



December 2021
First edition

Aravaipa Watershed

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Matt Magoffin

The Aravaipa Watershed Conservation Alliance is a 501c3 nonprofit that was formed in 2016 by a group of ranchers who wanted to maintain sustainable agriculture by using cattle as one of the tools to work on rangeland and watershed restoration and do so in a big way; by looking at projects as a whole instead of smaller projects that don't have the bigger impact. As the current president of the group, I see Aravaipa Canyon area as one of Arizona's greatest treasures and one of its more complex watersheds. The upper Aravaipa watershed is formed by three very dramatic and unique mountain ranges; the Pinalenos, the Santa Teresa's and the Galiuros. The Pinaleno mountains are literally steeper than any other mountain range in the state. The rugged Santa Teresa's are made up of large rock formations and deep steep canyons. The Galiuros mountains are called a block fault meaning erosion over time leaves huge bluff development. The combinations of these three ranges makes for rapid runoff during any significant rainfall. The land ownership of the upper Aravaipa watershed is mixed, which is what makes a collaborative effort necessary to make any restorative actions have lasting impacts. The area ranchers that have worked to set up and create a strong 501c3 are now set to involve all stakeholders and begin a planning process. We hope to host several large community and stakeholder meetings in the coming year to develop a Watershed Conservation Management Plan and get all partners and stakeholders unified to create a vision for the future of the upper Aravaipa Watershed and its significant management.



OUR FIRST EDITION NEWSLETTER

Our first edition new letter is more of an introduction of who we are and where we want to go. It is also an open invitation to anyone who is interested in becoming part of this process. The AWCA does not have membership, but rather open to participation and of course, volunteers.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Stakeholders
- Volunteers



PINNACLE FIRE

By John Stoddard, board member

After being faced with an extremely dry summer, a wildfire (Pinnacle) began on June 10th in the Santa Teresa Mountains. What first started as a few acres the fire quickly gained ground and burned over 34,000 acres in the near communities of Klondyke and Fort Thomas. There were several resources stationed in and around Klondyke specifically in order to contain the fires including helicopters, water tenders and dozers. I assisted the Response teams by reviewing old maps and showing team members where to

gain access to burn areas. I attended a few community meetings with the response team and other ranchers in the Klondyke area to assess the situation and help determine the best course of action. We were doing everything we could to protect the structures, livestock, and natural resources in the area. They put us on evacuation watch for several days, which was a scary thought that our homes and land could be affected in by this fire. Ultimately the fire was contained, and the evacuation was lifted. There was a lot of damage to the brush and small trees in the area, but we didn't lose a structure, and only a few had to leave their homes. I am grateful for everyone that did their part to help protect the Klondyke area from this burn and hope we don't have to go through this again any time soon.

“Nawhi ni nlt eego anlsih (Take care of our land)” San Carlos Apache

BUILDING DIVERSITY

The AWCA is about to begin the real work of developing both a Conservation Watershed Management Plan, that will be the first step into creating a long term Watershed Implementation Plan. Our current goal is to build the board diversity and to create a strong stakeholders group that can work towards common goals and set aside differences that have held collaboration up in the past.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Matt Magoffin, president. Matt is a fourth generation rancher who moved to Aravaipa in 2014 from Douglas, AZ. He has been recognized for his work in conservation in the past by the NRCS and other organizations.

Kathy Lackner, secretary. Kathy is a native of Arizona and grew up on horseback. She is married to Bill Lackner and they have a blended family that includes the Weathersby family who have been in Aravaipa since 1902. Kathy has been one of the prominent organizers of the AWCA.

John Stoddard, board member. John a native to Aravaipa and holds a serious determination to protect the resources he grew up in. He brings both leadership and innovative thinking to the board of directors. He and his wife Julie are both business owners and bring the knowledge of doing what it takes to get things done.

Mark Haberstick, Science advisor, board member. Mark is the manager of the Nature Conservancy's Aravaipa Preserve. The preserve both manages cattle and grows an irrigated field of native grasses for projects in the watershed.

Bill Lackner, board member. Bill (Billy) Lackner part owner and manager of the historical Four Mile Ranch and someone who has always been considered, "born to the land". Billy has worked both cattle and equipment in all parts of Aravaipa and is noted for knowing what the land responds to and how the watershed works.

Mike Magoffin, board member, Mike and his family are 5th (and 6th) generation ranchers. They are doing their best to add their vision to the old ways and create a positive image for ranchers so that open space ranching can thrive in the area.



Crystal and Sarah Magoffin (sixth generation rancher)

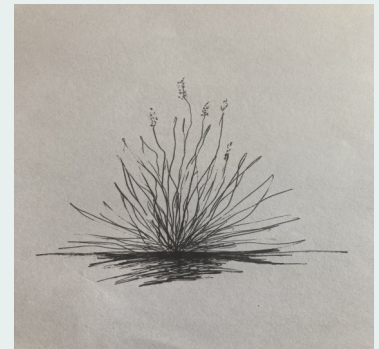
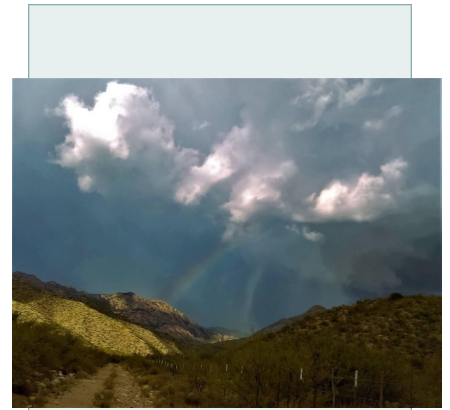
THE FUTURE

By Mike Magoffin, board of director

The steady growl of the side-by-side was suddenly interrupted by our 5 year old daughter, Sarah, as she loudly proclaimed, “Hey Dad! Do you see that really tall grass over there? The one with big seeds. Pop-pop says that is ‘Tack-a-tone’. It’s good for cows.” Sarah went back into silence on the perch that she had made out of her Mom’s lap, and she continued to survey the country as we drove along towards the next drinker to check. I was a bit shocked that she was actually looking for, and identifying, grasses as we bounced along. I smiled and began to think of how many lessons “Pop-pop” has given to both his children and grandchildren. I then went down the proverbial rabbit hole and pondered how many of those lessons revolved around ranching and nature. I spent the rest of the day checking to see just how many plants and grasses Pop-pop had gone over with Sarah. I was shocked that Sarah knew multiples plants, and grasses, and that she knew if they were good or bad for cattle to eat.

I asked Sarah what it meant for grass to be good for cows and she went on to lecture me about how they need to eat grass to make milk so they can have milk for their calves to grow up healthy. As kids tend to do, Sarah went on to educate her old Dad in the ways of the world, and how we need rain to grow the grass, and bulls have to be healthy so we can have calves in the first place, etc, etc. I was surprised again at the foresight from a young child and I asked Sarah why we need calves? Sarah shrugged and said, “I don’t know. But I think they are cute and I like to pet them. I think we should keep them all.”

Sarah’s desire to see good range conditions is one that I think we all share (our end goals may differ slightly from Sarah’s...but goals are goals right!). Some simple lessons from Pop-pop caused me to realize that the future of agriculture and rangeland conservation is something that is instilled and cultivated by goals. As Sarah grows her goals may change, but if she continues to realize that what is in the present will directly impact the future, things are good. I like to think that AWCA can help other folks to feel similarly, and that excites me to see what the future has in store.



OUR PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEERS.

One of our best secrets to creating a variety of professional materials has been done through a grant with the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona that allowed us to use Catchafire to connect with professional volunteer through the world to; write, explain and create products such as our logo, accounting spread sheets for grants and donations, advise on social media and this one of a kind art done specifically for the AWCA by an Artist out of Tucson, Arizona named Ruthie Marchand. Our goal to continue to grow depends on these collaborations of time and expertise. Working with a diverse panel of ideas is critical to the future of the AWCA.



The historic Klondyke Store is back in business, however, with limited hours. Welcome to Dave and Beth Ringwald and their new venture in Aravaipa Canyon.



PARTNERS

Our Partners



The AWCA has had the guidance and support of many wonderful partners. Our individual donors too have been instrumental in keeping us afloat while we got all areas of our office and roles organized. It would seem like simply task, building a 501c3: creating by-laws, accounting, book keeping, filing and other programs have taking time and using out partners experience has allowed us to keep on course and create a professional start to our future goals. Our individual donors keep us running; printing, websites, all things that our expense account needs to run a nonprofit.

VISION

AWCA Vision: To preserve personal property rights and the working open space lands those provide by utilizing hard work, the constant values of honesty and integrity. Provide science driven opportunities through grants and donations for practices that increase water quality and soil health and bring education through practices to the community.

APPLIED SCIENCE LIDAR AND MODELING PROGRESS

By Mark Haberstich, board of director AWCA

This year the AWCA has been working with the Bureau of Reclamation to expand our applied science and monitoring of conditions in the Aravaipa watershed. Due to its remote nature, relatively little long-term information is available for the Aravaipa valley, and both ranchers and wildlife managers are forced to fall back on data collected from urban areas like Safford or Willcox when developing ranch plans or assessing drought conditions. To fill this data gap, the BOR has provided funds to purchase two new weather stations and complete LiDAR mapping of the entire Aravaipa watershed. By combining this latest weather and soil information with a watershed model we developed with the US Geological Service two years ago, managers will have access to some of the best information available when making decisions for the future.



“Dr. Laura Norman has supported AWCA in their commitment to plan for sustainable development with consideration of long term hydrological analyses” Susan Benjamin, Director, western Geographic Science Center

HISTORY OF THE AREA

By Kathy Lackner, AWCA secretary

I have witnessed many changes in the Klondyke area during the past 50 years.

The 1970's were very quiet years for our valley. Most people here were ranchers. Very few people traveled to town for work. We had plenty of grass and water for our cattle.

The creeks would run trapping some of us in for awhile but those were times we enjoyed.

The 1983 flood took out most of the pasture land down the Aravaipa Canyon. All the beautiful big trees were gone! It was very sad for the locals that love that canyon. People started to sell out and move to town.

Land exchanged hands and subdivisions started during the during the 1987-1990 years. Changing the upper Aravaipa with roads and water diversion. Our roads became busy, where we would maybe meet one car going to town now we met 10 or more.

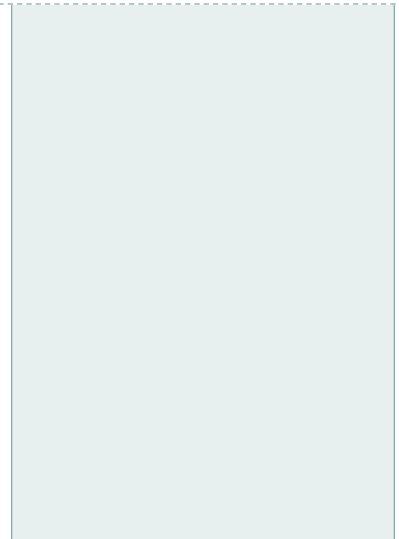
Children were taken to school in Pima, a 100 mile round trip, every school day, as

weather allowed. We had a lot more rain and snow during that time, we had plenty of grass and water for the cattle we raised. There were times we went without power for days or even weeks.

The 2000's have been a challenge for us. Weather has been so dry, no snow pack in winters. We have all been hauling water, feed and supplements to our cattle to keep them alive. Stressing times thinking we may have to sell more cows.

Prayers and helpful neighbors keep you going.

We will make it cause that's just what we do but praying for better times.



Mission Statement

“The goal of the Aravaipa Watershed Conservation Alliance is to preserve and sustain the Aravaipa Valley’s natural landscapes by means of watershed and rangeland restoration. The AWCA will create a renewed environment that supports wildlife, grassroots community education, and a holistic agricultural environment, all while limiting fragmented lands to promote a complete and functioning landscape for current and future generations.”

NEXT STEPS

The AWCA will be holding several stakeholder meetings in 2022 and would like to add all interested parties to the mailing lists. The AWCA is a 501c3 nonprofit recognized in the state of Arizona. The group does not have membership, but welcomes participation with all aspects of

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We can use your help! Donations can be sent to the address above. Aravaipa Watershed Conservation alliance is recognized as tax-exempt by the IRS under Section 501(c)(3). Your donation is tax exempt to the extent allowable by law.

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

