



FRIENDS OF SAN RAFAEL VALLEY

DATE	EVENT DESCRIPTION
1822	Mexico awards the San Rafael de la Zanja Land Grant to Ramon Romero and several other stakeholders from Santa Cruz, Mexico. Ranchers used the land as communal open range, with residents living closely together due to Apache raids.
1854	The Gadsden Purchase makes the San Rafael de la Zanja part of the United States. Purchase includes provisions for landownership to remain with original shareholders or descendants. Many descendants return to Mexico due to Apache raids.
1860-1890	San Rafael Valley changes due to: US Army campaigns targeting the Apache, the Homestead Act of 1862, and eastern investors seeking fortunes in mining and cattle ranching and homesteaders seeking land.
1881	Rollin Richardson, founder of Patagonia, purchases the San Rafael de la Zanja Land Grant.
1882	Colin Cameron arrives in Tucson, Arizona from Pennsylvania.
1883	Cameron forms the San Rafael Cattle and Land Company by selling three hundred shares at \$500 each to friends and family back east and becomes the Company general manager. The San Rafael Cattle and Land Company then purchases the San Rafael de la Zanja Land Grant from Rollin Richardson. The original Mexican Land Grant was 17,474 acres. Cameron, however, claimed to have over 150,000 acres that included the "overplus" or surrounding land. Some of the land was already occupied by other families.
1883	Cameron unloads pedigreed Herefords at Crittenden Station to move to the new ranch headquarters in La Noria which he renames as Lochiel after his ancestral home in Scotland. In preparation for his family to come, he builds a large house, corrals, wells, barns with Guernsey cows, and keeps fox terriers.
1899	Colin Cameron's house burns down, and arson was suspected.
1900	Cameron builds current San Rafael Ranch House with bricks fired on site and no expense spared.
1900	The San Rafael Cattle and Land Company loses a legal case in the US Supreme Court, ruling the San Rafael de la Zanja land grant size was four square leagues (17,474 acres) not 4 leagues square (152,899 acres) which Cameron claimed. After the court ruling, the Eastern stockholders expressed a desire to sell the property.
1903	San Rafael Cattle and Land Company and cattle sold to Greene Cattle Company for \$1.5 million. Shares owned by Colonel William Greene and family.
1903-1911	Frank Moson, Greene's stepson, serves as general manager of Greene Cattle Company.
1903-1908	Cameron remains manager of San Rafael Ranch for several years.
1908	Tom Heady, the ranch manager of a ranch owned by Colonel Greene's Cananea Cattle company in Mexico moves and becomes ranch manager for San Rafael Ranch, a position he retained until January 1947

1910	Greene transfers ranch holdings to wife Mary Proctor Greene.
1911	March 6, 1911, Colin Cameron dies from a stroke at his home in Tucson. Colonel Greene dies August 5, 1911, from injuries sustained in a carriage accident. Frank Moson resigns as general manager of Greene Cattle Company and moves to his own ranch. Charles Wiswall becomes general manager of Greene Cattle Company and Cananea Cattle Company.
1918	Charles Wiswall marries Colonel Greene's widow, Mary Proctor Greene.
1946	Wiswall hires Marshall Hartman to replace Tom Heady, who was ranch manager from 1908 - January of 1947 when he retired to his own Heady-Ashburn ranch. At the time the San Rafael house was reported to be in poor condition. Hartman lives in the ranch with his wife (secretary for the ranch), three sons, a cook and housekeeper
1947	Mary and Charles Wiswall transfer Greene Cattle Company holdings to Greene's six children. Bob Sharp Sr. (married to Florence "Bebe" Greene) then becomes general manager of the Greene Cattle Company.
1954-1958	Charles Wiswall's nephew, George, becomes general manager of the Greene Cattle Company until 1958. Marshall Hartman resigns as San Rafael ranch manager in 1954.
May 15, 1955	Mary Proctor Greene Wiswall dies in Mexico.
1957	Tracy Dent becomes San Rafael ranch manager.
1958	Florence Greene Sharp traded her stock in the Greene Cattle Company to get full control of the San Rafael Ranch. From 1958 until her death in 1995, Florence was President of the San Rafael Cattle Company. Florence moved into the San Rafael Ranch house, living in four rooms on the south side of the main floor while Mr. Dent and his family lived on the north side of the main floor.
1970s	Florence's son Robert Sharp, Jr became the ranch manager, and he moved his family to the San Rafael ranch where they lived with Florence.
1995	Florence "Bebe" Greene Sharp dies on May 15, 1995, and she was buried in San Rafael Valley. Following Florence's death, her son, Robert Sharp Jr became President of the San Rafael Cattle Company, with other siblings serving as Secretary and Treasurer.
1995-1999	Florence passed away without a will or trust. The Sharp family spent several years working with various organizations to develop a plan to assure the preservation and conservation of the property which included the 17,574-acre San Rafael de la Zanja Land Grant and 3,557 acres between the land grant and the border with Mexico.
1998	The Nature Conservancy purchased the San Rafael Cattle Company land and placed all the land under a conservation easement, assuring that the land would remain open space with no significant commercial or residential development.
1999	The Arizona State Parks Board authorized the purchase of the 3,557 acres which included the San Rafael Cattle Company headquarters. After the acquisition, the official name of the property became San Rafael State Natural Area (SRSNA). Hollis Cook was appointed the first park manager.

1999-2010	SRSNA was never formally opened to the public, but staff did hold events and programs. State Park employees and volunteers did maintenance, including recreating woodwork and doors to match original. Other State Park employees participated in numerous studies of the grasslands.
2000-2010	Various SRSNA park managers reside in ranch house.
2008	Twenty-five acres of the 3,557 acres received federal designation as the San Rafael National Historic District. The twenty-five acres include the house, barn, blacksmith shop, and the land surrounding those buildings.
2010	Arizona State budget cuts result in SRSNA being closed.
Post-2010	In some years, money was appropriated but later withdrawn by legislative actions. Arizona State Parks and Trails (ASPT) allocates funds for basic maintenance only. Budget for SRSNA is approximately \$60,000 annually to cover the cost of an employee living on site and basic maintenance.
2023-Present	Friends of San Rafael Valley formed to assist ASPT in the preservation and conservation of the SRSNA.