



Cascabel Conservation Association

Supporting Conservation, Education, Community and Contemplation in the Middle San Pedro Valley

Dear Friends of CCA,

Warm wishes from Cascabel. It's the time of year when we like to send you an update on our activities, send our thanks, and invite your participation and/or feedback.

It's been a year of transition and of progress. What follows is a little glimpse into each of our programs, seen through the eyes of a member. Enjoy!



Hermitage *Daniel Baker*

We are excited to announce... that CCA has approved receiving a donation of approximately 160 acres to be added to the existing 440 retreat acres in lower Hot Springs Canyon. This property includes the old Windmill lot, which was also approved as a new retreat site. A joint fundraiser is proposed with the Saguaro-Juniper Corporation (SJC) to raise monies to establish the retreat site in the fashion of an off-grid homestead. It is to be named the

Jim and Pat Corbett Retreat Center.

The site will be shared with Saguaro-Juniper members as a retreat and research center for the enjoyment and study of CCA and SJC lands, as well as upper Hot Springs Canyon. It should make a great addition to the existing Leitner-Gonzales strawbale hermitage.



CCA once again hosted the Proctor Academy students from New Hampshire for their solo retreats. Here is one reflection:

“Thank you so much for this opportunity to spend quality time reflecting in solitude in your beautiful hills and washes. Few and far between are the places in this country where one can get away from the hustle and bustle, the humming and shouting of people moving way too fast to chase after things we don’t really want and aren’t good for us. What we truly want and need are places like this one where we can go and live with what is important: a little food, water, and shelter where we leave little mark of our passing and hardly notice the marks of those who have passed before us.”



Over the past few days, I have been able to communicate with myself, to connect my heart and mind and hands in quiet reflection. I have thought a lot about how to see good in the world and how to bring about more. I have seen and wondered at the beauty of the desert here whose silent power and awesome desolation support a bounty of life, including in a way – my own.

I hope you can continue to grow in terms of space and those you can provide space for in that space. Keep up your good work, and I’ll be back again someday to explore again.”

Conservation News

Mick Meader

Our biggest accomplishment for the year has been working with landowners in the Aravaipa region to establish and strengthen the Lower San Pedro Watershed Alliance.

The most significant achievement from that collaboration has been the development of a San Pedro overflight film clip by Gilbert Urias of Cascabel. This is available for viewing at:

[https://www.youtube.com/user/saveSanPedro.](https://www.youtube.com/user/saveSanPedro)

We hope to expand on this effort during the coming year. We also plan to build on our alliance with our northern neighbors and look for new initiatives for our part of the valley. If you have ideas, please let us know.

The SunZia Southwest Transmission Project again dominated valley conservation concerns in 2013. The preferred route remains about two miles west of the river and would run for 45 miles down the valley. While we continue to relentlessly oppose this, litigation may be the only voice we have in the end. Other concerns this past year include using the middle San Pedro Valley as a drone testing site and establishing three Davis-Monthan helicopter rescue training sites on the west side of the river, two near the Heaven Sent Ranch and one in Paige Canyon. The federal government dismissed the valley for federal drone testing, although local Arizona efforts continue. The Environmental Assessment for the training sites has not yet been released.

We became a member of the Pima County Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, have upcoming plans to participate in a Sky Island Alliance wildlife monitoring project, and are supporting the creation of an aerial film designed to showcase the valley's natural value and traditional land use.

Community Garden

Erik Revere

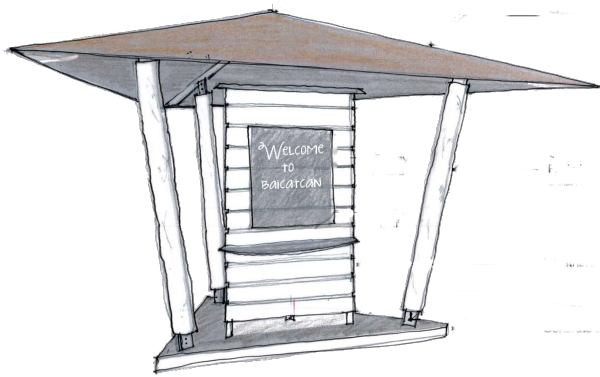
The abundance of the Baicatcan community garden has surprised everyone. We're harvesting giant heads of cabbage and more than enough winter vegetables to fill everyone's shopping carts.

There is now a new equipment shed, an 18- tree orchard, an herb garden, and several berry patches. Please join us some time.



Baicatcan Land *Jodi Wert*

This spring our focus is to bolster the infrastructure at the shared camp in the bosque. After housing a Young Adult Volunteer at Sleeping Frog Farms, the Avion trailer is back on site, and ready to host guests. We are also reviewing plans for a kitchen ramada and an information kiosk. So far, the the following three-sided structure is a likely candidate for the kiosk. Come by in the next several months to see how the kitchen ramada and kiosk projects turn out! ¡Bienvenidos a todos!



Education *Brandon Wert*

CCA continued the proud tradition of hosting the Mesquite Milling on November 2, 2013 at the Cascabel Community Center. Many thanks to all CCA members and friends who made the event possible.

Also, on November 16, 2013, geologists Mick Meader and Chris Eastoe, and hydrologist James Callegary led more than 40 participants on a geology walk in Hot Springs Canyon. Special thanks to our knowledgeable leadership for sharing their time and talent with all of us. Finally, the Education committee is looking forward to working together with the Baicatcan land committee on the kiosk and kitchen ramada. The ramada will be used to host groups that utilize the Baicatcan shared camp, and the kiosk will help orient groups for their stay.



At the beginning of each CCA meeting, our mission and values are affirmed when we share the reflective comments of those who have come to sojourn on the land and participate in the community model of collaborative stewardship. Many describe their experience as "transformative" and "life-changing."

The efforts to realize the unique vision of CCA for the Middle San Pedro Valley are not without cost. We are an organization supported almost entirely by donations and countless volunteer hours.

We appeal to you to add your support to our efforts through monetary contribution, becoming a member and lending your time and talent, or both.

ADD YOUR VOICE TO OUR VISION!
(Please see enclosed materials for more information.)

<http://www.cascabelconservation.org/>