

UPDATE FROM SEIC ON CATALINA STATE PARK

Steve Watry and Kay Galligan – Co-Chairs

January 2009

The park is located between Lago del Oro Parkway and the Canada del Oro wash, and it runs from the Catalina State Park to the south and the Pima/Pinal county line to the north. Ann Day, Pinal County District One Supervisor, led the October 20th meeting by explaining that county voters approved a bond issue in 2004, which includes \$2 million for developing this park. Half of that has been spent elsewhere and the remaining funding is \$1 million.

The park has an on-site manager who lives in the house at the corner of Lago del Oro Parkway and Golder Ranch Road. He has been directing the work for the past 18 months, planting native trees, installing fencing to protect natural areas and developing trails.

The southern portion of the park, south of Golder Ranch Road, will be left as a natural wetland and wildlife area. Viewing pavilions will be added for birders. A family park is planned just north of the Golder Ranch Road. This will include a parking area, picnic tables, a ramada, a basketball court, a biking trail, open turf areas, and children's play equipment.

The northern section will be devoted to recreation with trails for hiking and horseback riding. An area called White Dog Ranch will be renovated. This includes barns, corrals, and an old race track. The drawings for the proposed enhancements are 90% complete and the construction is expected to begin in October 2009. There will be no lighting in the park except for the restrooms, and the hours will be dawn to dusk. The public may now use the park areas.

The County presentation was well received and seemed to meet the needs of the attendees. During the question and answer period, concern was expressed by a resident about evacuation in case of a flash flood. The county's response was that the county does not have alarm systems in any of its parks, but they would look into this concern.

ORACLE ROAD (SR 77) IMPROVEMENTS

From SEIC, by Kay Galligan

February 2009

On January 27, several hundred area residents and representatives from the business community attended a public meeting in Catalina, to review improvements occurring on Oracle Road. ADOT (Arizona Department of Transportation), the Federal Highway Administration and several other entities involved in the planning process were available to show detailed drawings, a video presentation and respond to questions from the audience.

The project begins in the area of Tangerine Road and extends north to the Pima/Pinal County line, near the entrance to Eagle Crest. The length of the project is approximately 5.8 miles. Funding will come from state, federal and regional transportation authorities.

Basic Plans Include:

- Widening Oracle Road to six lanes by adding a new travel lane in each direction. The proposed roadway section will include three 12-foot-wide travel lanes and a 10-foot-wide shoulder in each direction, for the southern section of the project.
- In the northern portion (beginning at Golder Ranch Road through the community of Catalina): three 12-foot-wide travel lanes and a 7-foot-wide shoulder lane in each direction. The accommodation for bikes would include the removal of rumble strips.
- Install a raised center median with left turn lanes in the Catalina section. The pavement will be made of rubberized asphalt.
- There is no definite start date, and a contract has not been awarded at this time. Tentative plans call for an 18-month construction period to begin in 2011/2012.

Additional traffic signals are not included, and SaddleBrooke residents using Edwin Road proceeding onto Oracle Road were vocal about their ability to safely turn left onto Oracle Road. It was stated that a traffic signal costs \$300,000. The procedure to have one installed requires 11 "warrants," including traffic count, accident history, future growth projections, current design plans, sight distance and others. SaddleBrooke residents felt ADOT officials were not aware of the resident's potentially heavy usage of Edwin Road.

Catalina business owners expressed concerns about the raised medians and the traffic flow to and from their businesses.

Sound barriers are under study. The current barriers south of Tangerine were not viewed favorably by most attendees. Due to lack of funding, there are no plans for wildlife crossings.

For addition information: <http://www.oracleroad.info/>