



Regional Flood Control District

Fourth Quarter Report

FY 2004-2005

July 2005
Volume 4, Issue 4

RFCD has a new Logo and will soon have a new address

On January 1, 2005, the Pima County Flood Control District separated from the combined organizational unit of the Department of Transportation and Flood Control District. Suzanne Shields, P.E., former Deputy Director, was named the Director and Chief Engineer of the newly designated Regional Flood Control District (District). Chris Cawein was appointed Deputy Director.

As we all know, floods don't stop at the city limits or even the county line! Providing comprehensive service as a regional entity is in part a response to many inquiries from various participating jurisdictions, but also to ensure the fair allocation of the secondary tax revenues received by the District. The District's goal is to provide excellent customer service to our participating jurisdictions in the region including the City of Tucson, Town of Oro Valley, Town of Marana, City of South Tucson, Town of Sahuarita, Tohono O'odham Nation and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe.

The District will relocate to 97 E. Congress Street. Remodeling efforts are ongoing for the new site.



97 E. Congress

Floodplain Management Review

	FPUP Apps Received	FPUP Permits Issued	Walk-In Counter Customer's	Drainage Complaints Received	DC Comp Completed	FP Status Requests
April 2005	73	73	491	24	20	640
May 2005	104	77	497	23	22	561
June 2005	175	149	609	24	39	601
Fiscal Year 2004/2005						
July - Dec 2004	482	414	2830	155	138	2,675
Jan - June 2005	704	618	3324	134	149	3,324
Totals	1,186	1,032	6,154	289	287	5,999
Fiscal Year 2003/2004						
July - Dec 2003	456	362	2,888	150	198	3,352
Jan - June 2004	411	291	2,818	91	112	3,144
Totals	867	653	5,706	241	310	6,496

The home building industry is still strong in Pima County and the number of permits issued in 2004/2005 increased by 58% from last year. To meet the growing service demand, the District has been working with Development Services to improve the permitting process and to integrate our floodplain issued permits into their automated PermitsPlus system.

Process improvements to address drainage complaints and requests for maintenance was completed. The new process has improved the resolution of drainage complaints from 78% in 2003/2004 to 99% in 2004/2005!!!

Title 16 – Floodplain and Erosion Hazard Management Ordinance

In 2002, District staff began meeting with the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance Committee and Development Services staff to review the riparian habitat maps being developed for the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, and to coordinate the development and application of riparian habitat protection requirements in the Zoning Code and Floodplain Management Ordinance of the Pima County Code. On March 20, 2003, District staff along with a subcommittee of the Flood Control District Advisory Committee began revising Title 16, Floodplain and Erosion Hazard Management Ordinance (Ordinance).

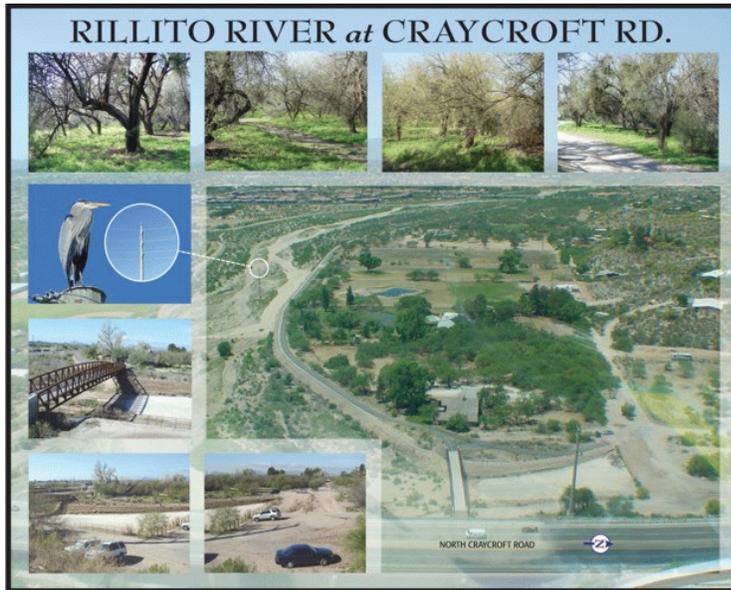
The purpose of these revisions is to reconstruct the Ordinance to be more comprehensive and concise (simplifying the composition for the general public and the development community), strengthening both the public safety elements as well as protection of Pima County's natural resources (Riparian Habitat Protection and Mitigation).

The draft Ordinance was presented to the Pima County Board of Supervisors, acting as the Board of Directors of the Pima County Flood Control District, on May 3, 2005, and will go for final adoption on August 2, 2005. An extensive series of public meetings and outreach events were held in May, June and July to present the draft Ordinance to the public and home building industry. Public comments were taken and have been incorporated into the final version of the draft Ordinance.

More information can be obtained at: <http://rfcd.pima.gov/rOrd.html>

RILLITO RIVER PARK IMPROVEMENTS ALVERNON WAY TO CRAYCROFT ROAD

Pima County residents approved bond funding to construct recreational and drainage improvements on portions of three major river systems within eastern Pima County. Later this year, the District and Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation (NRPR) plan to use the bond monies to construct the first of five approved projects.



This project is a two-mile segment of the Rillito River between Alvernon Way and Craycroft Road. The Rillito River Park improvements incorporate the Divided Urban Pathway (DUP) cross section and enhanced landscaping. The DUP includes asphaltic concrete (hard path) and decomposed granite (soft path). Details can be found in the NRPR's "Recreation Area Design Manual." Other amenities include two parking/staging areas with restroom facilities, public art features, enhanced landscape with irrigation, additional access to the local river parks and drainage improvements that will provide long-term protection to the park improvements. The park will also provide

for the Americans with Disability Act to include access- trails, comfort stations, post and cable fencing and park signing.

Rillito/Swan Wetlands Project

The Rillito/Swan Wetlands is an ecosystem restoration project being conducted in partnership with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). The Corps completed a Feasibility Study to determine the costs and benefits of enhancing approximately 60 acres of riparian habitat between Craycroft and Columbus roads along the Rillito River. This project will utilize reclaimed effluent and harvested stormwater to establish and maintain the riparian vegetation. Pathways and other amenities will link these improvements with the Rillito River Park.

The estimated project cost is \$3,448,750 with the District's share estimated at \$689,750 under the 2004/05 Capital Improvement Program Budget and Corps funding of \$2,759,000.

Drainage Structure Inventory

Over the past year, Floodplain Management Section staff has been locating and identifying its assets (basins, culverts, and channels). With over 200 public and private basins and many more culverts and channels identified thus far, the data will be integrated into Synergen and the Department of Transportation's Geographic Information System.

Cañada del Oro Watershed Catalina, Arizona

The Aspen Fire changed the hydrologic characteristics within the Cañada del Oro watershed. Moderate to high burn severity through much of the watershed denuded the drainage basin greatly increasing the chances of flooding during the summer monsoon season.

On August 25, 2003, a significant rainfall event occurred resulting in flows of approximately 7,000 cfs—a 25-year flow. Sheriff's deputies evacuated the area and most of the homes within low-lying areas both east and west of the channel. Immediately following the flood, the District began efforts to assist the residents by accepting applications to the Floodprone Land Acquisition Program from residents who wanted Pima County to appraise their properties for possible acquisition. The area consists of almost 200 acres of land. As of July 2005, 171 acres of land or approximately one-third of the total acreage within the acquisition priority area of the Cañada del Oro floodplain was acquired.

The cost to the District has been substantial—\$9,000,000 for real property (171 acres) and \$1,600,000 paid for relocation benefits to displaced property owners; however, the District garnered a federal grant of \$3,000,000 to contribute to this project.

The acquisition of continuous parcels of property has provided Pima County with a unique opportunity to develop open space and provide environmental restoration. In 2004/2005, the District with Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Department, the community of Catalina, Oro Valley, and the area residents have used this opportunity to create a plan that preserves the rural characteristics of the area by providing a rustic hiking and equestrian-oriented recreational space for this northwest cluster of communities, which preserves the riparian habitat and natural floodplain.

A Catalina Regional Park Advisory Committee was created to turn the area into a Regional Park offering a mix of open space, equestrian activity, recreational facilities and future public facilities with a community center for Catalina and Pima County. The committee has been working with Pima County staff, Ann Day's office, and more than a dozen other members who represent other interests and groups. More information can be viewed at: www.pima.gov/pw/crp/

Arroyo Chico – Park Avenue Flood Detention Basins Project

The Arroyo Chico – Park Avenue Flood Detention Basins Project is in the second and final construction phase. Federal funds for construction have been authorized and the Board of Directors approved the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Flood Control District, the City, and TUSD on January 18, 2005. The Corps will advertise the construction bids in the fall of 2005 following the signing of the Project Cooperation Agreement by the Board of Directors.

Holladay/Forrest Drainage Improvements

In 1997, the Bond Program provided for drainage improvements to eliminate repeated flooding of homes within this neighborhood, located northwest of the intersection of Mission and Drexel roads. Due to the absence of conveyance facilities, most flows occur over the surface of the land and concentrates in the streets. New improvements include constructing a 25-foot wide, 1.5-foot deep, 700-foot long swale north of Canada Street and west of Westover Avenue draining east to the Dakota Wash and a 15-foot wide, 1.5-foot deep, and 500-foot long concrete drainage channel between Westover Avenue and



Westover Avenue and Forrest Avenue. Other improvements were coordinated with the adjacent TUSD White elementary school. Holladay Street was reconstructed as an inverted crown street approximately 36 feet wide with 8-inch high curbs.



Homes that are flooded during relatively small rainfall events will now be protected from the 100-year flood and safer

vehicular access will be provided in this area. It should be noted that an elementary school is located on Holladay Street east of Forrest Avenue.

Ajo, Arizona

The District has contracted with Entranco to provide a design concept for the construction of a detention basin on the site of the existing Curley School ball field. The proposed basin will reduce peak flooding and alleviate potential flood damages to southern watersheds within the community of Ajo.

The District will also be replacing the Second Avenue Bridge, which was inundated with debris and sediment during the July 29, 2003 flood. The replacement structure will be more hydraulically efficient than the existing bridge and will be constructed to current standards.

Pima County undergoes CRS audit by Jean Hudson

A five-year in-house audit by a representative of the Community Rating System (CRS) was completed in March 2005. The audit is a routine part of the CRS program, which rates communities in the National Flood Insurance Program. The ratings are based on activities and policies communities undertake to improve their preparedness for floods and prevent flood losses. Currently, Pima County is a Class 6 community, which is in the top 5% of all those participating nationally. With the recent audit and with efforts being made to increase community awareness and education regarding flood hazards and regulations, Pima County is hoping to be upgraded to Class 5. Such a promotion would mean an additional 5% reduction in rates for all property owners purchasing flood insurance. Pima County residents currently receive a 20% discount on flood insurance. The District will continue to maintain and monitor its CRS program and seek ways to improve its class. Working in cooperation with the community, the CRS program is an effective incentive to reduce or eliminate losses due to flooding.

FEMA Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs)

Staff has been working closely with FEMA and other local communities to create and review a series of next-generation FIRMs with floodways and floodplains clearly delineated on aerial photographs. Many rectification problems exist because many of the maps were originally prepared in the 1980s. A consultant to the District was hired to complete the corrections. These corrections are anticipated prior to the publication date of September 30, 2005.

Public Outreach



Each year for the past 8 years the Regional Flood Control District has been part of Earth Day for Kids, held at beautiful Agua Caliente Park, and hosted by Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation. The District's theme "FUN-damentals with water" included discussion on the importance of having a family disaster plan.

The District was involved with Public Works Week on May 19, 2005, held in the Jacome Plaza. The District gave away coloring books and crayons along with flood safety information. On May 6, 2005, the District had a flood information and safety booth at the State of the County event. A big **Thank You** goes to staff member **Connie Maraschiello** and her husband, Chuck, for creating the table centerpiece that won first prize for the District!



Employee News

Have you recently received a certification, award, or graduated? This page is dedicated to employee-related news. If you wish to submit an announcement, please e-mail Nanette Reynolds.

New Employee: Marisa Trevino **Promotions:** Chris Cawein

Congratulations to Jerry Curless for completing the Boston Marathon 2005 !! #9566



Tammy Jacob and Steve Jorde were married in Seattle, Washington on May 21, 2005. Best wishes to both of you!

Larry Robison and **Frank Long** passed the three-hour Certified Floodplain Manager exam and can now add National Certification to their list of accomplishments. **Way to go guys!**



And finally, Farewell and Bye-Bye, hope to see you soon



to **Bill Snell** who just retired from Pima County after 20 years!

And to **Jean Hudson**, who is moving to Corona, New Mexico.

Good Luck to both of you!

