

Cienega Creek Watershed Conservation Workshop

December 5 – 6, 2006

The Manning House, 450 W. Paseo Redondo, Tucson, Arizona



Sponsored by:



*Senoita Crossroads
Community Forum*



Las Cienegas Field Trip & Cienega Creek Watershed Conservation Workshop

December 5 - 6, 2006
The Manning House, 450 W. Paseo Redondo, Tucson, AZ

Sponsored by: Arizona Open Land Trust, Sonoran Institute, Arizona Zoological Society, Sky Island Alliance, Sonoita Crossroads Community Forum, and The Trust for Public Land

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Cienega Creek Watershed (CCW) is bounded by the Santa Rita, Whetstone, and Rincon Mountains, and resides within both Santa Cruz County and Pima County, Arizona. The watershed is critical for wildlife movement, has a rich cultural history, is one of Arizona's last intact grasslands, and remains a primary source of recharge for Tucson's groundwater supply. The CCW lies within the 42,000 acre Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (NCA), part of the larger Bureau of Land Management (BLM) National Landscape Conservation System which includes NCA's, National Monuments, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Historic Trails, and Wilderness Study areas.

With the threat of encroaching development from Tucson and other surrounding communities, the initial purpose of the Cienega Creek Watershed Conservation Workshop, held in December of 2006, was to bring together local conservation organizations and environmental agencies with an interest in, or already working in, the watershed, in order to expand and strengthen the perceived need for funding conservation in the area. However, enthusiasm for the workshop quickly grew in the local environmental community to include the attendance of more than 20 conservation organizations and federal, state and local agencies, along with several landowners and community stakeholders. The specific goals were to develop strategies dedicated to conserving the rich biological values of the CCW and raise the importance of protecting the area in the priorities of various agencies so that funding sources could be identified for land acquisition. In addition, the workshop was designed to initially coordinate organizations working in the Watershed, then follow-up with a second workshop providing outreach and education to landowners in the Watershed.

The 3 objectives defined for the Workshop were as follows:

- To identify and agree on priority conservation areas for the Cienega Creek Watershed;
- To identify the necessary partnerships and funding mechanisms to implement conservation acquisitions in the Cienega Creek Watershed;
- To agree on a game plan for pursuing conservation acquisitions in the Cienega Creek Watershed.

By close of the workshop, a list of Action Items was developed, assigning specific tasks to workshop participants and focusing on attracting matching project funds to protect the area. (See Appendix A for *Cienega Creek Watershed Conservation Workshop Action Items*).

Workshop Proceedings

In preparation for the Workshop, the Arizona Open Land Trust and the Sonoran Institute conducted pre-workshop interviews with Workshop registrants. These interviews allowed the sponsors to compile a comprehensive list of topics for discussion, and provided starting points for the majority of the Workshop's facilitated discussion. These interviews provided critical guidance for how the workshop would proceed. (Complete notes from pre-workshop interviews available from the Trust, upon request.)

Common themes of these interview results included:

⇒ The need to strengthen partnerships among conservation organizations and government agencies, and enhance communication/coordination on CCW projects;

⇒ The need to continue to enhance education/and outreach to landowners, and identify willing sellers;

⇒ The need to increase awareness of funding sources for conservation acquisitions among Workshop participants - sources are out there!

⇒ There is a large and diverse variety of stakeholders with interest in the watershed;

⇒ Threats to landscape health: development and habitat fragmentation, groundwater pumping, invasive species, and development of State Trust Lands.

⇒ One major stakeholder group missing from the workshop is landowners; a follow-up meeting specifically addressing landowners was suggested



Photo credit: Vanessa Bechtol

Las Cienegas National Conservation Area

Lastly, interview responses revealed participants' priority conservation areas in the Watershed overlapped in **three geographic areas, two habitat types, and one land use** (see [Appendix B - Merged Priority Area Map](#)):

Geographic area overlap:

1) The north-south linkage between Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, Colossal Cave Mountain Park, and Coronado National Forest Rincon Wilderness in the northern part of the watershed;

Geographic area overlap (continued):

- 2) The east-west linkage from the Santa Rita Mountains to the Whetstone Mountains through Las Cienegas National Conservation Area;
- 3) The north-south linkage from Fort Huachuca and the Babocomari Ranch to Las Cienegas National Conservation Area.

Habitat type overlap:

- 1) Native grasslands; and
- 2) Riparian Areas

Land use type overlap:

- 1) Ranches (particularly the larger ones threatened with subdivision)

Las Cienegas Field Trip

Day One of the two-day Cienega Creek Watershed Conservation Workshop began with a Field Trip. Participants carpooled to the Empire Ranch Headquarters where workshop hosts provided an overview of current conditions and shared results of the pre-workshop interviews.

Following the discussion of pre-Workshop interviews, Karen Simms (Bureau of Land Management, Tucson Field Office), Jeff Williamson (Arizona Zoological Society) and Mac Donaldson (Empire Ranch lessee) introduced the backdrop of Las Cienegas NCA, touching on the history of the establishment of the NCA and critical resource values.

Workshop participants then enjoyed visiting 3 unique locations: 1) Empire Gulch, where the emphasis was on viewing cottonwood-willow riparian forest and native fish habitat; 2) a hilltop with an unbroken vista of desert grasslands and wildlife corridors stretching from the Canelo Hills in the south, to the Rincon Mountains in the north, the Santa Rita Mountains to the west, and to the Whetstone Mountains to the east; and 3) a drive through Sonoita Crossroads to see the evident development pressures.

The Workshop

Day Two of the Workshop included both presentations as well as facilitated discussion and work groups. The morning began with the following presentations, each with group discussion follow-up (Complete workshop presentation and discussion notes available from the Trust, upon request.):

- **David Beaver (BLM - Washington, D.C. Office) & Julie Decker (BLM - Arizona State Office)** – PowerPoint Presentation—*copy available from the Trust upon request*
Summary: Discussion of the Sonoita Valley Acquisition Planning District surrounding Las Cienegas NCA. This District is not currently listed as one of the 44 projects within the BLM that is eligible for Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funding, nor can

the BLM expand its current list, due to lack of additional funding. Also, the District would need to be reclassified as an *Area of Critical Environmental Concern* to be eligible for future LWCF funding, as it is not currently acknowledged by the BLM as having this designation. The BLM Tucson office will be following up on this. Las Cienegas is also not eligible for funds under the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA), due to a clause that states only NCA's created before FLTFA was established are eligible. The California congressional delegation is promoting an amendment to the FLTFA to push back or eliminate the sunset provision of 2010.

- **Ron Ruziska (Arizona State Land Department)**

Summary: To facilitate the questions and answer presentation with the State Land Department, Workshop participants were asked to provide a list of specific questions or issues of interest for the State Land Department prior to the workshop. Questions were compiled anonymously and provided to Ron prior to the Workshop.

Ron began with a brief discussion of State Trust Lands, and then addressed questions on topics such as: land exchanges between the Land Department and other government entities; the Urban Lands Act; density transfers; and the value of development rights. When asked about Land Department plans to develop parts of the CCW, Ron stated the Department has initiated a Conceptual Land Use Plan for the Rincon Valley area, including the area east of the Rincon Valley and north of Interstate 10, all the way east to the Cochise County line. The Department is not planning its land south of Interstate 10 yet.

- **Funding Panel moderated by Michael Patrick (The Trust for Public Land)**

Summary: A group of Workshop participants presented on funding mechanisms and opportunities for land acquisition within the CCW:

Vanessa Bechtol (Arizona Open Land Trust) provided a handout summarizing funding mechanisms for land acquisition and conservation easements. (see [Appendix D](#) for *Funding Mechanisms*, and also see *Land Acquisition and Habitat Protection: Funding Mechanisms for Southern Arizona* booklet, available from the Trust upon request.)

Nicole Fyffe (Pima County) discussed general obligation bonds

Julia Fonseca (Pima County Regional Flood Control District) described the Floodprone Land Acquisition Program (FLAP)

David Harris (The Nature Conservancy) spoke on the Army Compatible Use Buffer program (ACUB)

Joan Scott, Gene Sturla, and Angie Lohse (Arizona Game & Fish Department) described Heritage Funds from the Arizona State Lottery

Doug Duncan (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) discussed the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (Section 6 funds)

Kristen Egen (Natural Resources Conservation Service) described past and future Farm Bill programs, including the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP), the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), and the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP).

Fred McGee (Southeast Arizona Land Trust) gave examples of innovative funding partnerships, including work with FRPP and the Arizona Department of Transportation's (ADOT) scenic easement program.

Breakout Session

Following the lunch break, workshop participants divided into six groups to discuss one of the following six priority conservation targets: **1) Grasslands; 2) Riparian Areas; 3) Working Ranches; 4) North of I-10; 5) East West connection between Whetstones and Santa Ritas; and 6) link to isolated NCA area near Babocomari Ranch.** Each discussion group listed Actions, Timeline, and Funding Needs for each target. (Complete notes from the Breakout Sessions available from the Trust, upon request.) Of the numerous actions that were identified through these six working groups, initiating the planning process with the Arizona State Land Department was among the most frequently identified action in need. It was recommended that workshop participants coordinate their efforts and begin as soon as possible to initiate the planning process for the State Trust land within the Cienega Creek watershed (see [Appendix E](#) for *Resource Values of the Cienega Watershed*).

Closing of Cienega Creek Watershed Conservation Workshop

The Workshop concluded with very positive comments and feedback about moving forward in a unified manner, with improved communications among participants and interested parties (see [Appendix F](#) for *Summary of Post-Workshop Evaluations*). Adding to the significant success, the Workshop resulted in the specific list of action items agreed on by participants and focused on attracting matching funds to protect the area. Lastly, as increasing land preservation in the CCW through acquisition was the ultimate objective, the group agreed that a second workshop, focused on landowner participants and addressing a wider geographic area to include the San Pedro Riparian NCA, would be the next obvious step. The target date for this workshop is early fall of 2007.

APPENDICES

- A. Cienega Creek Watershed Conservation Workshop Action Items**
- B. Merged Priority Map (taken from pre-workshop interviews)**
- C. Summary Matrix (Stakeholders and Roles)**
- D. Funding Mechanisms**
- E. Resource Values of the Cienega Watershed I & II**
- F. Summary of Post-Workshop Evaluations**
- G. Participant Contact Information**

APPENDIX A

Cienega Creek Watershed Conservation Workshop

ACTION ITEMS

Suggested action items gathered from the CCW Conservation Workshop are identified below, along with the organization that volunteered to initiate or carryout the task:

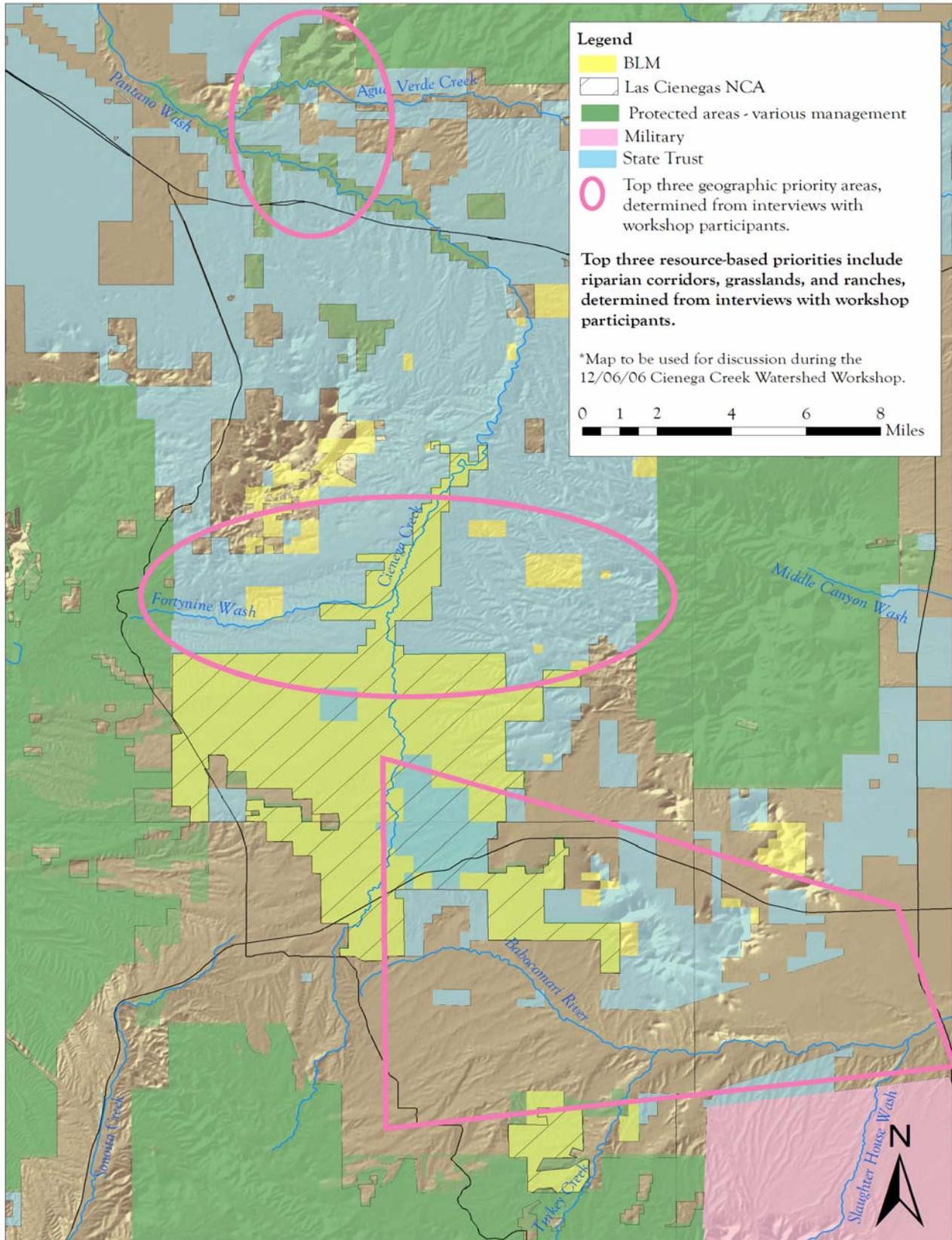
- Advocate for appropriations for the Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Grasslands Reserve Program. Sky Island Alliance is putting together a package for Arizona's Congressional delegation justifying why this is an important program for the region.
- Advocate that more money from NRCS' Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program be allocated to Arizona and that ranches become more competitive for available funding (currently, farms receive most of the funding). The Nature Conservancy will work to advocate for enhanced conservation programs in the 2007/2008 Farm Bill.
- Pima County Flood Control District will continue to pursue protective mechanisms for water resources.
- The Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection and the Arizona Open Land Trust will advocate for another \$500 million in Pima County open space bonds.
- The Sonoita Crossroads Community Forum will coordinate a meeting with landowners in the Cienega Creek Watershed to determine their needs and the tools they need.
- Arizona Zoological Society and the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection will investigate the private and philanthropic sector to assess their ability or capacity to assist in land protection.
- The Trust for Public Land and The Nature Conservancy will advocate for funding programs through the state legislature.
- The Sonoran Institute will coordinate efforts to support full federal funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and an amendment to the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act.
- Bureau of Land Management - Tucson Field Office will work to re-classify the Sonoita Valley Acquisition Planning District as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern.
- Bureau of Land Management, Tucson Field Office and Arizona Office will work on a state-wide land tenure strategy.
- The Nature Conservancy will coordinate approaching the Arizona Department of Transportation Board to advocate reinstatement of the scenic easements project eligibility under the Transportation Enhancement program.
- Santa Cruz County is looking into establishing an open space conservation program.
- The Cienega Corridor Conservation Council and Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership will serve as a forum for strengthening communication among all partners in the Cienega Creek Watershed.
- Cienega Corridor Conservation Council and Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership will work with Pima County to host a follow-up meeting by December 2007.
- Pima County, Cienega Watershed Partnership (CWP), and others will participate in State Land Department planning process

APPENDIX A (con.)

The following Action Items were identified, but a lead organization was not named:

- Advocate for NRCS’s Wetlands Reserve Program funding for Arizona.
- Advocate for full funding for the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund – Section 6 Funds.
- Find out eligibility requirements for the NRCS’ Conservation Security Program and try to get the Cienega Creek Watershed on the list of eligible areas.
- Develop a coordinated strategy for advocacy regarding funding needs.
- Coordinate activities among land trusts (TNC, TPL, SEALT, AOLT, etc.) and identify complementary strengths and appropriate roles
- Land trusts and other conservation groups discuss funding mechanisms to facilitate conservation easements and other preservation mechanisms
- Work with County and State staff to develop tools (such as transfer of development rights and purchase of development rights) to facilitate preservation
- Work with the counties and State to clarify Proposition 207 and develop land use plans and implementation tools
- Begin work with Congressional members and their staff to explore enhancing grassland preservation through existing funding
- Promote legislation to give increased incentives for land conservation
- Identify a “ranch ambassador”
- Study designation of I-10 between SR83 and J6 Road as Scenic Highway. Also look into designation of County maintained Marsh Station Road.
- Pima County and CWP will look into extending the Active Management Area or other State legislation recognizing limitations on water resources and development
- Educate private landowners about the many benefits of private land conservation and the mechanisms involved
- Oppose new interchanges and infrastructure on I-10
- Pull a team together to assess Rosemont Mine impacts

Cienega Creek Conservation Priority Areas



APPENDIX C

STAKEHOLDERS & ROLES SUMMARY MATRIX

Name	Type of Group	Role	Top priority	Key issue(s)
Bureau of Land Management	Federal agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds and manages fee title and easements • Internal process for prioritization • Can actively pursue acquisitions when funding is available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inholdings within the Las Ciene-gas National Conserva-tion Area and Sonoita Valley Ac-quisition Planning District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting BLM lands to other protected lands • State Trust Lands are prominent throughout the Las Cienegas NCA and Sonoita Valley Acquisition Planning District
Fish and Wildlife Service	Federal agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively pursue acquisi-tions only if there is a refuge involved or an approved Habitat Con-servation Plan • Conservation acquisi-tions have been a com-ponent of habitat protec-tion plans for Section 10 permits in some counties and will be for Pima County • Other roles include: Sec-tion 7 consultation for federal agencies to show compliance with Endan-gered Species Act • Serves on the Technical Resource Team for the Rangeland Resource Team for the BLM, gives input to the bio-logical planning process for the lessee and BLM on the NCA • Active with the BLM on fish monitoring on the NCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cienega Creek • Listed species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities presented through Pima County’s Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan • Challenges posed by potential development of State Trust Lands

APPENDIX C (con.) STAKEHOLDERS & ROLES SUMMARY MATRIX

NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
Forest Service (USDA)	Federal agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on available funding, can acquire easements and fee title, particularly for public access purposes Can partner with land trusts to pursue acquisitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the Whetstones and Santa Ritas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public access
National Park Service (U.S. Department of the Interior)	Federal agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative expansion of Saguaro National Park Most National Park Service acquisitions are funded through federal appropriation Can also work with organizations to have them hold properties until money is appropriated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 250 acres immediately south of the Park that are included in the expansion legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threat: development and fragmentation
Natural Resources Conservation Service (U.S. Department of Agriculture)	Federal agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic mission is “helping people help the land”, and major strategies are: cooperative conservation; watershed approach; and market-based approach. Most conservation practices are cost-share share as well as competitive NRCS works much as a consultant: giving advice or funding for technical management issues on private lands. Can provide funding to purchase conservation easements, but do not hold easements themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landowners contact the NRCS when they want to protect their land, not the other way around 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most interested in proper management and not preservation

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NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
Arizona Department of Transportation	State agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADOT rights-of-way dissect the watershed • ADOT manages infrastructure and vegetation in the area • No role in pursuing permanent land protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridged or culverted areas under I-10 impacting the watershed (these include: Davidson Canyon, Marsh Station, Los Estrachoes) 	None mentioned
Arizona Game and Fish Department	State agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can apply to the Fish and Wildlife Service for ESA Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition Grants • Receives about \$2.4 million annually for conservation acquisitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riparian areas and grasslands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential development (even 40 acre ranchettes can have significant wildlife impacts) • State trust lands
Arizona State Land Department	State agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize state trust lands for maximum benefit to Trust beneficiaries (most often includes disposal) • Potential planning tools: conceptual land use planning, development agreements, transfer of development rights, 404 permits, possibly purchase of development rights 	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most concerned about misunderstandings regarding what they are able to do and what their limitations are

APPENDIX C (con.) STAKEHOLDERS & ROLES SUMMARY MATRIX

NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
Arizona State Parks	State agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can own in fee simple, acquire conservation easements, lease state land, can partner with NGOs for acquisition and grant opportunities • Through the State Natural Areas Program, important parcels of land or water can be acquired using Heritage Fund grant money • State Parks also administers Heritage Grants but can't apply for it themselves (partners must do this) • NAPAC is a technical advisory committee that assists State Parks in the identification and evaluation of potential natural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area connecting with and contributing to the protection of the Sonoita Creek State Natural Area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development threats in the San Rafael Valley and near Kartchner Caverns
Pima County and Pima County Regional Flood Control District	County agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement public prioritization process for open space bonds • Purchase, hold and manage conservation acquisitions and fee lands • Also works with mining issues, BLM monitoring work, and water issues in the Cienega Watershed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The connection between the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, Colossal Cave Mountain Park, and the Forest Service (Rincon Mountains)—has riparian, public access, and wildlife corridor values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to define “protection” at the workshop • No good way to fund management (this can affect future acquisitions) • Other ways to “protect” lands without acquiring them include: Conservation Land System set-asides; land use codes; transfer of development rights; zoning; regulation of lot-splitting; management agreements with landowners; and county ordinances

APPENDIX C (con.) STAKEHOLDERS & ROLES SUMMARY MATRIX

NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
Pima County and Pima County Regional Flood Control District (continued)	County agencies			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Trust Lands • Groundwater pumping and inadequacies in state water rules
Santa Cruz County	County agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santa Cruz County has sought conservation easements as part of development approval along the Santa Cruz River and has facilitated others in developing voluntary conservation easements (as with Three Canyons) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting recharge to groundwater aquifers • Santa Cruz County has not formally set priorities for protection in the Cienega Watershed – land is protected opportunistically at this point in time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Trust Lands
Arizona Open Land Trust	Land trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for funding • Actively pursue land acquisitions (fee title and conservation easements) • Facilitate conservation acquisitions with partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grasslands near the Babocomari and the Cienega Creek in its entirety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitations: funding availability and willing sellers • Subdivisions of 40 acre ranchettes is a major threat • Partnerships, education and outreach are major opportunities

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NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
Rincon Institute	Land trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with private landowners to educate them about their land protection options • Facilitate and hold conservation easements • Advocate for specific protection measures (i.e. Saguaro National Park Expansion Bill, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rincon valley and Vail (northern portion of the watershed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat: disconnect between community and conservation • Opportunity: land acquisitions through the County and protection of private land by landowners
Southeast Arizona Land Trust	Land trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landowner outreach and facilitation through the easement process • Holding and monitoring the easement • Cannot lobby or ask for appropriations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barchas Ranch • Loving J Ranch • Grasslands area east of Sonoita • Anything around Las Cienegas NCA • Anything around Sonoita area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned about competition and lack of communication between the environmental groups and land trusts • Lands will only get more expensive - a compelling reason to act now. Concerned about paying richer ranchers a lot of money for easements instead of seeking donations - sends the wrong message to ranchers who don't have the means • Interested in BLM's plans for the area

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NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
<p>The Nature Conservancy</p>	<p>Land trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To pursue, hold and manage acquisitions and conservation easements • Active with State Trust Land reform effort • Cooperative acquisitions with public land managers • Assists other land trusts to give bridge funding at closing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babocomari Ranch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned about competition and lack of communication between environmental groups and land trusts—need to support local capacity for collaboration as through the Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership • A lot of conservation work in this region is opportunistically driven - need to have different groups agreeing on priorities • State Trust Lands • Would like a coordinated approach to authorization for money and in the BLM prioritization process • Possible future option: seek congressional approval for an acquisition plan for Las Cieneegas NCA (as they did in the San Pedro)—then it will be a matter of lobbying annually for appropria-

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NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
The Trust for Public Land	Land trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps public agencies acquire important properties for conservation (fee or easements) • Helps to secure the acquisition funding through federal, state, local, and private sources • Helps counties and cities to strategize and implement ballot measures for conservation funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Santa Cruz portion of the Watershed, given challenges with conservation funding and large opportunities for conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat: fragmentation of land and water issues • Opportunity: protection of larger intact ranches through fee or conservation easements
Arizona Zoological Society	Conservation and research organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help identify landscapes of concern and document the status of biotic communities • Lead efforts to reintroduce species and support species recovery • Advocate for habitat protection and help generate funding sources for protection, mitigation, recovery, education, and security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avian and aquatic habitat and invertebrate, amphibian, and arachnid populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for stewardship of uplands to support long-term health of the Cienega Watershed • Urbanization, drought and climate change, invasive species • State Trust Lands

APPENDIX C (con.) STAKEHOLDERS & ROLES SUMMARY MATRIX

NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
Audubon Research Ranch	Conservation and research organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement in the BLM’s RAC • Supports acquisitions, but does not actively pursue them • Linda Kennedy is on the AZ State Parks Natural Areas Program Advisory Group, which prioritizes lands for their natural areas elements and for their eligibility for purchase or protection through the fund established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babocomari Ranch and Sonoita Valley Acquisition Planning District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more money for acquisitions as well as management and operations • Development and invasive species are major threats, conservation easements are an important opportunity
Cienega Corridor Conservation Council	Ad hoc volunteer conservation organization (includes residents, groups, and governmental agencies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates priorities and projects for citizen involvement in conservation actions • Informational forum for stakeholders (including agencies) in the northern part of the Watershed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cienega Creek and its tributaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing participation and citizen involvement • State Trust Land
Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection	Coalition of conservation organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission is to pursue the highest degree of conservation through Pima County’s Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, particularly the Multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSCP) under the Endangered Species Act. Serves as an advocate in the development process, acquisition/easement program, flood control and riparian restoration, and other programs under the MSCP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas identified as “Habitat Protection Priorities” by The Nature Conservancy and the Arizona Open Land Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threats: mining, unregulated development, regulated development, over-grazing • Opportunities: Pima County open space bonds, a new Congress that might fund conservation priorities

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NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
Sky Island Alliance	Conservation organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with collaborators to secure protection of private lands • Does not directly purchase or hold easements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sonoita Valley Acquisition Planning district as well as state and private lands north of I-10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities include State Trust Land reform that allows for acquisition of lands for conservation purchases and Land and Water Conservation funding that is linked to County bond money for acquisition. Threats: Motorized recreation, especially OHVs and unauthorized roads; development; Rosemont Mine
Sonoita Crossroads Community Forum	Conservation organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active in pursuing cultural and natural resource asset mapping in the Sonoita Valley (Santa Cruz County) • Role is to bring together landowners, land trusts, and Santa Cruz County to develop land use patterns to match the vision of a vibrant community, open spaces, and working ranches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve ranching tradition and explore options for enhancing the profitability of ranching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to find more creative strategies to make more money for landowners who want to protect their land. Threat: state land development and exchanges through the Forest Service • Need to look into the tax aspects of conservation easements and inheritance taxes to make them more attractive to landowners. Follow up item could be a landowner-focused meeting to find out what they are interested in for the Watershed or to share positive experiences from landowners who have gotten benefit from conservation

APPENDIX C (con.) STAKEHOLDERS & ROLES SUMMARY MATRIX

NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership	Ad hoc volunteer conservation organization (includes residents, groups, and governmental agencies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates priorities and projects for citizen involvement in conservation actions • Informational forum for stakeholders (including agencies) in the southern part of the Watershed 	Babocomari and Rain Valley Ranches, north of the Mustang Mtns; Connection from I-10 south towards the northernmost portion of the NCA boundary and east to the Pima Co. line; east/west connection across the NCA, connecting the Whetstone Mountains and Santa Ritas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues related to Las Cienegas National Conservation Area • Increasing participation and citizen involvement
Sonoran Institute	Conservation organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps coordinate and facilitate the efforts of the Cienega Corridor Conservation Council and the Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership • Looks for funding opportunities for conservation in the Watershed • Advocates for protection of priority lands • Active in State Trust Land reform effort • Active with monitoring in Las Cienegas and socioeconomic research in the area 	Cienega Creek and its tributaries, Sonoita grasslands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cienega Corridor Conservation Council and Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership could be very effective mechanisms for enhanced coordination and communication in the Watershed • State Trust Lands, invasive species • Funding needs for acquisitions and management

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NAME	TYPE OF GROUP	ROLE	PRIORITY	KEY ISSUE(S)
Carl and Jane Bock	Biodiversity scientists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have conducted research in the Sonoita Valley since the 1970's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riparian and sacaton grasslands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity: negotiations with large private landowners remaining • Threats: development; reductions in the water table

APPENDIX C (con.) STAKEHOLDERS & ROLES SUMMARY MATRIX

Organization	Acquire land (fee or easement)	Facilitate acquisitions	Land manager	Advocate for funding	Funder
Bureau of Land Management	X		X		X
Fish & Wildlife Service					X
Forest Service	X	X	X		
National Park Service	X	X	X		
Natural Resources Conservation Service					X
Arizona Dept. of Transportation			X		X
Arizona Game & Fish Dept.	X	X			X
Arizona State Land Dept.			X		
Arizona State Parks	X	X	X		X
Pima County	X		X		X
Pima Co. Regional Flood Control District	X		X		X
Santa Cruz County		X			
Arizona Open Land Trust	X	X		X	
Rincon Institute	X	X		X	
Southeast Arizona Land Trust	X		X		
The Nature Conservancy	X	X	X		
Trust for Public Land	X	X		X	
Arizona Zoological Society				X	
Audubon Research Ranch		X		X	
Cienega Corridor Conservation Council*					
Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection				X	
Sky Island Alliance		X		X	
Sonoita Crossroads Community Forum				X	
Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership*					
Sonoran Institute				X	

*The Cienega Corridor Conservation Council (CCCC) and Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership (SVPP) include citizens, organizations, and agency representatives and therefore cannot advocate for funding as a group (though individuals may do so). A primary role for the CCCC and SVPP is to facilitate coordination and communication between citizens, organizations, and agencies with an interest in the Cienega Creek watershed.

APPENDIX D

FUNDING MECHANISMS

FUNDING FOR PRIVATE LANDOWNERS

GRASSLAND RESERVE PROGRAM

Program Description:

The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) serves to restore, enhance and protect grasslands through easements, while maintaining existing grazing practices. The program conserves: 1) vulnerable grasslands from conversion to cropland or other uses; and 2) valuable grasslands by helping maintain viable ranching operations. Conservation easements prohibit the production of crops (other than hay), fruit trees and vineyards that require breaking the soil surface, and any other activity that disturbs the surface of the land, except for appropriate land management activities included in a conservation plan. For permanent easements, payment equals the fair market value, less the grazing value of the land. Values are determined by appraisal.

WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM

Program Description:

For the purpose of conserving wetlands by retiring marginal land from agriculture, landowners participating in the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) establish perpetual conservation easements. In exchange for establishing a permanent easement, the landowner receives payment for 75% of the agricultural value of the land and 100% of the restoration costs for restoring the wetland.

CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM

Program Description:

The Conservation Security Program (CSP) provides financial and technical assistance to private landowners for the purpose of promoting the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on working lands in selected watersheds. Working lands include cropland, grassland, prairie land, improved pasture, and range land.

NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION ACT

Program Description:

Congress passed the North American Wetlands Conservation Act for the purpose of protecting habitat for migratory birds, fish and wildlife. The North American Wetlands Conservation Fund provides 50% of the cost for wetlands conservation projects involving acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of wetlands and habitat for fish and wildlife dependant on wetlands.

LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Program Description:

The Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) provides funds to establish or supplement existing state landowner incentive programs that protect and restore habitats on private lands to benefit Federally listed, proposed or candidate species or other species determined to be at-risk, and provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners for habitat protection and restoration. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service awards LIP funds to State Game and Fish Departments, which then provides funding of up to 75% of the costs for private landowners to protect, enhance or restore habitats that benefit at-risk species. LIP funds can be used for conservation easements, but not for fee title acquisition.

FUNDING FOR JURISDICTIONS AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

FARM AND RANCH LANDS PROTECTION PROGRAM

Program Description:

The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) provides matching funds to help acquire perpetual conservation easements to keep productive farm and rangeland in agricultural uses. The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides up to 50% of the fair market easement value. In exchange for easement payments, landowners agree not to convert their land to non-agricultural uses and to develop and implement a conservation plan for any highly erodible land.

COOPERATIVE ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND

Project Description:

Authorized by Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service offers funding for voluntary conservation projects that protect candidate, proposed and listed species on non-federal lands.

Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition:

This grant program provides funding for the acquisition of land associated with Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP). The three primary purposes of the grant program are to fund land acquisitions that: 1) complement, but do not replace, private mitigation responsibilities contained in HCP's; 2) have important benefits for listed, proposed, and candidate species; and 3) have important benefits for ecosystems that support listed, proposed and candidate species.

Recovery Land Acquisition:

Recovery Land Acquisition funds help to acquire habitat in support of approved species recovery plans and cannot be used for land acquisitions associated with permitted HCPs.

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

Program Description:

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is a private, non-profit organization that works with conservation organizations to stimulate funding for conservation through a matching grants program. General matching grants are awarded by NFWF to support projects that promote fish and wildlife habitat conservation and involve other conservation and community interests.

MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVANCY GRANT FUND

Program Description:

Administered through the NFWF, the Migratory Bird Conservancy Grant Fund provides 50% of the cost for projects that directly address conservation of priority bird habitats, such as land acquisition, habitat restoration, and improved habitat management.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Program Description:

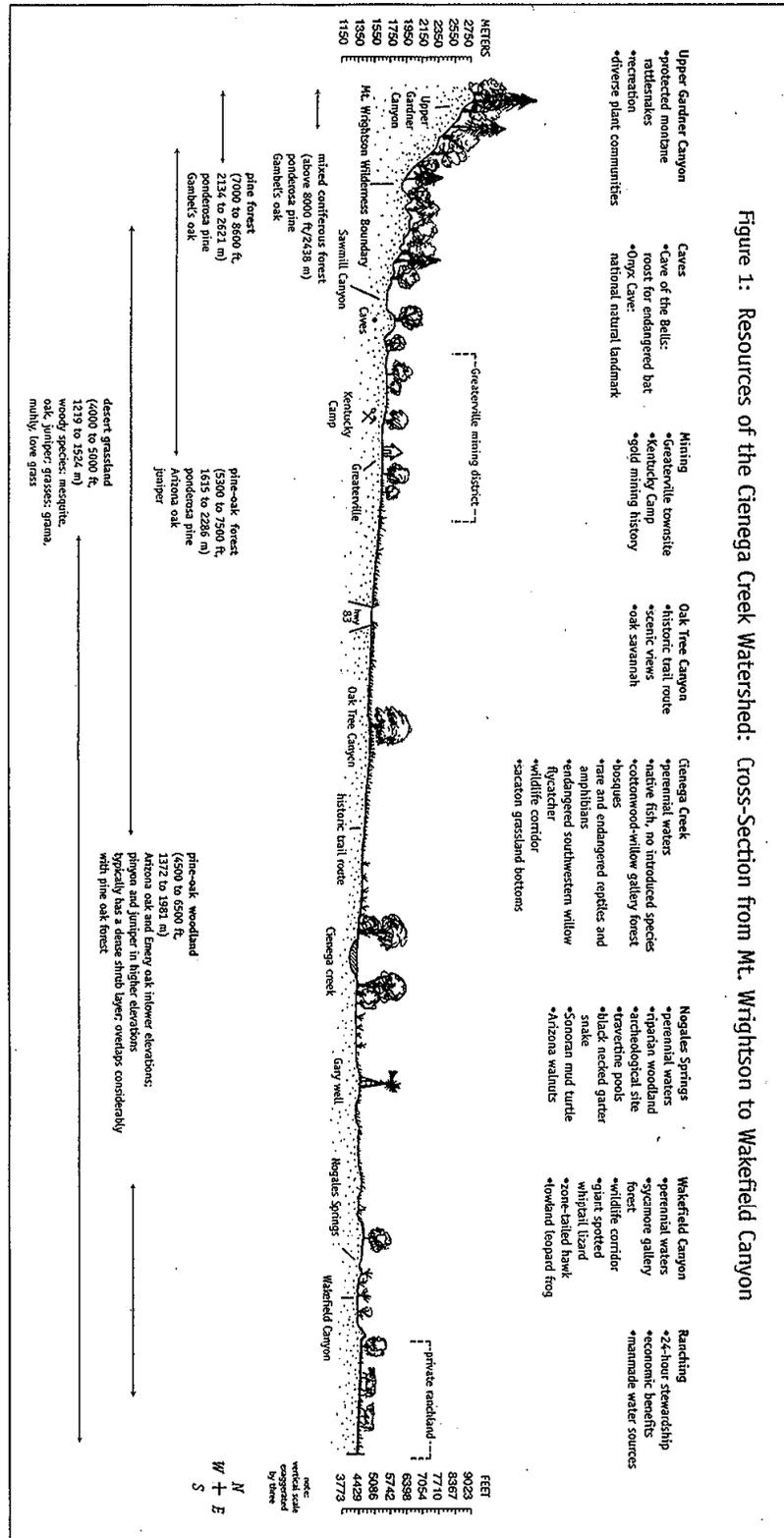
The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), administered through the Arizona State Parks Department, provides funding to support land acquisitions for parks and recreation. LWCF allocates funds for federal and state programs. The federal program funds the acquisition of land and water areas for conservation and recreation purposes through the Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service and National Park Service. The state matching grants program provides funds to states for planning, developing and acquiring land and water areas for state and local parks and recreation areas.

HERITAGE FUNDS

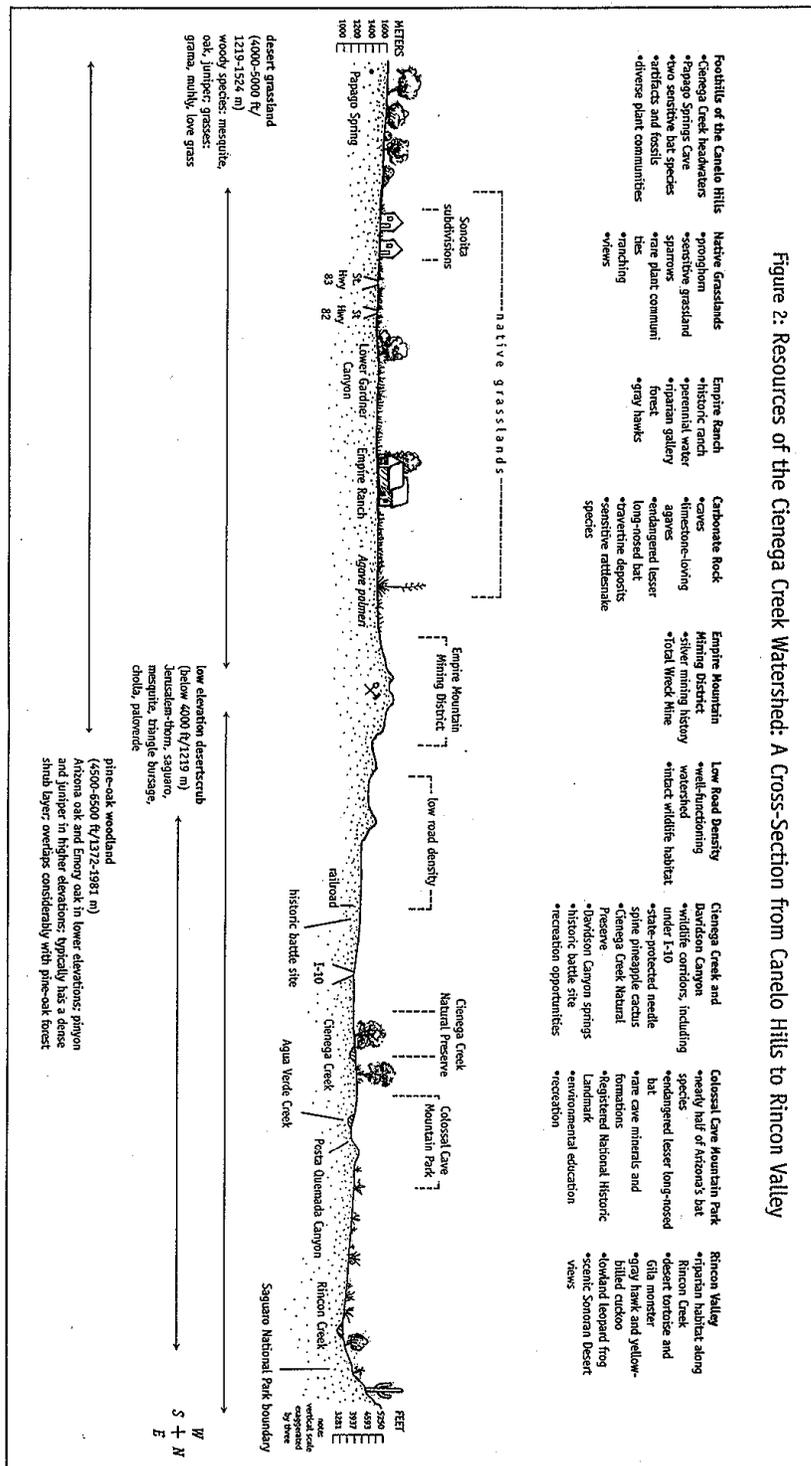
Program Description:

The Local, Regional, and State Parks Heritage Funds are derived from the Arizona Lottery for the purpose of promoting outdoor recreation and open space. Heritage funds can be used for projects such as park development to serve outdoor recreation needs, or land acquisition for outdoor recreation and open space.

APPENDIX E – RESOURCE VALUES OF THE CIENEGA WATERSHED, I & II



APPENDIX E (con.)- RESOURCE VALUES OF THE CIENEGA WATERSHED, I & II



APPENDIX F – SUMMARY OF POST WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS

Evaluation questions:

1) What did you like best about this workshop?

The overall response to the Workshop was very positive. Participants enjoyed the large number and variety of organizations and agencies represented, and learning about the roles or potential roles each have in the Cienega Creek Watershed. State Land Department participation was particularly appreciated. Opportunities to make new contacts, along with the development of the *Action Items* list and the Field Trip, were also mentioned as very positive workshop components.

2) What did you like the least?

Participants stated that there could have been a few more breaks throughout the Workshop. In addition, several stated they would have liked to see more landowners in attendance. Regarding the *Action Items* list, some stated they would have liked to have had more time to work on that, along with assigning an actual time line to the actions listed.

3) Were there topics that you would have liked to have covered that were not addressed? If so, please elaborate.

Topics mentioned included; mining permits at Davidson Canyon, water rights in LCNCA, and specific discussion on how conservation easements work.

4) What new or interesting information did you learn from this workshop that you did not know before?

Comments included: the description of work planned in the area through the Arizona State Land Department; federal funding sources available along with other funding mechanisms; deed restrictions; and Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).

5) What do you think is (are) the most important next step(s) for follow-up to this workshop?

Items mentioned included: State Land Concept Planning; rancher outreach and workshop (could there be a Rancher Ambassador?); follow-up with timeline commitments for *Action Items*; continued collaboration among present organizations and agencies; continue search for project funding opportunities; discuss political strategies; and schedule regular workshop sessions like this one so as to keep each other informed of current work in the Watershed and beyond.

APPENDIX G – WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT CONTACT INFORMATION

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
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APPENDIX G (con.) – WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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