	-	6
Hartley D-20	+	+	+	+	100
Huppenthal R-6	-	-	+	-	6
Jackson D-3	-	+	+	+	44
Lopez D-22	+	+	-	+	94
Mitchell D-27	+	+	+	+	100
Petersen R-29	-	-	+	-	6
Richardson D-11	+	+	+	+	100
Rios D-7	+	+	-	-	79
Smith R-26	-	-	+	-	15
Solomon D-14	+	+	-	-	79
Soltero D-10	+	+	+	-	76
Spitzer R-18	-	-	+	-	6
Wettaw R-2	-	-	+	-	44

... Legislature continued

cedure is justified because it most accurately reflects the importance each legislator attaches to the overall issue of environmental health in Arizona. As always, bill numbers that begin with "1" as in 1319, originated in the Senate and those beginning with a "2" as in 2610, originated in the House.

BILL UPDATES

HCM2003 This is a memorial asking the President, Secretary of the Interior and Congress to take action to prevent the designation of any additional National Monuments or Forest Service roadless areas in Arizona without "full public participation" and an express act of Congress. It ignores the fact that Interior Secretary Babbitt held several open, public meetings in Arizona prior to designating Agua Fria and Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monuments. Arizonans had plenty of opportunity to comment on the proposed designations, but when you're not in favor of an action it is convenient to allege that the public had no chance to weigh in. Perhaps that's the rub, the public did weigh in approving the designations, but the state's powerful elected officials were not able to prevail and derail the monuments - "sour grapes"? Since our last newsletter

(and the passage of HCM2003) Secretary Babbitt recommended, and President Clinton declared, a new monument in Arizona, the Ironwoods National Monument.

2610 Refers to chemical contaminants in Arizona's surface waters. This bill would require ADEQ (Arizona Department of Environmental Quality) to satisfy additional constraints in order to establish total maximum daily loads (TMDL's) for contaminating chemicals in Arizona's surface waters. Perhaps the intention is to slow the process down. Some waters have been waiting a decade for these guidelines, with a slower process it will mean Arizona's waters will remain polluted for a longer period of time. This bill contradicts the purpose and intentions of the Clean Water Act which requires the states to do a TMDL analysis on impaired waters. The bill sets up a 15 year schedule for establishing TMDL's for Arizona's impaired waters. The House passed this anti-environment bill 42-16 and the Senate 16-13. Once again, the Governor, making some of us long for the days of Fife Symington, signed it!

1319 The bill, as passed, would require a one-cent tax on gas to fund the clean-up of underground storage tanks. The House passed the bill 43-16 and the Senate 20-10. Just when you think they've finally done something right, along comes the Governor and, yup, she vetoed it.

Her logic seems to be a transparent attempt to curry favor with the public who face higher gas prices of recent. Who wants to pay even more for gas? But, if the alternative is water contaminated with petroleum, I'll gladly pay the additional penny a gallon. Instead of preventing this additional funding and blaming the penny per gallon it would cost, why not put the blame where it lies, with OPEC and their get rich on Americans scheme. Let's pay the penny! It doesn't go to OPEC, it comes back to us!

see Legislature page 11...

CITIZENS GROWTH MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE PROPOSITION 202

By **Keith Bagwell**, Southern Arizona Coordinator, Citizens Growth Management Initiative Campaign.

Arizona voters will be able to halt runaway urban growth in November after volunteers wheeled 50 boxes of Citizens' Growth management Initiative petitions into the Secretary of State's seventh-floor office on June 26. On the petitions were nearly 162,000 signatures of registered Arizona voters — far more than the 101,762 valid signatures needed to put the anti-sprawl measure on the November ballot. Approval of ballot status from Secretary of State Betsey Bayless is expected.

The election campaign is underway and should reach a fever pitch before voters cast ballots. Developers, bankers and pro-sprawl real estate brokers plan to spend more than \$3.5 million trying to defeat the citizens initiative. Supporters will try to raise one-seventh of the developers' minimum to refute their false and misleading claims about the initiative. **Contributions go to: Citizens' for Growth Management, P.O. Box 22, Phoenix, AZ 85001.** The grass-roots campaign relies heavily on volunteers to help with mailings, leafleting, fundraising coffees and other events, and by spreading the initiative message by word of mouth.

The initiative requires city, town and county voters to adopt growth-management plans, with clearly defined boundary lines, for cities and towns of 2,500 or more, by Jan. 1, 2003. Beyond the lines, rezoning and provision of new urban services are banned. The measure requires planning departments to work with local citizens to develop growth-plan proposals. They go to public hearings before voters have a final say on plans at the ballot box. Major changes must go back to voters for approval, or rejection. Developers, not taxpayers, will begin to pay the full cost in impact fees of public facilities — parks, police and fire stations, schools, water and sewer lines, and streets — required to serve their subdivisions.

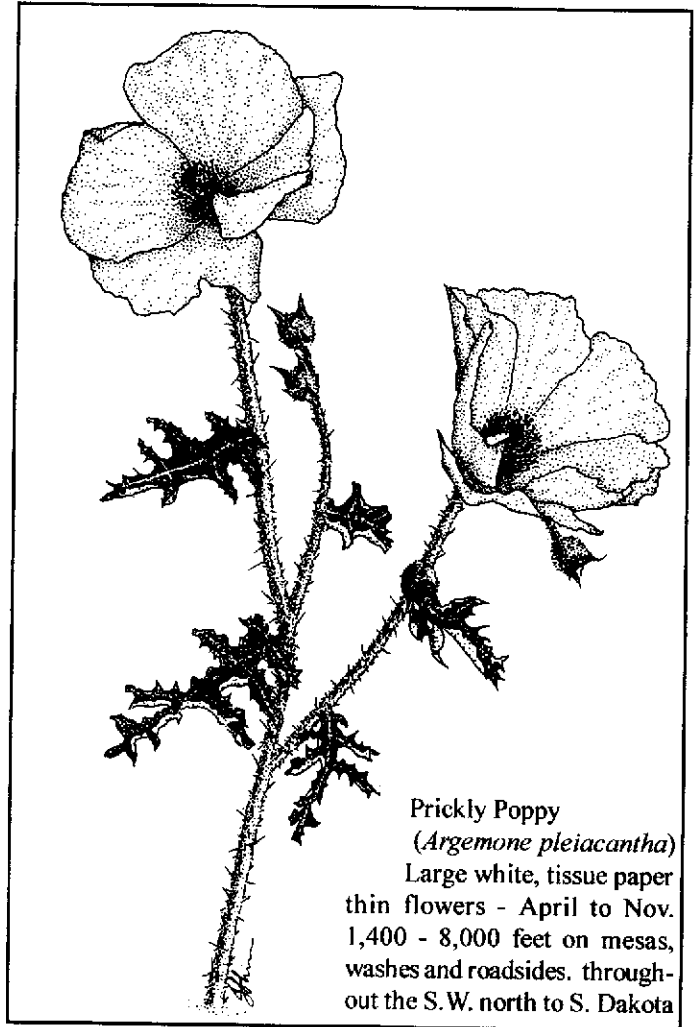
The plan will set aside 10 percent of the land within growth boundaries for fee waivers. Impact fees are lowest just outside the waiver areas and highest the farthest away from them. There will be plenty of places to build as the plans must allow for 10 years of growth. Inside Tucson's city limits, 45.15 percent of the land is vacant.

Growth-management plans will: address air and water quality issues; ensure water supplies are sufficient for new growth; protect neighborhoods and sensitive areas; and provide for affordable housing. Citizens, as well as the state Attorney General, can file lawsuits against cities, towns and counties if they refuse to comply with this law. Developers claim the enforcement provision will result in growth-halting lawsuits, but a similar allowance in state environmental law from 1986 to 1997 resulted in just three lawsuits. Who wants a law that cannot be enforced?

Developers are silent on how many lawsuits they might file under a 2000 law of the Legislature and Gov. Jane Hull allowing impact fees that recover a "fair share" of the costs of public facilities for their developments. The law does not define "fair share" and does not say which facilities qualify for its impact fees and which do not — open invitations to developer lawsuits against any city or town trying to set such fees. Hull and her legislative allies also tried to confuse the issue with a referendum they put on the November ballot. But their proposed constitutional amendment, a cumbersome program that could preserve at most 3 percent of Arizona's 9 million acres of state trust land, does not conflict with the Citizens' Growth Management Initiative.

Only the growth-management initiative gives local voters tools to shape their cities and towns, and to protect their scenic natural heritage.

For more information contact Keith Bagwell at: 738 N. 5th Ave., Suite 214, Tucson, AZ 85705. Ph: (520) 620-6401.



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Large white, tissue paper
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washes and roadsides. through-
out the S.W. north to S. Dakota

CITIZENS GROWTH MANAGEMENT FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST LEGISLATURE FOR DEVELOPER-FRIENDLY ANALYSIS OF ANTI-SPRAWL INITIATIVE

By **Keith Bagwell**, *Southern Arizona Coordinator, Citizens Growth Management Campaign*

Citizens for Growth Management filed a lawsuit July 14 against the legislature for its developer-friendly analysis of the anti-sprawl initiative. The Legislative Council, a 14-legislator body, adopted an analysis of the Citizens Growth Management Initiative that developer attorney Rebecca Pieroni suggested July 6 for the publicity pamphlet of the November election. Pieroni speaks at public forums against the initiative on behalf of the Central Arizona Home Builders Association. "It's business as usual at the Arizona Legislature," said Lila Schwartz, Citizens for Growth Management chairwoman. "The Legislature allowed developers to hijack the process."

State law requires the Legislative Council to give voters an "impartial" analysis of initiatives in the publicity pamphlets for election ballots. Council employees drafted a suggested analysis they circulated to interested parties. Citizens for Growth

Management, a coalition of more than 40 Arizona public interest and environmental organizations, filed proposed amendments to the draft language and spoke for the changes at a July 6 public hearing. "The Changes we suggested were mainly editorial in nature," said Joy Herr-Cardillo, a Citizens for Growth Management attorney. But Pieroni brought a complete rewrite of the analysis to the hearing, which no one formally had seen before, and the council adopted it in full without changes, Herr-Cardillo said. "We were appalled," she added.

Signatures of nearly 162,000 registered Arizona voters should put the citizens initiative on the November ballot. Only 101,762 valid signatures are needed. County recorders are checking signature validity.

The initiative lets local voters approve urban growth management

plans, after public hearings that citizens help prepare for Arizona cities and towns of at least 2,500 residents. The plans must have growth boundaries. The proposed law also requires developers, not taxpayers, to pay the full cost for public facilities — schools, parks, police and fire stations, water and sewer lines, and streets — needed to serve their developments.

The Legislative Council's analysis of the initiative ballyhoos the Legislature's weak, developer-supported alternative for a full paragraph before beginning to analyze the initiative in a second paragraph. The Legislative Council's nine-paragraph analysis never tells voters the initiative requires developers to pay the full cost of public facilities needed to serve their developments.

"This shows why we need the initiative — to put voters, not developers, in the driver's seat when it comes to growth management," said Sandy Bahr of the Citizens for Growth Management steering committee.

PROP 100 - NO FRIEND OF OPEN SPACE FOR ARIZONA

By **Jennifer McDonald**, *AZLCV staff*

The 44th Legislature and Gov. Jane D. Hull are looking to the voters to change the Arizona State Constitution this November. Designed by the folks at the State Legislature, Prop 100, the referendum part of Growing Smarter Plus, is a proposed constitutional amendment changing the state trust land provisions of the Arizona State Constitution. It is a step in the wrong direction for Arizona, making it much more difficult to manage our state's growth and protect important state trust land. Prop 100 does not provide a clear and meaningful vision for open space protection.

Created by Gov. Hull, the Growing Smarter Commission, a panel of concerned citizens representing many different interest groups, dedicated a great deal of time to the issue of conserving state trust lands. In the end, three critical recommendations were made that would help Arizona better manage growth and protect open space. These were to provide counties meaningful tools for managing costly, unregulated subdivisions; create and fund a statewide voluntary program to prevent development of private property that the owner wishes to protect; and protect state trust lands with high conservation values. The legislature ignored or changed each of the three important recommendations in passing Grow-

ing Smarter Plus. What we now have on the ballot in November is not a referendum containing growth control measures. Prop 100 is a proposed constitutional amendment changing the state trust land provisions of the Arizona State Constitution. The two major proposed changes are 1) the creation of the "Arizona Conservation Reserve" (ACR) which will set aside no more than 3 percent of state land for conservation and 2) the authorization of land exchanges between government entities.

Arizona has 9.3 million acres of state trust lands. Prop 100 imposes a three percent cap (a maximum of 279,000 acres) on state trust lands that could be protected - EVER. This leaves 97% of our state trust lands open for development. Even worse, a vast majority of the land allowed under the three percent cap is limited mainly to streambeds and

"Prop 100 does not provide a clear and meaningful vision for open space protection."

mountaintops; land that is not suitable for development anyway. The ACR has included immediate protection for a small portion (70,000 acres) of state trust lands; however, the criteria used to select these and other lands for inclusion in the ACR does not allow meaningful open space conservation.

For example, if Prop 100 passes in November, Rogers Lake in Coconino county will be one of the first state trust lands set aside for conservation. However, if you look at the State Land Department map you will see that no land other than the actual lake itself is designated for protection. (Even then, portions of the lake fall outside the protected boundaries) No land around the lake is included. This means that development can occur right up to the water's edge and completely surround the lake.

Under Prop 100, the significance and importance of open space encircling critical habitats is completely ignored. Protecting one small body of water, without including the habitat around it is a frivolous and weak attempt at habitat conservation. This patchwork approach to conservation leaves the surrounding lands needed for sustainable habitat and wildlife corridors completely unprotected.

A three percent cap will also cause competition and conflict between counties. Because only 279,000 acres of state trust land, by law, would be available for protection, each county, if the trust land were divided up equally, would be allowed to protect only a mere 19,928 acres. Already, Pima County has identified 400,000 acres in need of protec-

tion under the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and Maricopa County has identified 600,000 acres. If only one third of these lands identified receive protected status, there still would not be room under the three percent cap to protect critical habitat in the remaining 12 counties. Including this three percent cap in the state constitution is not only needlessly insufficient in terms of conservation but it also makes it much more difficult and expensive to change or eliminate the cap later.

As if the three percent cap weren't detrimental enough, the process for conserving state trust lands under Prop 100 would be a huge undertaking. It requires either a 2/3 majority vote of the legislature or a state-wide referendum to set aside state trust lands for conservation. This process will be very expensive and will progress at a snail's pace. There is no guarantee that any acres beyond the original 70,000 will ever receive protection.

Under the Arizona Preserve Initiative, communities, land trusts and others can submit an application to the State Land Department to reclassify certain state trust lands within specific urban boundaries as conservation lands. Under Prop 100 nonprofits with the scientific expertise to identify the trust lands with the greatest conservation values will be restricted from nominating or acquiring lands for protection. They will not be eligible to purchase and/or manage state

"Prop 100 will severely limit our ability to conserve our natural heritage on state trust lands."

trust lands for their conservation values. Only local governments may nominate lands within their jurisdictions. It is estimated that under Prop 100 it would take 4 years to get state trust lands designated as "Arizona Conservation Reserve" lands. During that time, these lands would not be protected against sale to the highest bidder for development.

Prop 100 is not the answer to managing Arizona's runaway growth. It is not even "a step in the right direction". It will severely limit our ability to conserve our natural heritage on state trust lands. It will undermine the existing Arizona Preserve Initiative and create new barriers to keeping state trust lands open and healthy for people and for wildlife. Worst of all, it will change the Arizona State Constitution in a manner that will make it extremely difficult for current and future generations to identify, protect and enjoy state trust lands rich in biodiversity and cultural history.

COURT UPHOLDS CLEAN ELECTION LAW

*By The Arizona Center for Law in
the Public Interest*

On June 16, the Arizona Supreme Court issued its decision upholding Arizona's Clean Elections Law. Arizona voters passed the Clean Elections Law as an initiative in 1998. It establishes a publicly funded campaign finance system for candidates who agree to limit their campaign spending. The Act also reduces contribution limits for candidates who choose not to participate.

Last year, the Arizona Chamber of Commerce's political committee, VotePAC, filed a lawsuit alleging that the Act violated the Arizona Constitution in numerous respects. The Center intervened in the case on behalf of Arizonans for Clean Elections,

the campaign committee that filed the initiative and promoted its passage in the 1998 election.

In a decision issued earlier this year, Judge Robert Myers of the Maricopa County Superior Court held that the Clean Elections Act violated the Arizona Constitution. He held that assigning the Commission on Appellate Court Appointments the role of screening and recommending slates of candidates for appointment to the Clean Election Commission was an unconstitutional expansion of the Appellate Commission's constitutionally prescribed duty to recommend judges for appointment. Judge Myers held that the Appellate Commission's role was so integral to the

idea of a non-partisan Clean Elections Commission that it could not be separated from the rest of the Act. Based on that conclusion, he held that the entire Act passed by the voters was unconstitutional.

Both the Center and the Arizona Attorney General's Office filed petitions for special action with the Arizona Supreme Court seeking to reverse Judge Myers' decision. By a vote of 3-2, the Court agreed with Judge Myers that the Clean Elections Act could not add to the constitutional responsibilities of the Commission. However, the Court held that the screening role for the commission on appellate Court Appointments could be removed from the Act and that individuals otherwise meeting the re-

see Clean Elections page 11...

A CLOSER LOOK AT ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION - SOUTHWEST PONDEROSA PINE

By Taylor McKinnon, Program Associate, Grand Canyon Trust

If a person were charged with the uninviting task of systematically dismantling an ecosystem, they would find no finer example of "how to" than through an examination of the past 130 year history of our Southwestern ponderosa pine forests. The sequence of extraction oriented management that yielded our often dysfunctional forest ecosystems of today couldn't have more accurately targeted keystone ecosystem processes, biologically rich habitats, and trophic linkages upon which all species native to ponderosa pine habitats depend.

The process of degradation began in the late nineteenth century with fire suppression via the removal of native grasses domestic livestock. Native grasses and wildflowers accounted for the vast majority of plant diversity in the ecosystem, and served to regulate tree establishment (and therefore also habitat structure) through competition and facilitating the spread and carry of frequent ground fire. Upon removal of the herbaceous understory came a net reduction in biological diversity, an end to the frequent fire regime, and a subsequent flush of young trees establishing at densities orders of magnitude higher than historic forests. Railroad logging and later modern industrial logging resulted in a 95% reduction of the biologically rich old-growth forest conditions. Fi-

nally, a concurrent rash of species extirpations that included grizzly bear, Mexican-gray wolf and California condor (to name a few) greatly changed the trophic dynamics of the ecosystem. It's no wonder that old-growth ponderosa pine (which once represented up to 70% of some Southwestern ponderosa forests) has been identified as one of the most endangered ecosystems in the nation.

Sadly, today's Southwestern ponderosa forests are characterized by dangerously high fuel loads, greatly reduced structural diversity and biomass, and decreased decomposition and nutrient cycling rates- all indicating decreased over all ecosystem resilience and integrity, and increased susceptibility to catastrophic disturbances (especially large scale, *unnatural* stand-replacing fire).

Yet in the face of adversity there is always opportunity. So pronounced are these dire ecological circumstances that they've led to both a common appreciation for the need for ecological restoration, and several efforts to begin researching the viability of different restoration strategies in Arizona.

Ecological restoration has been defined by the Society for Ecological Restoration as "...the process of assisting the recovery and management of ecological integrity. Ecological integrity includes a critical range of variability in biodiversity, ecological pro-

cesses and structures, regional and historical context, and sustainable habitat.”

There are a few key concepts central to the process of assisting the recovery and management of ecological integrity. First is the premise that restoration of natural systems to a condition consistent with their recent evolutionary past will prevent further degradation, and eventually provide sustaining habitats for native species. The species level significance of this idea is grounded in the concept that species function best in ecological conditions consistent with those in which they evolved and are adapted to. The

“Native grasses and wildflowers accounted for the vast majority of vegetative biological diversity in the ecosystem...”

community level significance of this idea is grounded in the concept that species that have interacted over evolutionary time have developed co-evolved regulatory mechanisms and interdependencies. An understanding of the evolutionary environment is therefore paramount to understanding restoration in a larger temporal framework.

Within the context of contemporary ecological communities, the evolutionary environment is commonly appreciated to be of the last several thousand years. In ponderosa pine forest ecosystems of the Southwest, this time frame generally corresponds to the time since the last glacial event, between 10,000 and 12,000 years ago. Prior to that time, ponderosa pine was virtually absent from the Southwest, becoming more abundant with the ensuing warming and drying over the last 10,000 years.

As one might expect, information derived from past environments is most easily obtained for the most recent periods of time. Our understanding of ponderosa pine forests prior to disturbance is most thorough for the time period immediately predating Euro-American arrival in Arizona. Ecosystem conditions and dynamics prior to disturbance serve as “reference conditions,” providing the foundation upon which ecological restoration goals and objectives are established.

Reference conditions for ponderosa pine forests are based upon three primary streams of information: retrospective ecological analysis, historical records, and analogous ecosystems (similar, often localized ecosystems that have escaped disturbance). These analyses cumulatively describe reference conditions within a “natural range of variability.”

Moving from reference conditions to “on the ground” ecological restoration is a value-laden process that is fraught with uncertainty and easily criticized. There are innumerable variables to consider: tree density and spatial distributions, operational meth-

ods, fire reintroduction and smoke, understory response, wildlife response, exotic species, spatial and temporal dynamics, etc. Interpretation of reference conditions and the rate at which restoration is implemented continues to be a topic of significant discussion and experimentation. Nonetheless, a key component of restoration must be to proceed with the best scientific information at hand, in an experimental context that, by definition, openly admits uncertainty of outcome. It is quite reasonable to adopt an approach in which the necessity of trying restoration experiments is accepted and the experiments are conducted at a scale sufficient to answer key questions.

To date, ecological restoration efforts in Southwestern ponderosa pine ecosystems have been based on thorough retrospective ecological analyses, employing dendrochronological analyses of tree rings, fire scars, stand structures, analysis of predisturbance spatial tree patterns, paleoecology and climatology to determine regional and site specific reference conditions. These techniques have provided considerable insights into the recent evolutionary structure and function of ponderosa ecosystems. Using these reference conditions, research efforts employing episodic fire reintroduction, small tree thinning, and in some cases native grass seeding have begun to answer some of the many questions that still need to be answered. The research employs various combinations and intensities to assist the recovery and management of ecological integrity.

“It’s no wonder that old-growth ponderosa pine...has been identified as one of the most endangered ecosystems in the nation.”

The future of restoration efforts will ultimately depend upon our commitment as a society and as a conservation community to solution-based conservation efforts. Efforts like the Grand Canyon Forests Partnership (www.gcfp.org) are working to provide a venue for research of diverse restoration strategies. Without such information, the preponderance of evidence suggests that doing nothing will result in further ecosystem degradation and destruction. Southwestern ponderosa pine ecosystems are structurally, functionally, and compositionally far outside the historic, natural range of variability, and do not reflect the evolutionary environment for the host of species who, in time have developed co-evolved interdependencies and regulatory mechanisms that allow them to function as relatively self-regulating ecological systems.

We have a choice to either begin down the hopeful and vulnerable path towards solutions—advocating with humility for well-researched, well-informed ecological restoration experimentation, or we can do nothing - for whatever reason, and witness paramount ecological losses in our lifetimes.

FORUM 2000

COALITION FOR SONORAN DESERT PROTECTION

On October 20-21, 2000, The Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection (CSDP) will be sponsoring a public education forum on the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan process currently being undertaken by Pima County. This forum will provide the general public and activists with basic information about the process and steps everyone can take to contribute to the plan's success. Your participation in this forum is critical in showing support for a science-based process, and in your knowledgeable participation in protecting our desert.

The CSDP was formed in 1997, and it's mission is to advocate for the strongest protection possible for the Sonoran Desert. This year the Coalition was instrumental in the establishment of the Ironwood Forest National Monument northwest of Tucson.

Dates: Friday, Oct. 20 Evening reception (location and time to be announced). Saturday, Oct. 21 Speakers at Duvall Auditorium Arizona University Medical Center.

8:30 AM—3:00 PM (refreshments provided).

Our agenda will consist of short and basic introductions to pertinent scientific, legal and economic/social issues, with plenty of time for questions from the audience. Speakers will represent various western environmental organizations which have been undergoing similar habitat conservation plan processes. The tentative agenda is as follows:

- * Principles of Conservation Biology
- * Introduction to the Endangered Species Act
- * Critical Habitat and Local Example of Recovery Plan (Pygmy Owl)
- * US Fish and Wildlife Service Policies and Procedures
- * Habitat Conservation Plans and Lessons Learned from Regional Habitat Conservation Planning
- * Links Between Conservation and Thriving Economies
- * Land Conservation Options Under Regional Habitat Conservation Plans
- * How You Can Make a Difference



Forum 2000 Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection REGISTRATION FORM

Please return this form to: CSDP, c/o Tucson Audubon Society, 300 East University Blvd #120, Tucson, AZ, 85705.
Questions? Please call April at 520-326-7435.

Please bring a brown bag lunch or plan to purchase a lunch at the UMC cafeteria or a nearby restaurant and bring it back to the auditorium.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ (day) _____ (evening)

E-mail address _____

I will attend the Saturday, October 21 forum _____

I will attend the Friday, October 20 evening reception _____

Please return by October 14! Thank you!

...Clean Elections continued

quirements for appointment to the Clean Elections Commission could simply be appointed directly by the elected officials designated in the Act for that purpose. The Supreme Court simply severed the offending portions of the Act relating to the Commission on Appellate Court Appointments with the result that all the other provisions of the Clean Elections Act remain in full force.

This is a huge victory for the people of Arizona who passed the Clean Elections Act in 1998. The major purpose of the Clean Elections Act is to reduce the influence that privately contributed money has on the outcome of elections. The idea that the entire Act could be invalidated based on the unconstitutionality of a rela-

tively minor provision would frustrate the right of Arizonans to initiate laws.

Now that the Supreme Court has issued its decision, the Clean Elections Act will be in full force and effect for this year's election. However, the Chamber of Commerce has filed another lawsuit in federal court, this time challenging the Act on grounds that were not raised in the state court lawsuit. We're confident the Chamber's federal lawsuit will meet the same fate and that the Clean Elections Act will continue to operate and return control of elections to all Arizonans without regard to how much money they can contribute to a campaign.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW MEXICO MEETS RESISTANCE IN ARIZONA

The controversy continues over the placement of a proposed 345,000 volt transmission line that would carry power from the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station in Phoenix to the Santa Ana Substation in Mexico.

This gigantic powerline would have stations standing 150 feet tall and would require blading thousands of acres of desert for the construction and maintenance of the powerline towers.

Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) has been denied access to land on the Tohono'O'odam Nation and has met opposition from cities and towns in southern Arizona to its other 4 proposed routes. These routes would have run along wildlife refuges, conservation areas or scenic highways.

PNM has proposed 2 new routes. However, these routes are meeting the fierce opposition of local neighborhood groups

because they would cross residential areas. The two newly proposed routes would also border Saguaro National Park, Tucson Mountain Park, and the Ironwood National Monument and run along the right-of-way of the Central Arizona Project (CAP) disrupting CAP wildlife corridors. All eight of the proposed routes have been rejected outright or have met substantial opposition. One would think PNM would take the hint...

If you would like more information on the specific routes that have been proposed, contact the Department of Energy: Ellen Russell, Office of Fossil Energy - FE27, U.S. Dept. of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave. SW, Washington D.C. 20585. Phone: (202) 586-9624. Ellen.Russell@hq.doe.gov

...Legislature continued

2179 A real no-brainer, except for Arizona's Legislature. Before this bill was passed, Arizona required pesticide chemical companies to produce information concerning active ingredients, water solubility, vapor pressure, soil absorption coefficients, and dissipation studies for their pesticides. If criteria for public health was not met in these categories, the pesticide would be placed on a groundwater protection list.

Not so now - this bill would allow chemical companies to sell their pesticides for use over a three year period during which registration information is gathered.

So, it's like a limited license to pollute and poison. Gee, if after three years contamination we find a pesticide to be harmful, we can pull it. How much harm can using it for three years do?

Your House of Representatives passed the bill 44-14 and your Senate passed it 17-12. Yes, Governor Hull signed it.

1508 The "river giveaway" bill. Such rivers as the Big Sandy, Santa Maria, Virgin and Burro Creek are no longer held in public trust by the state. It means that the giant gravel industry can ravage their stream beds for a buck. These are generally perennially flowing streams. How many of those do you think Arizona still has left?

Thanks to the Center for Law in the Public Interest for continuing to challenge this giveaway.

It passed the House 36-20 and the Senate 21-9. The governor signed it - where's Fife Symington when you need him?

Updates and Volunteer Opportunities
with

THE ARIZONA CONSERVATION VOTERS HABITAT FUND

It's been a busy summer for Habitat Fund volunteers, planting native seedlings on the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge (BANWR). All of these were grown in our new greenhouse and greenhouse annex. Hopefully, by the time you receive this, all of our seedlings will be in the ground.

The most time consuming planting project so far involved planting 250 native grass seedlings on a barren site that probably hasn't seen vegetation since anglos introduced cows in Arizona. We planted 50 two-inch pots or grass plugs for each of five species: plains lovegrass, Rothrock grama, sprucetop grama, cane beardgrass and cottontop.

The monsoons have been particularly capricious this summer and not a drop of rain has fallen on these plots since we planted three weeks ago. This means we've had to hand water them several times in order to ensure they become established in their first growing season.

The idea is to make sure the seedlings establish a root system sufficient to tolerate drought conditions over the winter and spring months. When the monsoons begin next summer we'll be able to determine survivorship and which species are most readily transplanted using this protocol. Our goal is to re-establish populations of native grass species where none has grown for many years.

While we have concentrated on grass species this

year, we have also grown several perennial and tree species including: sand verbena, desert cotton, *Mimosa* species, *Senna* species, coral bean, blue palo verde, desert willow, hackberry, whiteball acacia and more!.

Since our last newsletter the Habitat Fund was informed that we received a small National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant to bring an enclosed area into seed production - a seed propagation field. So far volunteers have cleared the enclosure of mesquite and cultivated the soil in preparation for planting this fall.

Speaking of this fall, we will be removing fence on the BANWR as well as planting the seed propagation field. We plan to plant some annual and semi-perennial wildflow-



Volunteers plant grass seedlings in plots on the BANWR

ers whose seed is costly to purchase.

If you can't come out and help, consider making a contribution to the Habitat Fund. Your financial assistance will allow us to continue and grow our ecological restoration projects. We are fast approaching a time where at least one full-time staff member will be needed to maximize our accomplishments and organize our efforts. The results of the Habitat Fund's work are direct and immediate - working to restore the land to a condition that hasn't existed since before the onslaught of cows.

If you want to be added to our volunteer list to be called for upcoming events, give Bob or Jen a call at 622-2819. Volunteers can stay overnight at the El Cazador (north end of the refuge).

I want to support the Arizona Conservation Voters Habitat Fund. I understand that my contribution will be used for the purchase of native trees, grass seed, equipment, equipment maintenance and fuel to restore natural areas in Arizona. contributions to the Habitat Fund **ARE** tax deductible.

\$100	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/>	mail checks to: AZ Conservation Voters Habitat Fund P.O. Box 40154 Tucson, AZ 85717
\$50	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$10	<input type="checkbox"/>	
\$25	<input type="checkbox"/>	other	<input type="checkbox"/>	