



## Report to the Planning and Zoning Commission

Prepared by the Maricopa County Planning and Development Department

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**Case:** Z2016016 – Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center

**Meeting Date:** May 5, 2016

**Agenda Item:** 4

**Supervisor District:** 2

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**Applicant:** Sam Coppersmith, Coppersmith Brockelman PLC

**Owner:** Linda Searles

**Request:** Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow for public assembly/special events at a private wildlife reservation in the Rural-43 zoning district

**Site Location:** Generally located approximately 628' west of the northwest corner of 156<sup>th</sup> St. and Red Bird Rd. on the north side of Red Bird Rd. alignment in the Rio Verde area

**Site Size:** Approximately 10 acres

**Density:** N/A

**County Island:** No

**County Plan:** Rio Verde Foothills Area Plan (Rural Residential – 0-1 d.u./ac.)

**Municipal Plan:** N/A

**Municipal Comments:** N/A

**Support/Opposition:** Staff has received a petition of over 160,000 signatures and 129 emails in support of the SUP

**Recommendation:** **Approve** with conditions

## Project Summary:

1. Sam Coppersmith, on behalf of the landowner Linda Searles, requests a Special Use Permit for public assembly at the Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center (the Center) in the Rio Verde area. The 10-acre property is zoned Rural-43, as are the vast majority of properties in the area. The property is accessible via 156<sup>th</sup> Street and a driveway along the Red Bird Road alignment. All vehicular access to the property is unpaved.
2. The property was granted Agricultural Exemption status in 2015 to accommodate the equine and wildlife rescue operation as an ancillary use to the residential property. The rescue facility has been in operation since 1994. The Center rescues and rehabilitates wildlife that has been injured, displaced, orphaned, and provides sanctuary for animals that cannot be released back into the wild.
3. Following a complaint from a neighboring landowner, Staff issued a violation notice (V201400882) in September 2014 for conducting public assembly without a use permit. Staff found that the owner has been conducting public programs at the Center for educational, conservation, and veterinary medicine activities. The center will also provide summer camps and programs for school children.
4. The applicant was initially advised to apply for a temporary use permit as a remedy to the violation. For the past year, the Center has operated limited public programs under two Temporary Use Permits, one issued without a public hearing (TU2015014) and one after a hearing with the Board of Adjustment (TU2015031). After the Board of Adjustment hearing, staff suggested that the Center consider a Special Use Permit for a large assemblage of people/special events per MCZO, Article 1301.1.11.
5. The Center includes the owner's personal residence, veterinary facility, ramadas, storage building, and fenced pens for the animals. The SUP request does not call for any changes to the site.
6. The property can accommodate up to 50 vehicles, and most programs have fewer than 50 people attending. However, programs are available only by advance reservation, and the Center limits the number of participants, both for specific programs and overall for any particular date, due to limits on staff and volunteer availability, respect for neighbors, and to avoid adverse impacts to animals being rescued or rehabilitated. To keep down dust, the owner uses a water truck to spray down adjacent roadways and driveways and parking areas.
7. A typical event has at least one staff member for each 20 guests. Times for the programs vary depending on the program date. The largest programs are during the daylight hours, particularly those involving schoolchildren. Programs during the summer months generally have lower attendance than during the late fall, winter and early spring.

Various uses within site



**LEGEND**

- (CYAN) = RESIDENCE
- (GREEN) = VETERINARY CLINIC, OFFICE, CLASS ROOM/MEETING ROOM, ANIMAL FOOD PREPARATION AND SMALL EDUCATION MAMMAL AND REPTILE HOUSING AND REPTILE HOUSING
- (ORANGE) = EQUINE RESCUE
- (PINK) = REHABILITATION
- (PURPLE) = NATIVE WILDLIFE
- (RED LINE) = 8' CHAIN LINK PERIMETER FENCE

**BARN IS MIXED USE; (ORANGE) = HORSES AND BURROS, (PINK) = USED FOR REHABILITATION OF WILDLIFE**

**OTHER ITEMS ON PROPERTY INCLUDE SWCC HORSE TRAILERS FOR HORSE, BURRO RESCUE, RESEARCH UNIT, PERSONAL HORSE TRAILER AND AGFD TRAILER FOR JAVELINA TRANSPORT.**

**CARGO CONTAINERS FOR FOOD STORAGE AND OUT REACH EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS.**

**STORAGE OF CHAIN LINK PANELS FOR FIELD USE AND ADJUSTMENTS TO ENCLOSURES.**

**STORAGE OF MATERIALS, BLOCK, PIPE AND CHAIN LINK USED FOR REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE.**

8. Staff notes that the Center is not a “zoo” or a commercial operation, although the Center holds a zoo license from the Arizona Game and Fish Department allowing public agencies to drop off injured or captured animals without the requirement for separate licenses on an animal-by-animal basis.
9. The Center operates several animal rescue and rehabilitation programs in cooperation with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, accepting wildlife from throughout the state.
10. The Center will also allow summer camps and school visits. Portable toilets will be provided at these events.

**Existing On-Site and Adjacent Zoning / Land Use:**

11. On-site: Rural-43 / Single Family Residential & Conservation Center  
 North: Rural-43 / Single Family Residential & Agricultural  
 South: Rural-43 / Single Family Residential  
 East: Rural-43 / Single Family Residential  
 West: Rural-43 / Single Family Residential

Zoning Map



Aerial Photo



**Utilities and Services:**

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 12. Water:       | Private well       |
| Wastewater:      | Private septic     |
| School District: | Cave Creek Unified |
| Fire:            | Rural Metro        |
| Police:          | MCSO               |

**Adopted Plan:**

13. **Rio Verde Foothills Area Plan:** The property is designated as Rural Residential (0-1 d.u./ac.)

**Public Participation Summary:**

14. The applicant has complied with the Maricopa County Citizen Review Process with the required posting of the property and notification by first class mail to adjacent property owners within 300' of the subject parcel and interested parties.

15. Staff has received approximately 160,000 signatures through an online petition and 129 form letters in support. One neighboring landowner filed a complaint against the Center in 2014 for conducting the public assemblies, which resulted in a violation case (V201500882). Staff has not received any additional complaints or opposition to the SUP. An example copy of the support form letter is attached to this report.

**Outstanding Concerns from Reviewing Agencies:**

16. N/A

**Background:**

17. **October 3, 2006:** Violation case V200601261 was closed with staff interpretation that the use on the site was a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation that is considered a private wildlife reservation permitted in the Rural-43 zoning district. It was noted that public assembly on site would be a zoo and would require a SUP.
18. **April 23, 2008:** Case LU20080014, a request for legal non-conforming use of record, was administratively denied. The property owner was advised that a SUP was required for proper zoning entitlement, as public assembly was occurring on site.
19. **December 23, 2008:** Violations V200801495 and V200801500 were closed based upon the previous decision that the private wildlife reservation with ancillary wildlife rehabilitation was permitted in Rural-43 but that public assembly/special events would require an SUP.
20. **May 21, 2015:** Staff administratively approved LU20150079, an Agricultural Exemption for an equine rescue and rehabilitation service. Also, with this record and site plan, staff documented the private wildlife reservation (wildlife rescue and rehabilitation service) as an established use.

**Staff Analysis:**

21. The purpose of this SUP request is only for the public assemblies as required under Article 1301.11.1 of the MCZO. Approval of the SUP would allow the property owner to continue holding public programs for educational, conservation, and veterinary medicine activities, including overnight camping, in addition to the equine rescue and wildlife rescue and rehabilitation services.
22. The driveway leading into property from 156<sup>th</sup> Street is unpaved, as are all roads in the neighborhood. This creates concerns with excessive dust during the events. Staff recommends that the applicant continue to utilize a water truck along 156<sup>th</sup> Street and the driveway along the Red Bird Road to mitigate dust prior to each event.
23. The public has been overwhelmingly supportive of the programs offered at the Center. An adjacent landowner filed a complaint with staff regarding the activity on the property, which led to the violation notice from staff. As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any additional complaints.

24. Staff believes that the Center adequately accommodates the programs by providing adequate space for parking and facilities for the events, provided the programs are for a limited number of attendees and available only by advance reservation. Staff recommends a few conditions for approval to ensure adequate water supply and dust control during the events.
25. Approval of this case would discontinue the need for further Temporary Use Permits and will close violation case V20140882. However, during the 20-year duration of this use permit, staff will require a status update at the end of 2 years beginning from the BOS approval date. Staff shall determine if additional status updates are necessary.

**Recommendation:**

26. Staff recommends the Commission motion for **approval** with conditions 'a' – 'i' of **Z2016016**:

Provided the following conditions are met:

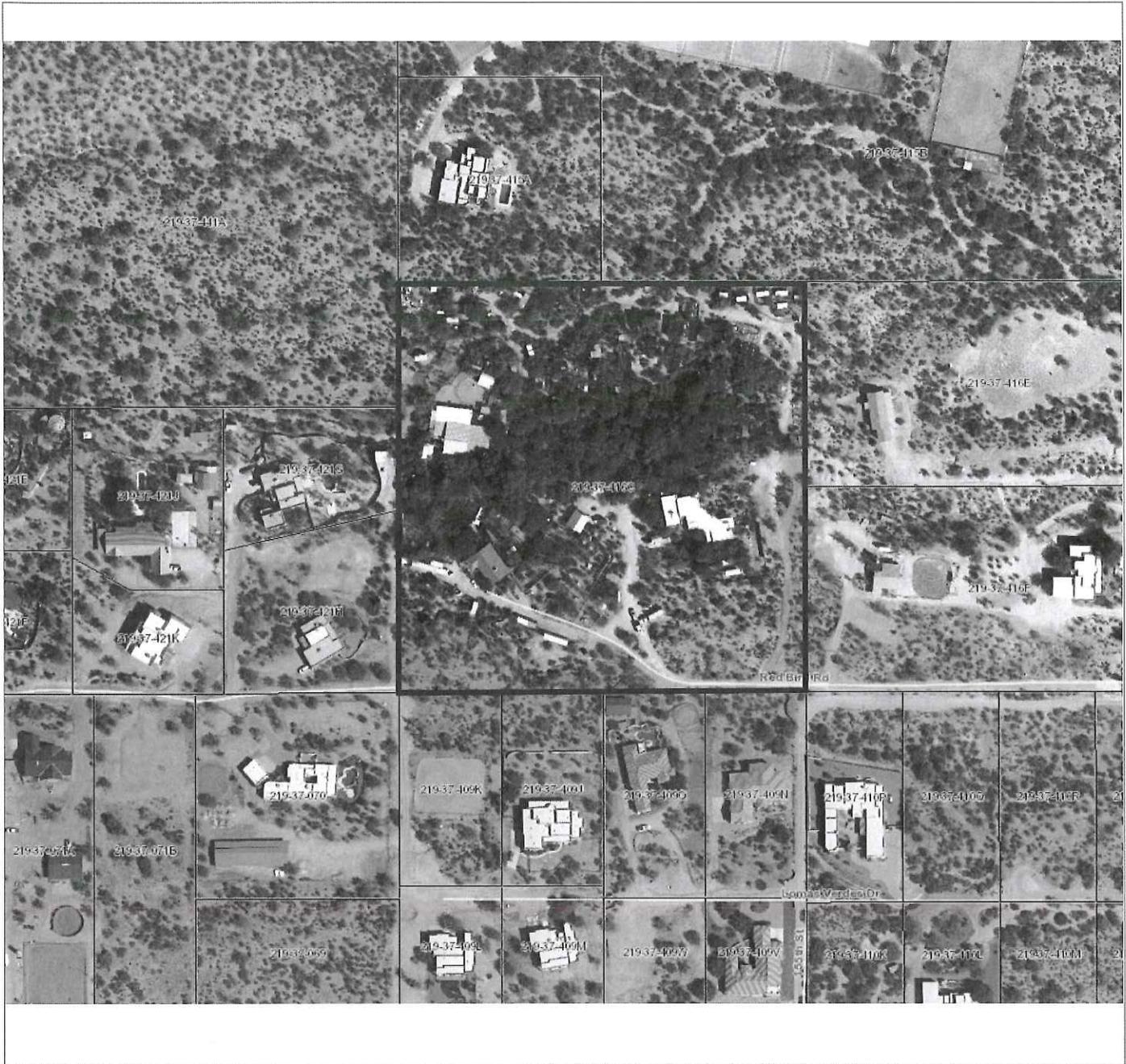
- a. Development of the site shall be in substantial conformance with "Land Use Map", consisting of 1 full-size sheet, dated February 18, 2016 and stamped received March 8, 2016, except as modified by the following conditions.
- b. Development of the site shall be in conformance with the Narrative Report entitled "Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center", consisting of 7 pages (including title page) stamped received March 8, 2016, except as modified by the following conditions.
- c. This Special Use Permit shall expire 20 years from the date of approval by the Board of Supervisors or after termination of use for a period of 90 or more consecutive days, whichever occurs first.
- d. The applicant/owner shall submit a written report outlining the status of the development at the end of 2 years from the date of approval by the Board of Supervisors. The status report shall be reviewed by staff to determine whether the Special Use Permit remains in compliance with the approved conditions, and/or whether additional status reports will be necessary.
- e. Applicant shall utilize a water truck or sprayer to control dust along 156<sup>th</sup> Street, between Red Bird Road and Rio Verde Drive, and along the private driveway providing access to the site from 156<sup>th</sup> Street, or some other method acceptable to Maricopa County Department of Air Quality, as necessary for all public assembly events.
- f. Noncompliance with any Maricopa County Regulation shall be grounds for initiating a revocation of this Special Use Permit as set forth in the Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance.
- g. The property owner/s and their successors waive claim for diminution in value if the County takes action to rescind approval due to noncompliance with conditions.

- h. The granting of this change in use of the property has been at the request of the applicant, with the consent of the landowner. The granting of this approval allows the property to enjoy uses in excess of those permitted by the zoning existing on the date of application, subject to conditions. In the event of the failure to comply with any condition, and at the time of expiration of the Special Use Permit, the property shall revert to the zoning that existed on the date of application. It is, therefore, stipulated and agreed that either revocation due to the failure to comply with any conditions, or the expiration of the Special Use Permit, does not reduce any rights that existed on the date of application to use, divide, sell or possess the property and that there would be no diminution in value of the property from the value it held on the date of application due to such revocation or expiration of the Special Use Permit. The Special Use Permit enhances the value of the property above its value as of the date the Special Use Permit is granted and reverting to the prior zoning results in the same value of the property as if the Special Use Permit had never been granted.
  
- i. Unless a public water system is approved by the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department, all public assembly or special events shall be limited to a maximum of 50 attendees on site at any given time. Bottled water shall be provided for all assembly/events with 25 or more attendees. The applicant may hold up to 3 special events in any calendar year which exceed 50 attendees, up to a maximum of 100 attendees, so long as appropriate measures are taken for off-site parking, circulation, and dust control. Any assembly/event in excess of these limits requires a temporary use permit.

Presented by: Farhad Tavassoli, AICP, CFM  
Reviewed by: Matthew Holm, AICP, Planning Supervisor

Attachments: Case Map (1 page)  
Vicinity Map (1 page)  
Land Use Plan (1 page)  
Narrative Report (7 pages)  
Engineering comments (1 page)  
MCESD Comments (1 page)  
One example (of 129) of a form letter of support (1 page)  
Letter of support from AZ Game & Fish Dept. (2 pages)

# MARICOPA COUNTY



Date: 05/05/2016      Legal Description:      T05N R06E 33

Applicant: Coppersmith Brockelman, LLC	Phone: 602-381-5461	<b>Z2016016</b> Aerial Date - 2014
Case Address: 301 West Jefferson, Phoenix, AZ.	Parcel: 219-37-416C	

SUPERVISORAL DISTRICT NO 2

Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center - Special Use Permit for public assembly/special events at a private wildlife reservation

# MARICOPA COUNTY



Date: 05/05/2016      Legal Description:      T05N R06E 33

Applicant: Coppersmith Brockelman, LLC      Phone: 602-381-5461

Case Address: 301 West Jefferson, Phoenix, AZ.      Parcel: 219-37-416C

**Z2016016**  
Aerial Date - 2014

## SUPERVISORAL DISTRICT NO 2

Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center - Special Use Permit for public assembly/special events at a private wildlife reservation





Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center  
Special Use Permit Application Narrative Report

Purpose of Request

The purpose of this Special Use Permit application by Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center (SWCC or the "Center") is to allow public programs at the Center for educational and conservation and veterinary medicine activities. For the past year, the Center has operated limited public programs under two Temporary Use Permits, one issued without a public hearing (TU2015014) and one after a hearing at the Board of Adjustment (TU2015031). After the Board of Adjustment hearing, County Planning Staff suggested that SWCC consider a SUP for a large assemblage of people/special events per MCZO, Art. 1301.1.11.

Description of Proposal

SWCC proposes to conduct the same types of public activities under the proposed SUP as under the previous TUP and before. The SUP would allow public tours and educational programs, including summer camps and school visits, on a more frequent and flexible schedule. The SUP also would allow SWCC to resume its summer camp programs; the date limitations under the TUP required the Center to cancel those programs for this summer. The site plan, types of uses, hours of operations, numbers of volunteers and visitors, materials, fencing, and structures would remain the same as under the current TUP. The SUP only would increase the number of days on which SWCC would offer public programs and eliminate the need for a new public hearing every 6 months.

SWCC operated public programs for a number of years without complaint, save for one new neighbor. For several of those years (and in particular between 2006 and 2013), the Center operated public programs without proper zoning. This was a mistake, which SWCC corrected through the TUP process. The Center now applies for the SUP to allow public programs on an ongoing basis, without the need for hearings every six months.

The current (and proposed) use is described in the Narratives submitted with the two Temporary Use Permit Applications, and the Narrative from TUP2015031, with slight edits, is repeated on the following pages, with the exception of the limitation on dates in the TUP. For all programs, SWCC limits attendance, both out of respect for neighbors as well as to avoid interfering with animal rescue and rehabilitation. SWCC has held similar educational programs at this location for more than 20 years, and for the last 6 months under a TUP, and none of SWCC's neighbors – save one – has had any issue with these programs. SWCC has operated these programs in harmony with the neighbors and surrounding property, without any adverse impact.

Not allowing public access will have no impact on SWCC's rehabilitation and rescue of native wolves and coyotes. ***Those programs (and animals) will remain at this location*** whether or not the County allows SWCC to continue hosting educational programs for the public, under whatever mechanism the County prefers.

## Background on SWCC

As additional background, SWCC is a tax-exempt public charity recognized by the IRS under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. SWCC operates several animal rescue and rehabilitation programs in cooperation with the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), accepting wildlife from throughout the state. In addition, SWCC also provides on-demand animal rescue services to Maricopa County agencies. With only few exceptions, all animals housed at SWCC are species native to Arizona that have lost homes to development, or are found injured, orphaned, or abandoned. When possible, animals cared for by SWCC are rehabilitated and released, healthy and wild, back in their native habitat. If they cannot be released to the wild, those animals reside at SWCC for life. SWCC also provides educational programs, both on and off-site, and participates in conservation medicine research and education. Finally, SWCC acts as a refuge for some exotic animals, illegally brought to Arizona, as well as native animals unable to return to the wild due to interactions with humans, which have been seized by AGFD and need a place to live out their lives. SWCC acts as both a short-term facility for animal "evidence" in AGFD criminal prosecutions as well as a long-term residence for animals that cannot be released or placed in zoos.

SWCC's Horse and Burro Program has been saving neglected, abused, and slaughter-bound equines by rescuing, rehabilitating, and finding new homes for them. Some of these equines are dumped in the desert after their owners can no longer afford to care for them, others are owner turn-ins, and still others are rescued from abusive situations. Animals that cannot be placed in a new situation (rehomed) are given sanctuary at SWCC's 10-acre facility. Horses and burros at SWCC receive professional care. A trainer and horse behaviorist consult and help with training and adoptions. Our veterinarians are available 24/7 for emergencies, with farrier visits every 6 weeks. Equines are held in corrals according to their abilities, needs, and social behaviors. A barn, pens, and round corral are utilized for housing, turn-out, and training.

Through its Wild Equine Conflict Program, SWCC assists BLM with overpopulation of wild horses and burros through education and adoption. SWCC has a proposal pending with BLM for contraception work with the wild animals as well. Because wild horses and burros have no natural predators, their numbers in Arizona have increased dramatically. This population growth has caused competition with livestock for limited resources, damage to vital wildlife habitat, starving animals, and traffic accidents on major highways. SWCC strives to mitigate wild horse and burro conflicts through education and science. Educating the public on the issues of wild horse and burro overpopulation is crucial to restoring a balanced environment for livestock, wild equines, and wildlife. In addition, SWCC's program of injecting females with birth control chemicals and surgically vasectomizing males will slow the reproduction rate of wild horses and burros.

SWCC was founded in 1994 by Linda Searles. An orphaned coyote pup ended up in her care, and she was the only one who could care for it, as she could not find a veterinarian who would take it. Undaunted, Linda decided to start a wildlife center for mammals. That pup,

named Don Coyote, lived at SWCC as an educational ambassador for his wild counterparts until he died at 20 years of age. The ten acres site holding SWCC is Linda's property, where she has her house. As Executive Director of SWCC, she takes no salary and works entirely as a volunteer. Linda also owns the 10 acres on which the Center and her personal residence is located, leasing it to SWCC for \$10 a year.

SWCC is not a "zoo" or a commercial operation. The SWCC zoo license from AGFD allows public agencies to drop off injured or captured animals without the requirement for separate licenses on an animal-by-animal basis. AGFD has only 2 types of licenses for animal facilities, either animal-specific or the general zoo license, and animal-specific licenses will not work for SWCC's mission.

SWCC is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) public charity, which status prohibits any private inurement. Except for exotic animals rescued from abusive or illegal situations and being cared for at SWCC, and a few smaller, non-native animals housed at SWCC on a temporary basis for educational programs – the Center does not host "exotic" species but only species native to Arizona, and works in conjunction with governmental agencies with responsibility for managing and rehabilitating native wildlife. While most animals at SWCC may be considered wild, SWCC's cooperation with AGFD, BLM, USDA, and USFWS means that the animals are not kept on either a private or commercial basis, but rather in cooperation with, and serving the missions of, public agencies. All animals which cannot be released, whether due to non-native status, permanent injuries, or previous interactions with humans have made them unfit for the wild, are spayed and neutered.

#### Relationship to Surrounding Properties

The SWCC property has an Agricultural Exemption and shares the same Rural-43 zoning and similar residential and agricultural uses as the surrounding properties. Most of the Center's neighbors have chosen to live in the area because of its rural nature, and because the unpaved streets and proximity to recreation areas allows for equestrian activities as well as motorized recreation. The Center property and its buildings – Linda Searles's personal residence, the new veterinary facility, the ramadas, the storage building, and the fenced pens for the animals – fit with the neighborhood and are similar in scale and use to other horse and animal properties in the vicinity. This SUP request does not call for any changes to the site; the purpose of the request to allow public assembly uses at the current site. Allowing the Center to remain at its current location will allow SWCC to continue to rehabilitate animals and assist law enforcement at a relatively accessible location, and to resume more extensive educational programs, all while helping to maintain this rural, desert neighborhood.

With but one most unfortunate exception (who has sued SWCC), all of the Center's neighbors either support or do not oppose the Center in its current location and with its current operations. Many neighbors have submitted letters of support, either individually or by signing a group letter, recognizing the vital public service the Center performs and how it helps preserve the rural and desert nature of the neighborhood. A neighbor of the Center, unsolicited and not at the request of SWCC but entirely on her own initiative, started an online petition of support (at [www.thepetitionsite.com/634/101/504/neighborhood-support-for-the-southwest-wildlife-](http://www.thepetitionsite.com/634/101/504/neighborhood-support-for-the-southwest-wildlife-)

conservation-center) which reached 24,000 signatures by March 4, 2016. This case truly is about one individual opposing the will of thousands.

#### Location and Accessibility

Access to the Center is provided from 156<sup>th</sup> Street along a private drive, which is an easement across the property immediately to the east to the Center property. SWCC does not require onsite police or traffic control protection. Programs are available only by advance reservation, and SWCC limits the number of participants, both for specific programs and overall for any particular date, due to limits on staff and volunteer availability, respect for neighbors, and to avoid adverse impacts to the animals being rescued or rehabilitated. SWCC has never needed police or traffic control for educational events held during the previous 20 years or under the current TUP. Most programs have fewer than 50 people attending, and SWCC attracts families and couples, and rarely individual visitors, so the number of vehicles is considerably less. Volunteers and staff assist visitors with parking. For larger events (the annual Dinner with Wolves fundraiser), neighbors allow guests to park on their property, and they are shuttled to the SWCC site by bus or hay wagon. According to standard traffic generation guidelines, SWCC generates fewer vehicle trips than would building out the site as residential under current zoning.

#### Circulation System

As noted, access to the SWCC site is provided by a private easement roadway, with parking available on the site. SWCC requires advance reservations for educational programs and limits the number of people and vehicles to what the site can accommodate easily. For larger events, such as the annual fundraiser and donor and volunteer appreciation events, a neighbor allows guests to park their vehicles on their property, and guests were shuttled to SWCC on a hay wagon; the only cars parked on the SWCC property were for handicapped guests. The parking area at SWCC can accommodate 50 vehicles, but even the largest events during the busier fall and winter season (with a limit of 90 guests) do not fill the available spaces.

To keep down dust, SWCC uses a 1951 GMC water truck (a classic, but it still works) with a pump sprayer for water, supplemented with a water “buffalo” pulled by a private vehicle to water both adjacent roadways and driveways on private property as well as to parking areas on site, as needed and as required under the current TUP.

#### Development Schedule

This application does not call for any development or changes to the site.

#### Public Utilities and Services

**Water and Sewer:** The SWCC property has a private well. SWCC also stocks a refrigerator with bottled water for guest, volunteers, and staff. The property also uses an on-site septic system.

**Food Concessions:** SWCC does not have a food concession. Guests with children may bring their own food and water. For some children's events, SWCC provides lemonade, water, coffee, and cookies. The Dinner with Wolves fundraiser, sponsored by My Sisters Closet, is catered and the caterer and bartender obtain the necessary licenses and permits.

**Sanitation:** Refuse service is provided at the site by Waste Management. The recent addition to the veterinary hospital facility on site (permits were not required by Maricopa County because of the property's Agricultural Exemption) includes one public ADA-compliant restroom and another restroom for staff, which eliminated the need for the "Porta John" outdoor toilet for public use. Restrooms are connected to the residential septic system on the property.

**Medical Facilities and Fire Protection:** The nearest Rural/Metro fire station is located at 160<sup>th</sup> Street and Rio Verde, less than a mile from SWCC, and provides both fire protection and emergency medical transport. SWCC subscribes for Rural/Metro service, has provided a site plan of the property to the station, and the personnel at the station often stop by to visit and see the animals. SWCC also has installed a lockbox, containing all keys to the facilities, so emergency personnel have access to the site in an emergency. The nearest urgent care/hospital facility is Honor Health (formerly Scottsdale Healthcare) located at Scottsdale Road and Thompson Peak Parkway, approximately 16 miles away.

SWCC does not allow visitors to interact or have any contact with the animals. In 22 years of public educational programs, SWCC has not had any need to call for emergency medical services, and we hope to keep that streak alive for many years to come.

SWCC is exploring with Rural/Metro the possibility of joint educational programs on fire safety and desert wildfires. SWCC also assists Rural/Metro with wildlife issues called into their switchboard, including responding to domestic animal emergencies and wildlife-human conflict situations at their request.

**Time of Operation:** Time of programs varies depending on the program and date, and SWCC will hold early morning and evening programs when people are most able to attend. The largest programs are during daylight hours, particularly those involving schoolchildren.

**Illumination:** SWCC does not have any illumination for educational programs other than holiday lights on the property fences, and two 100-watt lightbulbs on the outdoor ramada. Evening programs depend on the light of the full moon.

#### Other Information

The SWCC property does not have overnight camping facilities.

The typical event has at least one staff member for each 20 guests; SWCC has found that ratio works, as children do not come without either parents or teachers. Most school trips include not just teachers, but also parent volunteers.

Programs during the warmer months generally have lower attendance than during the late fall, winter, and early spring; SWCC attendance increases with both winter visitors as well as school programming, with November through April are the most popular months to visit SWCC. Hours for public activities, however, are generally shorter in the winter due to the shorter daylight hours.

The site plan submitted with this application shows both the existing structures as well as the general locations for different types of animals at SWCC.



# Maricopa County

## Planning & Development Department

Robert Fedorka, P.E.  
Planning & Development  
501 North 44<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Phoenix, Arizona 85008  
Phone: (602) 506-7151  
Fax: (602) 506-8762  
[www.maricopa.gov/planning](http://www.maricopa.gov/planning)  
Email address:  
[RobertFedorka@mail.maricopa.gov](mailto:RobertFedorka@mail.maricopa.gov)

**Date:** March 21, 2016

**Memo To:** Darren Gerard, AICP, Deputy Director, Department of Planning & Development

**Attn:** Farhad Tavassoli, Planner, Planning & Development Services

**From:** Robert Fedorka, P.E., Engineering Supervisor, Planning & Development Services

**cc:** Michael Norris, P.E., Engineering Manager, Planning & Development Services

**Subject:** Z2016016– SUP – Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center  
(E1 Memo)

**Job Site Address:** 27026 N. 156<sup>th</sup> Street, Rio Verde

**APN(s):** 219-37-416C

Based on the site's agricultural exempt status, the site is exempt from the Maricopa County Drainage Regulations.

Engineering Review (Drainage, Flood Control & MCDOT) has reviewed the plans and narrative submittal date stamped 03/08/2016 for this zoning case and has no objections.

Any approval of this case should include the following stipulations:

1. Any new structure exceeding 200 ft<sup>2</sup>; or site disturbance exceeding 1,500 ft<sup>2</sup>, constructed/created for the public assembly use, will be required to comply with the Drainage Regulations (i.e. require an engineered grading and drainage plans & storm water retention for commercial uses).
2. Exemption from the Drainage Regulations does not relieve the owner from liability if its actions cause flood damage to any person or property.
3. Engineering review of planning and/or zoning cases is for conceptual design only and does not represent final design approval nor shall it entitle applicants to future designs that are not in conformance with Section 1205 of the Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance and the Maricopa County Drainage Policies and Standards.
4. All development and engineering design shall be in conformance with Section 1205 of the Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance and current engineering policies, standards and best practices at the time of application for construction.

Please contact me if you have any questions or require clarification of these comments.



# Maricopa County

Environmental Services Department

Water and Waste Management  
Division  
Subdivision Infrastructure &  
Planning Program  
1001 N. Central Avenue #150  
Phoenix, Arizona 85004  
Phone: (602) 506-6666  
Fax: (602) 506-5813  
TDD 602 506 6704

**DATE:** March 17, 2016

**TO :** Farhad Tavassoli, Planning & Development Dept.  
Planner.

**FROM:** Souren Naradikian, P.E.  
Senior Civil Engineer

**SUBJECT:** Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center; Z2016016

The Maricopa County Environmental Services Department (MCESD) has reviewed documents received from the Maricopa County Planning and Zoning Department for the above referenced project. This project is a request for public assembly for educational programs, summer camps and wildlife rehabilitation. Water/ Sewer the property has a privet well and also stocks a refrigerator with bottled water for guest. The property also uses an on-site septic system. Stormwater - While the parcel is located in the urbanized unincorporated area, the disturbed area is estimated to be much less than one acre and is therefore, not regulated by the Maricopa County Stormwater Quality Program.

Based on the above, MCESD **raised no objections** to the Planning & Development Department in Accela Automation on March 17, 2016 and the project may proceed with the following stipulations:

**Stipulations: None**

It should be noted that several other Maricopa County agencies must review and recommend approval of this project. Final approval authority for this project rests with the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors.

**First Name**  
**Last Name**  
**Address**  
**City**  
**State**  
**Zip Code**  
**E-mail Address**

Maricopa County Planning & Development  
501 N. 44th Street, Suite 200  
Phoenix, AZ 85008  
Re: Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center

Dear Sir or Madam:

I write to support Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center's application for a special use permit to allow public educational programs, summer camps, veterinary medicine, and wildlife rehabilitation activities. The Center is a critical community resource. Its work in rescuing native wild animals and in educating the public – especially children – about wildlife is vital to life in a desert environment.

**Letter**

The Center also provides essential on-call wildlife management and rehabilitation services to public agencies, and needs public support, which comes in large part from the visibility and support from the public tours.

Far from being a detriment to the neighborhood, the Center provides a vital public service and also enhances the area, helping to preserve its rural and desert nature. It is a good neighbor and a wonderful resource. Please grant the special use permit to allow the Center to continue its work and benefit to the community.

Very truly yours,

**Electronic  
Signature**  
**Date**



THE STATE OF ARIZONA  
**GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT**

5000 W. CAREFREE HIGHWAY  
PHOENIX, AZ 85086-5000  
(602) 942-3000 • WWW.AZGFD.GOV

**GOVERNOR**

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY

**COMMISSIONERS**

CHAIRMAN, KURT R. DAVIS, PHOENIX  
EDWARD "PAT" MADDEN, FLAGSTAFF  
JAMES R. AMMONS, YUMA  
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ERIC S. SPARKS, TUCSON

**DIRECTOR**

LARRY D. VOYLES

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

TY E. GRAY



April 14, 2016

Farhad Tavassoli  
Maricopa County Planning and Development Department  
501 N. 44<sup>th</sup> St. 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Phoenix, AZ 85008

RE: Linda Searles; SUP Z2016016

Dear Mr. Tavassoli:

As the steward of Arizona's wildlife, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (Department) relies upon a coalition of passionate and knowledgeable volunteers and organizations to help accomplish our mission. For nearly three decades, the Department has relied greatly upon Ms. Searles and the Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center, to support our efforts to conserve and protect Arizona's wildlife, strengthen the public's appreciation and awareness of conservation issues, and provide immediate medical care for sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife.

The Department has a strong, vested interest in ensuring Ms. Searle's non-profit facility continues to operate without substantive restrictions. Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center has furnished an altruistic service that no other nonprofit, business, or government agency provides, greatly benefitting wildlife, the citizens of Maricopa County and Arizona, and the Department. They provide services and benefits to wildlife and the public, such as:

- Inspirational public education and outreach programs teaching the intrinsic value of Arizona's wildlife and their habitats;
- Rehabilitating countless sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife, then successfully returning the great majority of those individual animals to the wild;
- Providing "forever homes" for wildlife that cannot be returned to the wild and otherwise would have been euthanized due to physical or behavioral issues; and
- Supporting and advising researchers, veterinarians, and Department staff in answering scientific and management questions regarding wildlife and captive husbandry.

These examples clearly illustrate Ms. Searles' commitment to wildlife, her role in the Department's conservation coalition, and the value provided to citizens in Maricopa County and statewide.

Mr. Farhad Tavassoli

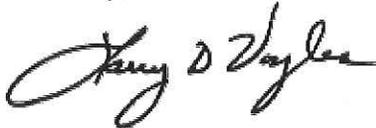
April 14, 2016

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To ensure there is no disruption of her participation in the Department's coalition or interruption of the essential services she provides to wildlife and citizens, the Department respectfully requests that Ms. Searles be awarded a Special Use Permit that allows her to continue wildlife conservation and education outreach efforts unhindered.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and anticipated support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry D. Voyles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Larry" being the most prominent.

Larry D. Voyles

Director

cc: Ty Gray  
Jim Paxon  
Tom Finley  
Jay Cook