WATERSHED NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE ALTAR VALLEY **JANUARY 2005 NO. 3** Winter Rain Edition

Rainmaker

Thank you for a Great Year

The Altar Valley Conservation Alliance (AVCA) has enjoyed a successful year thanks to our donors, members, cooperative governmental agencies and their personnel, as well as other private and community organizations. Together we continue to find ways to help protect and preserve the more than 600,000 productive acres that lie in the Altar Valley Watershed. Here are a few highlights of this year's successes.



Wildlife conservation partners gathered in the Altar Valley in June to talk about fire management, leopard frogs, Pima pineapple cactus, and future collaborative work concerning the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. Left to right: Sally Gall, Buenos Aires NWR; Sherry Barrett and Marty Tuegel, Tucson Field Office, USFWS; Duane Shroufe, Director, Arizona Game and Fish Department; Mima Falk, Tucson USFWS; Dale Hall, Regional Director, USFWS; Pat King, Chair, Altar Valley Conservation Alliance; Larry Bell, USFWS Regional Office; Steve Spangle, Director of Arizona Ecological Services Office, USFWS; Ross Humphreys, Palo Alto and Baboquivari Peak Ranches; and (kneeling) Dan Robinett, US Natural Resource Conservation Service.

- AVCA has a created a stronger working relationship with Arizona Game and Fish Department and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in a joint effort to help design a Safe Harbor agreement for the reintroduction and protection of the Chiricahua Leopard Frog.
- Cooperative work with USFWS is ongoing. regarding a fire management plan that will include the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Reserve (BANWR), and other lands in the Altar Valley.
- The new manager of the BANWR, Mitch Ellis, has met with the Altar Valley Conservation Alliance. He is interested in working with the AVCA on many areas of shared concern including fire plans, habitat, property destruction by illegal aliens and the sharing of scientific information garnered from on-the-land projects.

ranchers and farmers with the implementation of conservation projects that provide for the preservation of open space.

- The Alliance completed its first annual assessment for USFWS regarding the Pima Pineapple Cactus mitigation bank on the Palo Alto Ranch.
- New collaborative efforts are under way between the Alliance and the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson. Thanks to a grant from the Alliance, Robles Elementary in the Altar Valley School District was able to bring the Desert Museum's Desert Ark to the school to teach the
- The Alliance, in partnership with the Southeast Arizona Land Trust hosted a community meeting on ranchland conservation in June.
- Pima County Administrator, Chuck Huckelberry and Diana Freshwater of the Arizona Open Land Trust met with the AVCA executive committee to describe the county's efforts to preserve open space either through the purchase of fee land or to purchase conservation easements on large parcels of land. Pima County voters recently approved a \$173 million bond package that will

.

Kathleen Ryan of the Arizona Department of Agriculture met with the AVCA to explain the newly created Livestock & Crop Conservation Fund. This grant program was created by the State Legislature through the "Growing Smarter" initiative. The grants will be available to assist

children about our Sonoran Desert animals.

Thanks to the Helen Clay Frick Foundation, riparian restoration expert, Bill Zeedyk spent two days visiting several Altar Valley ranches. He returned January 10, 2005, to present a public workshop.

allow the county to buy land for its Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.

Thank You to everyone and may you have a bright, healthy and happy new year!

Make Rain Runoff Work for You

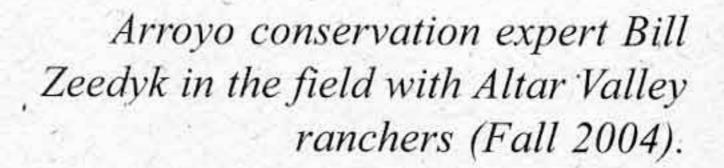
On January 10, the Resource Stewardship Program of the Altar Valley Conservation Alliance presented a program on watershed restoration, sponsored by the Helen Clay Frick Foundation, Pima County and the Pima Natural Resource Conservation District and Elkhorn Ranch guests. The daylong workshop entitled "The Altar Wash Arroyo: History, Ecology and Conservation," included presentations on "History of the Altar Wash Arroyo" by Nathan Sayre, "Historic Declines in Southwestern Sacaton Meadows" by Ray Turner, and an update by Van Clothier on the work being done in the Malpai borderlands region of southeast Arizona. More than fifty people attended the workshop, including ranchers, community members and representatives from various agencies and organizations. Bill Zeedyk, riparian restoration specialist, presented the featured program, "Assessing the uplands and their relation to the Arroyo." He talked about lowcost, low-impact techniques to promote natural recovery of degraded riparian areas as well as uplands altered by erosion. Zeedyk spent two days in the Altar Valley in November, hosted by Pat and John King of the Anvil Ranch. Zeedyk visited several Altar Valley ranches and commented on erosion caused by road grading practices and pointed out how upland water runoff problems affect · valleys and streams below. His big message to all landowners is disperse the water — disperse — disperse — disperse. One inch of rain falling on one acre of compacted road surface can yield up to 27,000 gallons of water. This water runoff accelerates as it rushes downhill, damaging roadways, eroding soil, generates gullies and robs the landscape of life-giving moisture. Zeedyk emphasized that all land owners should look for sites where your efforts will have the most effect. Start small and resist the desire to pile up a lot of rocks. One-rock-high dams and curved rock dams called medialunas will slow water runoff without causing additional erosion. The idea is to filter the water through the rocks so that sediment will build up and form a bed for new plant growth. He also made suggestions on road grading practices to mitigate erosion and how to induce meanders in gullies to slow runoff.

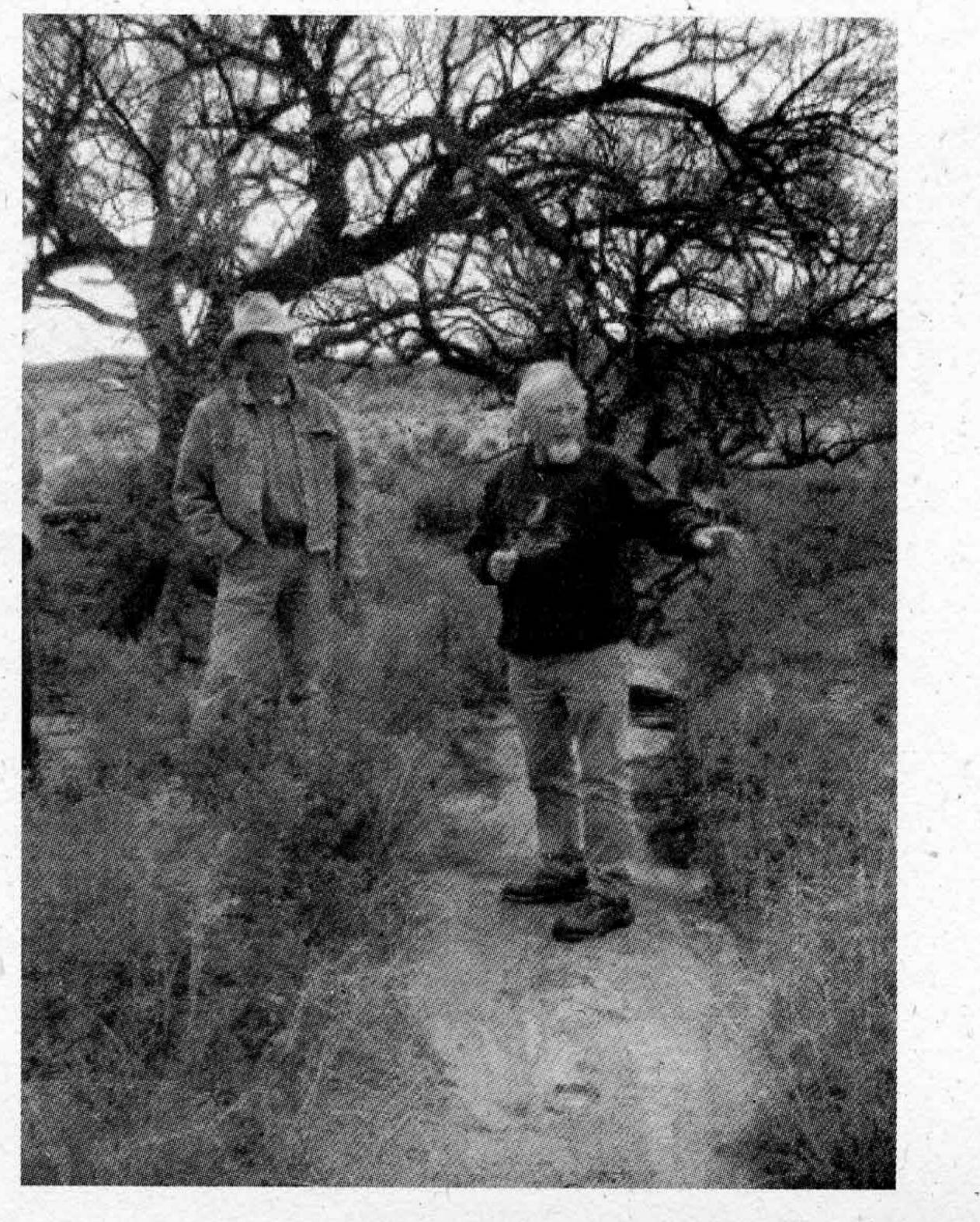
after 34 years of service. His last assignment before retirement was as the Staff Director for Wildlife and Fisheries Management, Southwestern Region, Albuquerque, N.M. He owns and operates a small consulting business specializing in the restoration of wetland and riparian habitats using low tech, hands on methods and native materials. He has many successful projects throughout the Southwest and Mexico and various state, federal, tribal and nonprofit agencies have sponsored his workshops.

Nathan Sayre, associate professor of Geography at the University of California at Berkeley, presented his history of the Altar Valley Wash. Sayre has spent several years in the

area, researching the impact

Zeedyk holds a B.S. degree in Forestry (Wildlife Management) from the University of New Hampshire. He retired from the U.S. Forest Service in 1990 of ranching, the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge and weather on the ecology of the valley. Ray Turner has researched the changes over time in the ecology of Southern Arizona and is the author of The Changing Mile Revisited. Van Clothier works on various watershed restoration projects in New Mexico and the Southwest.





AVCA Welcomes New Refuge Manager

Mitch Ellis, the newly-appointed manager of the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, located within the heart of the Altar Valley, was welcomed at the October 29, 2004 AVCA board meeting, hosted by Rob and Mary Kasulaitis.

Mitch had been on the job only a few weeks when he enthusiastically accepted our invitation to meet his neighbors in the Altar Valley.

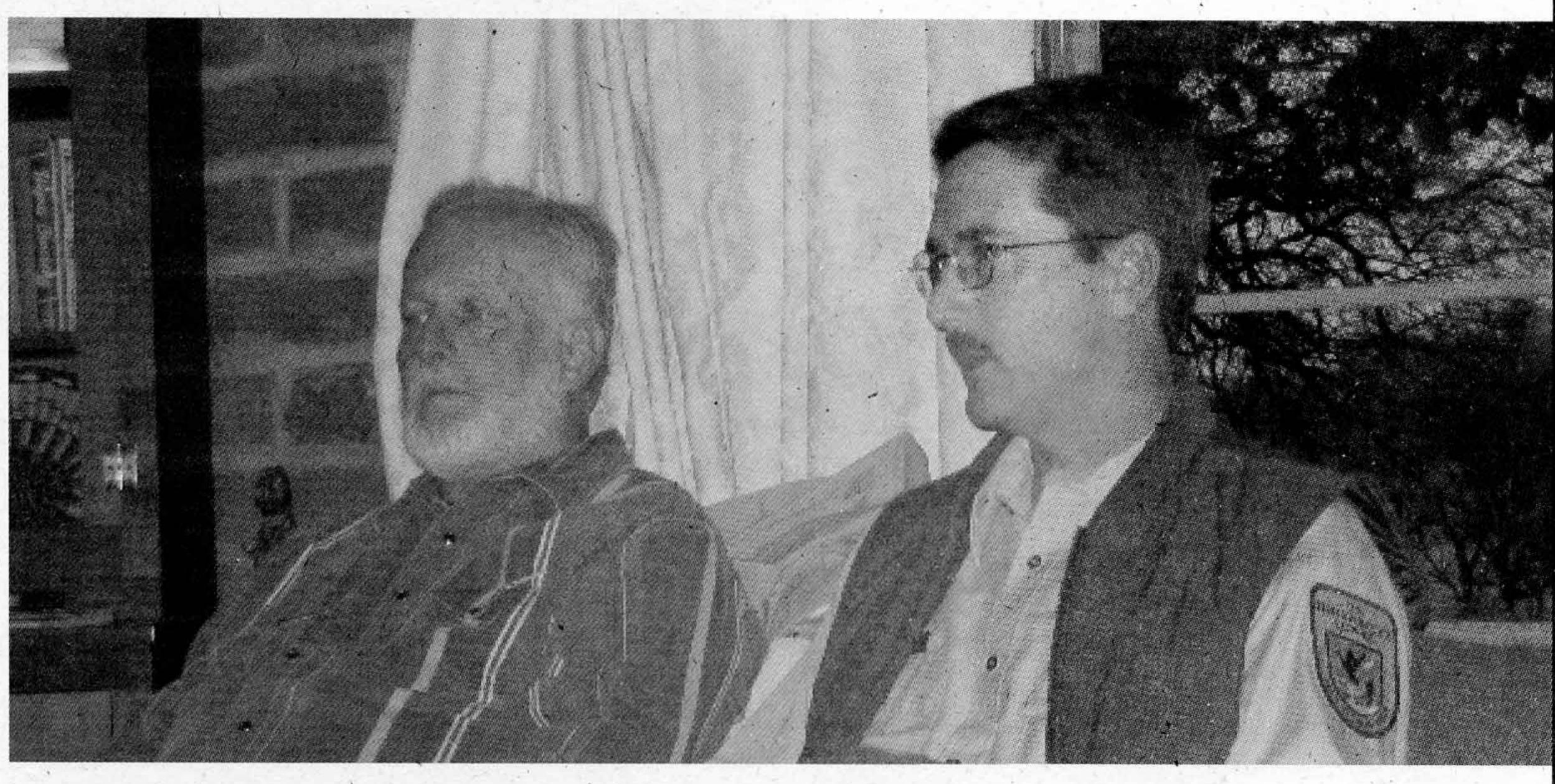
Mitch is a self proclaimed "desert rat" who grew up in Ajo, Arizona. His father, who worked for Phelps Dodge, was an avid outdoors man. The love of the desert came naturally to Mitch and he was inspired to pursue a career in conservation, by his best friend's father, who was a refuge manager.

Mitch pursued a wildlife ecology degree at the University of Arizona and went on to work at a variety of refuges in Arizona, Alabama, and West Virginia before landing his first manager's position at the Imperial National Wildlife Refuge based in Yuma, Arizona. His most recent position, Law Enforcement Chief for the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wildlife Refuge System, took him to Washington, D.C.

Mitch stressed to the Alliance his willingness to be a good neighbor. He promised an open door policy and said that he would work with the Alliance as much as possible. He is bound by Federal law to operate the refuge in a certain manner. He made it clear that he had to work within the confines of his federally mandated duties, but felt by being "open and honest" a

harmony could exist between the refuge, the Alliance and landowners in the valley.

Mitch has already begun discussions with USFWS colleagues Sherry Barrett and Steve Spangle about collaborative fire management in the Altar Valley. He looks forward to sharing the results of a biological review of the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge that was conducted in July 2004. This study will guide the preparation of a habitat conservation plan (not to be confused with an Endangered Species Act Section 10 permit National Wildlife Refuge here in the Altar "Habitat Conservation Plan")—another good Valley. opportunity for collaboration and consideration of



Rob Kasulaitis (left), host of the Altar Valley Meeting, listens to his new neighbor and new manager of the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. Mitch Ellis is "looking forward to a long stay" at the Refuge.

Land Protection—How TO KEEP RANCHERS RANCHING

The Alliance, in partnership with Southeast Arizona Land Trust, devoted the June 2004 community meeting to ranch land protection. California ranchers, Darrel and Karen Sweet, shared the story of the California Rangeland Trust (CRT).

The CRT is a land trust developed about seven years ago by California's equivalent of the Arizona Cattlegrowers' Association. It was born out of the need of ranching and farming families who wanted to preserve their lands and protect them from development.

Organizations like The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Lands, beginning to explore and transactions involving ranches, but ranchers often were not com-fortable with these organizations "holding" the easement. Every conservation easement has an organization that acts as

the steward of the easement. These organizations usually are non-profit, conservation organizations. The organization that holds the easement must assure that the terms of the easement are implemented properly —typically this involves some form of annual monitoring and documentation -conservation easements often remove and or reduce the development rights on the property.

California ranchers decided to start their own

land trust and the partnerships and projects have been brewing ever since. The Sweets shared many stories of successful land protection projects, answered questions, and gave inspiration. Many California ranchers now greet news of an endangered species on their land with, "How much are they worth?" rather than dreading the regulations and lawsuits that have plagued so many land owners.

The Sweets emphasized the importance of getting partners on land protection and conservation projects out on the land through tours, field trips, rides, and the like. It is especially important to get the scientists talking with everyone. Darrel also emphasized that most CRT conservation easements focus on limiting or totally avoiding development, and focus on keeping the ranch lands ...how much are they worth?" managed similarly to their current condition. He suggested avoiding manage-ment prescriptions in easement agreements. Instead, parties can agree to develop management plans to address

and other land trusts were "Many California ranchers now embark on land protection greet the news of endangered species on their land with

issues as they evolve.

www.rangelandtrust.org.

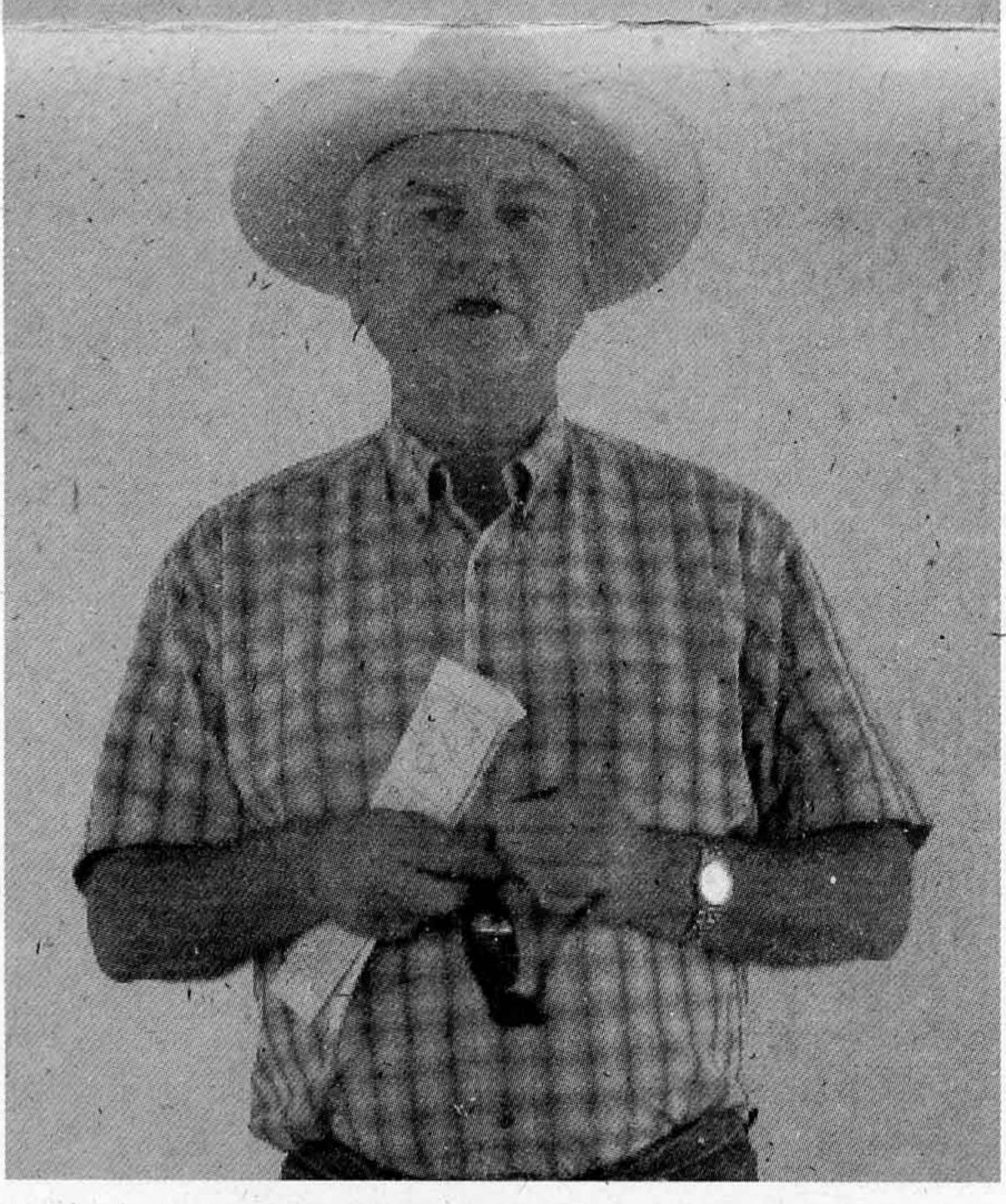
The Alliance has been working this summer to build relationships with other organizations and individuals with technical expertise about land protection. If you have questions or ideas, you might consider contacting Stuart Leidner,

a range of land management techniques and goals.

Jim Chilton spoke for all Altar Valley ranchers when he said, "We want to welcome you warmly;" and in turn, everyone appreciated Mitch's commitment to being "open and honest" and to be clear about the refuge's goals and objectives.

We look forward to a new era of cooperative conservation work with the Buenos Aires

You can learn more about CRT at



Southeast Arizona Land Trust and the Alliance brought California rancher Darrel Sweet and his wife Karen to the Altar Valley to share ideas about successful ranch land protection projectsthat have worked in California thanks to the California Rangeland Trust.

Executive Director of Southeast Arizona Land Trust at (520) 455- 5592, Peter Warren at The Nature Conservancy in Tucson, or Diana Freshwater at the Arizona Open Land Trust (520) 577-8564 (www.aolt.org). Pima County is working on their land acquisition program connected to the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, and has bond money available for land and/or conservation easement purchase.

A7F NN XHQ 24 H & 3N Conserving the Altar Valley for future generations A7F NN XHQ 24 H & 3N

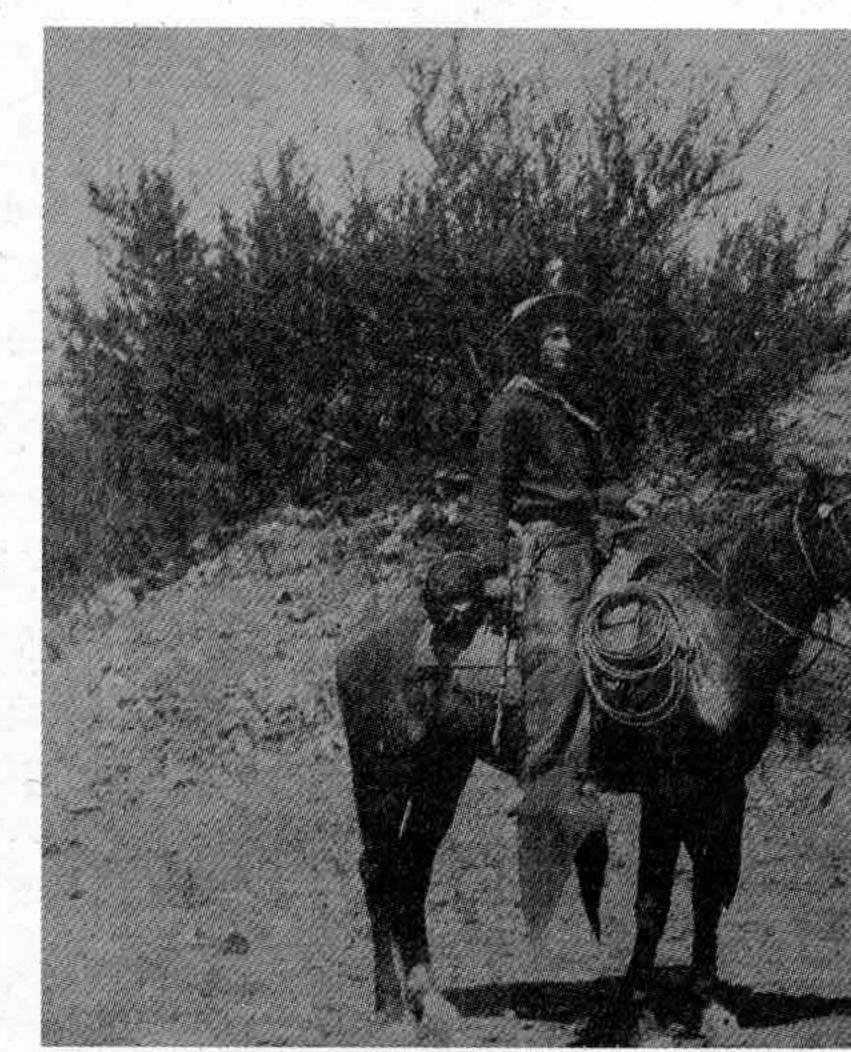
Noon Ranch History 1879—2004

The Noon Ranch history in Arizona dates back to October, 1879 when Dr. Adolphus H. Noon and his oldest son Alonzo arrived in Southern Arizona looking for a place to relocate. By Jan 1, 1880, they had established a homestead. The next summer the rest of the family had arrived from San Francisco, including Mrs. Emma Noon and their children, Arthur, Adolphus, Edward and Samuel Frederick. Their daughter Sarah was born in Oro Blanco.

Oro Blanco was mining and ranch country, so Dr. Noon proved up on his homestead by cattle ranching, all the while practicing medicine and doing some prospecting. He recorded the ND brand in 1881. The boys, Alonzo and Arthur, took to cattle ranching right away, and spent their youth among Mexican cowboys, learning how to rope, ride and do all the tasks necessary on a ranch, such as blacksmithing. Alonzo recorded the 15 brand and Arthur the quarter-circle Running N.

Alonzo married Martha (Annie) McClenahan in 1888 and built a house in Peña Blanca canyon. At one point Alonzo also lived in Chimney Canyon, just east of Oro Blanco, where the chimney is the only thing left of the adobe house he built.

Dr. and Mrs. Noon moved to Nogales in



Arthur and Alonzo Noon, photo circa 1900

1898, leaving the operation of what they called the Oro Blanco Ranch to Alonzo. Alonzo seemed to have encountered nothing but trouble in his cattle business, losing cattle over the border to Mexican banditos. One hot summer in 1903, he took his own life.

Arthur took over management of the ranch. Martha Clayton arrived to teach In the 1950s, Katherine (Dot) and her husband Bob Grantham built an adobe school in Oro Blanco in 1906. She and Arthur married in 1907. house on the site of the old homestead house on the south side of Arivaca valley, About that time the Arivaca valley was being opened to homesteading. Arthur keeping the original barn and well. Fred and Zella built an adobe house, filed on 160 acres, which included part of the Arivaca cienaga. Arthur and Martha outbuildings and a barn on their north half of the property. Fred purchased the moved to the Arivaca valley in 1910 and built a small frame house and barn. Philemon Ward homestead, south of Arivaca, which has ditch access to Arivaca In 1906, the National Forests were being established in Southern Arizona. The Creek water in the (now) Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. In 1988 Fred lines were drawn around the mountains in the area, but the town of Oro Blanco sold 30 acres on the west side of Ruby Road to Jim and Sue Chilton.

and the property of A.H. Noon were excluded, as were other homesteads.

Arthur became the first Forest Guard (Ranger) and his job was to mark the husband Rob Kasulaitis have taken over management of the Noon Ranch in Arivaca, corners of the Tumacacori division of the Forest with posts. He resigned after a using Fred's Running S brand. Katherine retained the Running N Brand and few years because of the inherent conflicts between being a rancher and Forest continues to raise cattle with the help of her son Bob and family. Ranger. Ranchers who had traditionally run cattle on the land that became National Herefords had been Fred's cattle of choice at the ranch. Horton began stocking Forest were able to obtain grazing permits on that land. The Noons obtained a Charolais in the 1950s, which his sons, Ted and Robert, continue. Mary and Rob grazing lease on the hills from the Austerlitz Mine on the east to Fraguita Mountain have added Red Angus cows, maintaining the Hereford bulls. Katherine Grantham, on the west, called the Oro Blanco allotment. Pastures within the allotments were her son Bob Grantham, Jr. and his son Jim have Herefords, Angus and crossbreds. constructed in the 1950s to promote rotational grazing. Fred always used fire to manage the sacaton grass in the bottomland and this

Meanwhile, in Arivaca, Arthur cultivated crops by dry farming such as barley, practice is being continued. Rob and Mary work with the NRCS to monitor and corn, and pumpkins on the floodplain just to the east of the (current) ranch house. make range improvements, including fencing and erosion control projects. Some In 1916, Martha moved the children to Tucson to go to school. The mines were of these were done in conjunction with the Arivaca Watershed Education Taskforce playing out in the Oro Blanco area and people were leaving. The Noons were able organization in Arivaca, which has conducted gabeon workshops in the north field. to purchase several nearby homesteads. State Land became available in 1914 and Rob and Mary's long term goal is to continue to run the ranch and improve it a parcel adjoining the original homestead was leased. wherever possible. Among its members, the Noon family still owns the entire spread that was developed by A.H. and Arthur Noon.

The Drought of 1921 was a milestone, for it marked the downfall of the

The History of Ranching in the Altar Valley

Everybody that could, went into the cow business in the 1880s. So said the vegetation than cattle, and we may never know the real impact they had in this Agriculture Professor R.H. Williams. In 1880s the railroad had come to Arizona area. The economy and climate conspired against the cattle business. The Panic of and with it a greater demand than ever before for beef. In that decade the large 1893 dropped cattle prices. The droughts of 1893, 1895 and 1903 were the ruin of ranches began to develop, and those who held the water held the range. George many ranchers. It was at this time that serious management of the range began to Pusch and John Zellweger of Tucson teamed with Bernard and Bogan to form the be studied in Southern Arizona, with involvement by the University of Arizona Arivaca Land and Cattle Company. Col. William Sturges, a mining man from and U.S. Department of Agriculture. The now-ubiquitous government agencies Wisconsin, bought La Osa Ranch in 1889. Manuel King had come to the Palo Alto were just in the beginning stages. in 1885 with a cattle company from California. The company folded in 1892 when In the summer of 1906, W.H.B: Kent was sent by the newly established U.S. drought hit. He was paid off in calves, with which he developed his own ranches. Forest Service to set up the Forest Reserve in Southern Arizona. In the summer of King moved to Brown Canyon, but shortly ran out of water and relocated to the 1906 he examined the mountains west of Nogales and the Baboquivari range. Redondo Ranch at the north end of the Altar valley, homesteading near it. He also Along with the Tumacacori Mountains, they became the Garces National Forest. acquired the Rouse and Redmond Ranch (later called the 98), north of the Anvil The purpose: to protect the watershed, but for use, not withdrawal. The U.S.F.S. is Ranch. In 1896 he married Margarita Cora, who was teaching school at the Palo part of the Dept. of Agriculture. Needless to say, ranchers in the area objected Alto at the time. Her family had a ranch in Mexico, but at the time were living in because they saw no timber of commercial value in the mountains. What had been Arivaca. Joe Ronstadt, whose mother was a Redondo, began developing the Santa open range was being divided up into grazing allotments. Fees were being levied. Margarita Ranch into the Baboquivari Cattle Company. Illinois-born William D. Ranchers who were running cattle before the Forest was established were given Coberly brought his family to the Palo Alto Ranch. The vast grasslands seemed priority for the allotments. Among them were the Noons, Jack McVey of the Jarillas never ending, especially after a number of rainy years in the 1880s. Ranch, Arivaca Land and Cattle Company and William Marteny in the Arivaca In the period between 1890 and 1910, big changes were in store. Many of the area. Any land already homesteaded was left out of the Forest Reserve. Later, homesteaders were from the Midwest or California and conditions in the desert apparently at the behest of the politically-connected Col. Sturges, the Baboquivaris were withdrawn from the National Forest and their west side returned to the newly were unlike what they had expected. Many were unsuccessful at farming. Consolidation of smallholdings into vast ranch properties began in the 1890s and created Papago (Tohono O'Odham) Reservation. The General Land Office, later went on for several decades. The prospects seemed endless for cattleman, some of known as the Bureau of Land Management, resumed control, but large tracts of whom developed large herds. Before the droughts of the 1890s, ranching in desert land in the Altar Valley were eventually taken over by the State. State Land leases grasslands or stocking rates was not clearly understood. Overgrazing took its course. were to become as important as Forest grazing allotments to the ranching economy. Pedro 'Aguirre, Noah W. Bernard and John Bogan of Arivaca were not the only The Forest Reserve south and east of Arivaca became part of the Coronado National ranchers with several thousand head of cattle, but sheep herds were also quite Forest. Ranchers in Southern Arizona began adjusting to their new relationships prevalent near Arivaca and in the Altar Valley. Sheep are much more destructive of with government agencies. (Continued next issue.)

neighboring Arivaca Ranch. Arthur lost dozens of cows, but he was able to salvage his herd somewhat by rescuing abandoned calves belonging to the Arivaca Ranch (with their permission). He built a corral, plastered it with mud to keep out the wind, soaked last year's corn in water and fed the motherless calves.

Martha Noon passed away in 1929. The two eldest children, Fred and Helen, graduated from the University of Arizona. Fred returned to the ranch, with his

younger brother Johnny, who was the cowboy of the family. John passed away in 1936. Daughter Katherine married Bob Grantham, who was working at the Arivaca Ranch. The youngest son, Horton, majored in agriculture at the U. of A. and went on to manage the Sopori Ranch and later the Oak Bar near Nogales.

In 1931, Dr. Noon passed away in Nogales. Arthur ran the ranch until he died in 1944. The management of the ranch then passed to Fred, the eldest son, who had married Zella Metzer in 1942. He relied on the help of Francisco "Chico" Orozco, long-time Oro Blanco ranch cowboy. Fred constructed stock tanks and developed springs in a cooperative effort with the National Forest. Near Arivaca, he acquired the adjoining Rita Mora homestead.

In 1955-56 the children of Arthur Noon divided the ranch property. Helen sold her quarter to Horton. Horton and his wife Muriel kept the Oro Blanco ranch property with the Kempton house, using the quarter-circle Running N brand. Katherine and Fred kept the Arivaca or north end of the ranch and used a plain Running N brand.

Since Fred passed away in 1996 and Zell in 1991, their daughter Mary and her

1890—1910

The Desert Museum Came to My School by Clara Miller, age 7

The Desert Museum came to my school. They showed us a slide show. We sang a song. Then we saw animals. My favorite was the ring-tail. It eats bugs and sleeps at day and comes out at night.

Thank you Desert Museum, Robles Elementary and the Altar Valley Conservation Alliance. The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Ark visited Robles Elementary School, located at the north end of the Altar Valley. Alliance members

introduced the Desert Museum educators, teachers and administrators from the Altar Valley School District. A \$500 grant from the Alliance to the school district helped assure that programs were available to all grade levels. Altar Valley Conservation Alliance c/o King Anvil Ranch HC 1 Box 97 E Tucson, Arizona 85736

Executive Committee

Pat King, President (520) 822-1065 Mary Miller, Co-President (520) 822-1040 Bruce Buchanan, Vice-President (520) 398-0476 Peggy Rowley, Treasurer (520) 398-2593 Mary Noon Kasualitis, Secretary (520) 398-2344 Nathan Sayre, Community Representative

Ranch Round Up

Arivaca Ranch

Rancho El Mirador

Baboquivari Peak Ranch and Palo Alto Ranch Carrow Cattle Co.

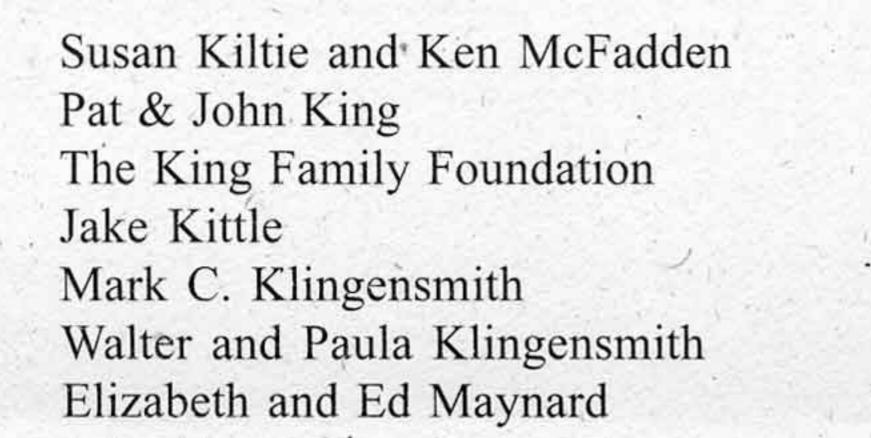
Chilton Ranch — Arivaca and Diamond Bell Ranch Elkhorn Ranch Jarillas Ranch Kasulaitis Family

King Anvil Ranch . McGee Ranch and Sierrita Mining

Alicia and Clara Miller, Elizabeth

McGibbon, and Matthew and John King—representatives of the next generation of Altar Valley ranchers—thank you for your generous support and enthusiasm about our work and wish you a Happy New Year! Your gifts help the Alliance spread the word about the beauty and importance of the Altar Valley watershed. A special thanks to all the Elkhorn Ranch guests who have heard about the Alliance through Mary and Charley Miller and The Rainmaker.

Lincoln and Aubin Ames Anne C. Brower Jeanette Calderwood Alexandra Coe and Judy Meath J.T. Coe Family Coronado RC&D Carol Craig Cowan Albert and Hillary Creighton Elizabeth Davis Cynthia Devine Double L Feeds Mrs. B.G. duPont Mercedes Eichholz Ann Field **Engel Family Foundation** Helen Clay Frick Foundation Gale Harris Walter and Anne St. Goar Anne St. Goar and Shippen Page William and Mary Graff and The New York Times Matching Gifts Program Carolyn Graham Pam and Bruce Harris Roseann Hanson Pam and Bruce Harris Susan Hawkins Dan and Betsy Hollins Richard and Alberta Hopkins Myke and Pat Kanis



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Amy McCoy, Altar Wash Restoration

The Rainmaker edited by Peggy Rowley and Mary Miller

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Please contact the Altar Valley Conservation Alliance for a complimentary copy of *The Rainmaker*. Copies of *The Rainmaker* will be distributed to all Alliance partners and supporters. A minimum annual donation of \$35 is recommended to assure continued receipt of *The Rainmaker*. We apologize for any errors or omissions. Please contact the Alliance with corrections, questions, ideas, concerns, or address changes at: Altar Valley Conservation Alliance, c/o King Anvil Ranch, HC 1 Box 97E, Tucson, AZ 85736.

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Please share your ideas and questions with us!

The Altar Valley Conservation Alliance needs your ideas and support! Please contact any of the Executive Committee by phone or by mail at:

Altar Valley Conservation Alliance c/o King Anvil Ranch HC 1 Box 97E Tucson, AZ 85736	Your financial support is greatly appreciated!			
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