

**PALO VERDE REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN
WORKING GROUP MEETING #2
February 4, 2016, 10:00 AM
Location: Don Pearce Fire Station Community Room**

Attending:

Gina D'Abella	Pinal County Open Space and Trails Advisory Commission
Kent Taylor	Pinal County Open Space and Trails
Evan Balmer	Pinal County Planning
Harry Grizzle	Pinal County Sheriff's Office
Gary Metievier	User Group: Shooting
Chelli Sage	User Group: Equestrian
Paula McNatt	User Group: Equestrian
Kristie Riester	City of Maricopa Community Services
Michael Park	EPG
Karen Snodgrass	EPG

Summary:

1. 12/10/15 Public Meeting:

- a. The public meeting was well attended with approximately 40 people. Opinions of attendees were mixed in favor of and in opposition to the development of a regional park.
- b. While the first presentation and open house period had many attendees, only one person attended the second half of the public meeting. The stakeholders agreed that one presentation during evening hours would be sufficient for the next public meeting.

2. Online Recreation Survey:

- a. It was indicated that 411 online surveys were completed. While only one survey could be completed by a single IP address, the County did not receive any questions or complaints about being unable to complete the online survey.
- b. The results of the online survey were compiled with the dots on the "How Would You Recreate" boards from the public meeting for 435 total surveys and charted in a Draft Recreation Activity Evaluation Chart. This chart also included input from EPG for each activity regarding availability of that activity elsewhere in the region, degree of potential site disturbance, level of infrastructure required, operations and maintenance needed, and revenue potential. The stakeholders evaluated the chart and as a group identified the level of public opposition to each activity and whether each activity should be considered for the master plan.

- i. None of the survey respondents voted for trailhead facility (parking/comfort station), it was suggested that this be included as an item on the master plan as a necessary component to trail development.
- ii. Motorized trails would meet more public resistance, but that single track trails, two track trails, and a staging area should be considered for the master plan since these activities will likely continue to occur, and that a managed facility is be a better way to manage the use.
- iii. It was suggested that a riding stable may have been narrowly interpreted as a vendor-run facility for horseback riding tours and that “equestrian stalling” may be a better term for this use. While there is another arena in the area, it is located within a residential area and limited in the types of events it can accommodate. Watering holes already exist within the park to accommodate horses and that informational signage would adequately address equestrian backcountry water needs.
- iv. An administrative headquarter for the park could include a combined nature/interpretive/cultural center, but that a botanical garden did not merit consideration in the master plan.
- v. Trails, picnic, and camping activities ranked highly in the survey.
- vi. Shooting sports, while noted as controversial, were recommended for consideration in the master plan as a way to better manage this existing use.
- vii. Of the miscellaneous uses, it was suggested that a large amphitheater should not be considered for the master plan. It was recommended that the user added activities of a landing strip and hang glider site not be considered in the master plan, and that the suggestion for an amateur rocket launch site could possibly be combined with an RC airfield. It was also noted that an RC airfield could incorporate a track for RC cars.

3. Resource Maps:

- a. Mike Park presented an additional resource board mapping the drive times to the park. Pinal County requested this GIS data so they could tie population counts to these drive time areas in order to aid the preparation of the market review.
- b. Mike Park presented a draft site analysis map that combined the resource maps with observations of site features, potential access points into the park, and areas of existing disturbance.

4. Other:

- a. A few survey respondents suggested that the regional park was not necessary and to leave the area as is. It was discussed that the word “park” in Palo Verde Regional

Park might suggest to the public that this area would become more developed than a typical open space regional park. The stakeholders were open to other descriptive titles to properly characterize Palo Verde's function and purpose.

- b. Adjacent Arizona State Land Trust parcels are to be considered for recreational activities such as trails during the master planning process, knowing that easements would need to be acquired.

5. Next Steps:

- a. Prepare for the next public meeting on March 31 by establishing a time and location for the meeting and notifying the public.
- b. Prepare a map for discussion at the next public meeting showing potential preferred access points into the park along with a typical trailhead and campground configuration at one or two of these access points.