



MEMORANDUM

Date: June 1, 2023

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Leshner
County Administrator

Re: **Fiscal Year 2022/23 Budget Allocation for Acquisition of Conservation Land - Progress Report Number 3**

The Board of Supervisors included \$2 million in the adopted Fiscal Year (FY) 2022/23 budget for acquisition of conservation land. Attached is the third progress report from the internal Conservation Land Acquisition Team (CLAT) with updates on previously recommended properties, new recommendations for acquisition, status of the allocation fund, and expansion of the criteria used to guide the identification of potential acquisition properties should the Board approve the second round of funding in the FY2023/24 Final Budget. The report also summarizes property operation and maintenance needs.

Under my previous direction, CLAT has been pursuing acquisition of three properties consisting of seven parcels totaling nearly 60 acres. Approximately 40 of the 60 acres have been acquired based on Board-approved acquisition agreements. Negotiations for the remaining 20 acres are still in progress.

Three new properties are being advanced for acquisition. In total, they would add approximately 328 acres of fee owned land (eight parcels) and nearly 7,100 acres of a state grazing lease to the County's Conservation Land portfolio. These acquisitions would represent a continued investment in the SDCP's focus on habitat and biological corridors, mountain parks and recreation, and ranch conservation.

As is typical of real property negotiations, timelines are fluid and dependent upon property-specific issues. It is apparent that while a few acquisitions may be completed by the end of FY2022/23, some will likely extend into FY2023/24, especially those related to the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) grant. Currently, approximately half of the \$2 million FY2022/23 allocation is expected to be spent for acquisitions completed this fiscal year with the balance available to complete acquisitions occurring in FY2023/24.

Should the Board provide the recommended FY2023/24 budget allocation for the continued acquisition of conservation land, CLAT will apply a revised set of Preferred Selection Criteria to guide the identification of potentially suitable properties. These revisions will allow the consideration of properties that address existing gaps in the management of the County's current conservation land portfolio while still contributing to the vision of the SDCP.

The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors

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I have approved staff's recommendations to:

- Continue negotiations with the owners of the Buckelew Inholding to conclude acquisitions according to the approved acquisition agreement.
- Continue discussions with the owners of Lande, Christensen, and Parkland Foundation properties to determine acceptable purchase prices. Should these negotiations succeed, acquisition agreements will be drafted and submitted to the Board through the normal processes.
- Continue discussions with the owners of Banda, Larsen, and Redstone parcels to determine acceptable purchase prices. Should these negotiations succeed, acquisition agreements will be drafted and submitted to the Board through the normal processes after all documents necessary to execute the federal HCP grant are completed and approved by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Apply the proposed expanded set of Preferred Selection Criteria should the Board approve the FY2023/24 budget allocation for the continued acquisition of conservation land.

JKL/anc

Attachment

c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator
Francisco Garcia, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator
Linda Mayro, Director, Office of Sustainability and Conservation
Victor Pereira, Director, Natural Resources Parks and Recreation
Nicole Fyffe, Senior Advisor, County Administrator's Office

Date: May 31, 2023

To: Jan Leshar
County Administrator

From: Linda Mayro, Director *LM*
Sustainability and Conservation

Thru: Carmine DeBonis, Jr.
Deputy County Administrator, Public Works

Re: **FY 2022/2023 Budget Allocation for Acquisition of Conservation Land – Progress Report No.3**

This memo is the third in a series of updates pertaining to progress toward expending the Board of Supervisors’ (Board) FY2022/2023 Budget allocation of \$2 million for the acquisition of conservation land.

Previously, your [September 12, 2022 memo](#) to the Board presented guidelines to evaluate properties for potential acquisition with this FY 2022/2023 allocation and directed that a Conservation Land Acquisition Team (CLAT) carry out those evaluations. Subsequent updates occurred [October 20, 2022](#) and [December 6, 2022](#). This memo brings current information on those properties previously presented and on new properties currently under consideration. Along with other relevant topics, it also touches on projected acquisition timeframes and the preferred selection criteria that CLAT would employ should the proposed additional \$2 million funding allocation be approved in the FY 2023/2024 Final Budget.

Update on Previously Presented Properties

To date, you have directed CLAT to pursue acquisition of three properties; all have acquisition agreements approved by the Board (Buckelew, Tuck 20, and The Nature Conservancy). The Nature Conservancy and Tuck 20 parcels have been acquired; Real Property Services anticipates closing on the Buckelew property before the end of this fiscal year.

For reference, prior updates provided extensive background details on each of these properties and will not be repeated here.

Buckelew Inholding

The Board approved an acquisition agreement for this approximately 10-acre private property within the County’s Buckelew Ranch on December 26, 2022. Efforts are on-going and expected to conclude before the end of this fiscal year. To date, known due diligence and acquisition costs are estimated at \$734,000.

As originally reported in the October 2022 update, operation and maintenance costs for this property should it be acquired are in the range of \$67,000 per year. This continues to be the expectation.

Tuck 20

The Board approved acquisition of this 20-acre parcel on January 24, 2023. The County took title on May 8, 2023, at a total cost of approximately \$41,750. Additionally, the property owner was offering another nearby 40-acre parcel to the Regional Flood Control District. This acquisition was also completed on May

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8, 2023, funded entirely with Regional Flood Control District funds. Collectively, these acquisitions removed the last remaining private inholdings from within M-Diamond which the County operates as a working ranch and contribute to conservation of the San Pedro River watershed.

As originally reported in the October 2022 update operation and maintenance costs for the 20-acre property are estimated at \$20,000 per year. This continues to be the expectation.

CAP Land Bridge

This property on the west side of the Tucson Mountains is comprised of five parcels belonging to three separate owners (The Nature Conservancy, Larsen, and Banda). These parcels, totaling approximately 30 acres, are adjacent to an existing wildlife bridge over the Central Arizona Project and provide an important connection between protected federal lands in the Tucson Mitigation Corridor.

A federal Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) grant has been awarded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to reimburse acquisition costs for these parcels. However, after receiving clarification from the Service, only acquisition costs for the Larsen and Banda parcels are currently eligible. Additionally, the maximum reimbursement amount has been reduced to no more than \$266,744 and requires the County to contribute a 26 percent match (\$93,720) toward the cost of acquisition. Matching funds would come from the FY2022/2023 Budget allocation for conservation land. Preparation of final contract documents is still in progress and accessing grant funds is contingent on their completion.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) - The Board authorized acquisition of these three parcels totaling approximately 20 acres on February 7, 2023; the County acquired fee title on March 31, 2023, at a total cost of \$289,320. Because terms of the acquisition did not conform to HCP grant requirements, acquisition costs for these parcels are not eligible for reimbursement under the HCP grant.

Larsen – On December 6, 2022, County Administration directed CLAT to pursue negotiations to acquire this approximately four-acre parcel. Negotiations with the owner continue to be positive. The appraised value has been opined at \$109,000. Requirements of the HCP grant require the final value be subject to review by an outside reviewer which has been completed. Real Property Services estimates land purchase and closing costs at approximately \$113,000. To leverage grant funds for reimbursement, however, acquisition of this parcel must happen after the HCP grant contract documents are completed and approved which will most likely push closing into FY2023/2024.

Banda – On December 6, 2022, County Administration also directed CLAT to pursue negotiations to acquire this approximately five-acre parcel. Negotiations with the owner are not progressing due to a significant difference of opinion about the monetary value of the property. The appraised value has been opined at \$78,000 but the property owner is asking for significantly more. Given the current difference of opinion of value, it is unlikely that acquisition would occur before FY2023/2024.

The December 2022 update reported that operation and maintenance costs should all five of these CAP Land Bridge parcels be acquired would approximate \$31,000 for the first year following acquisition with about \$10,000 annually for management and monitoring.

New Properties Under Consideration

Several new opportunities have been identified since the last update. All are in the Conservation Lands System (CLS) and collectively support multiple Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP) elements. One involves two parcels that would strengthen the effectiveness of the CAP Land Bridge wildlife crossing; others would expand two important County natural resource park properties, Colossal Cave Mountain Park and Tucson Mountain Park.

Details about the characteristics of these new properties can be found in the attached completed checklists.

CAP Land Bridge Additions – Redstone & Christensen

These two privately owned, undeveloped parcels in Supervisor District 3 are good candidates for acquisition. While neither have a Priority Acquisition status, they are proximal to other properties in the CAP Land Bridge (Figure 1) where properties have been acquired and negotiations are continuing with property owners as discussed above. Together, these parcels would add 12.5 acres to the nearly 30 acres previously identified, potentially protecting up to 42 acres at this very significant location which advances the SDCP's Critical Habitats and Biological Corridor element.

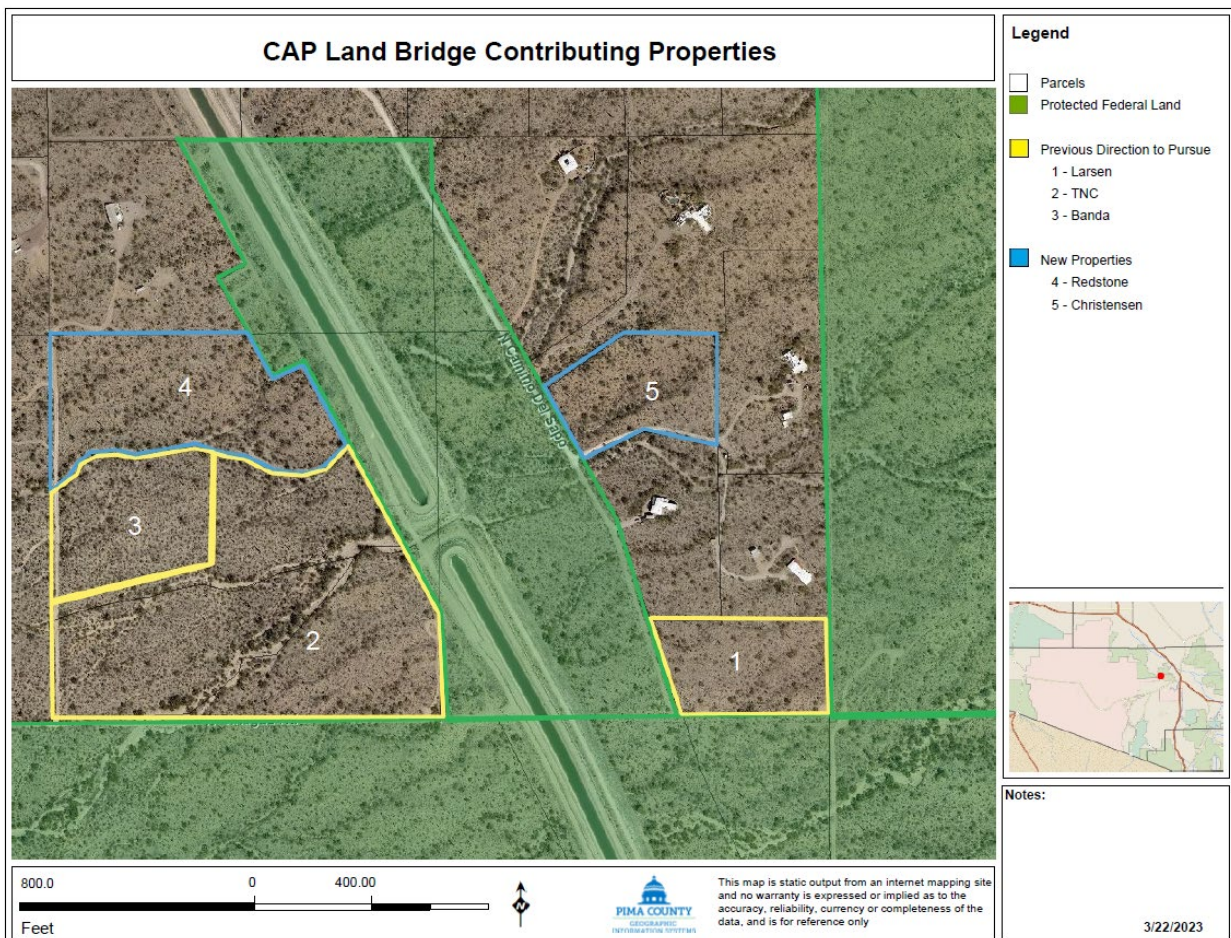


Figure 1. Relationship of Redstone and Christensen parcels with other CAP Land Bridge parcels.

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Real Property Services has obtained appraisals for both parcels with Redstone (8.4 acres) appraised at \$125,000 and Christensen (4.1 acres) at \$92,500. The Redstone property can be included in the aforementioned revised HCP grant which requires contract documents be finalized prior to property acquisition. This means closing on the Redstone parcel would likely occur in FY2023/2024. The Christensen parcel is not grant eligible, but acquisition is also expected in FY2023/2024.

Natural Resources Parks and Recreation (NRPR) estimates property monitoring and management costs at approximately \$16,340 for the first year following acquisition; annual costs for the following four years fall to \$12,245. These costs include establishing a baseline property inventory, assessment, and initial property clean-up followed by annual routine land stewardship activities.

Parklands Foundation

This is a collection of five, mostly undeveloped, privately owned parcels in the CLS – Biological Core Management Area and located in Supervisor District 4 with all but one being contiguous to Colossal Cave Mountain Park (Figure 2). On-site development is not recent and consists of one building, outhouse, and chicken coop all of which are dilapidated and deteriorating.

The Parklands Foundation is interested in selling the fee property to the County and would also transfer a 7,093-acre State grazing lease (Figure 3). Based on an appraisal requested by Real Property Services, the 311 acres of fee property is valued at \$1,060,000 which translates to approximately \$3,400 per acre.

Only part of this acreage is identified as a Priority Acquisition for Community Open Space; however, acquiring all five parcels would add 311 acres to Colossal Cave Mountain Park and incorporate 7,093 acres of grazing lease lands into NRPR's Ranch Management Program. This addition to Colossal Cave Mountain Park is a significant expansion of the park's recreational value and aligns with the SDCP's Mountain Parks and Recreation element.

The addition of fee acres and State grazing lease to the County's conservation land portfolio would significantly expand protection of the Cienega Creek and Agua Verde Creek watershed and create greater landscape connectivity between Cienega Creek Natural Preserve and the federally protected Rincon Mountains. This connection is considered by the Arizona Game and Fish Department to be an important wildlife linkage between the Rincon and Whetstone Mountain ranges.

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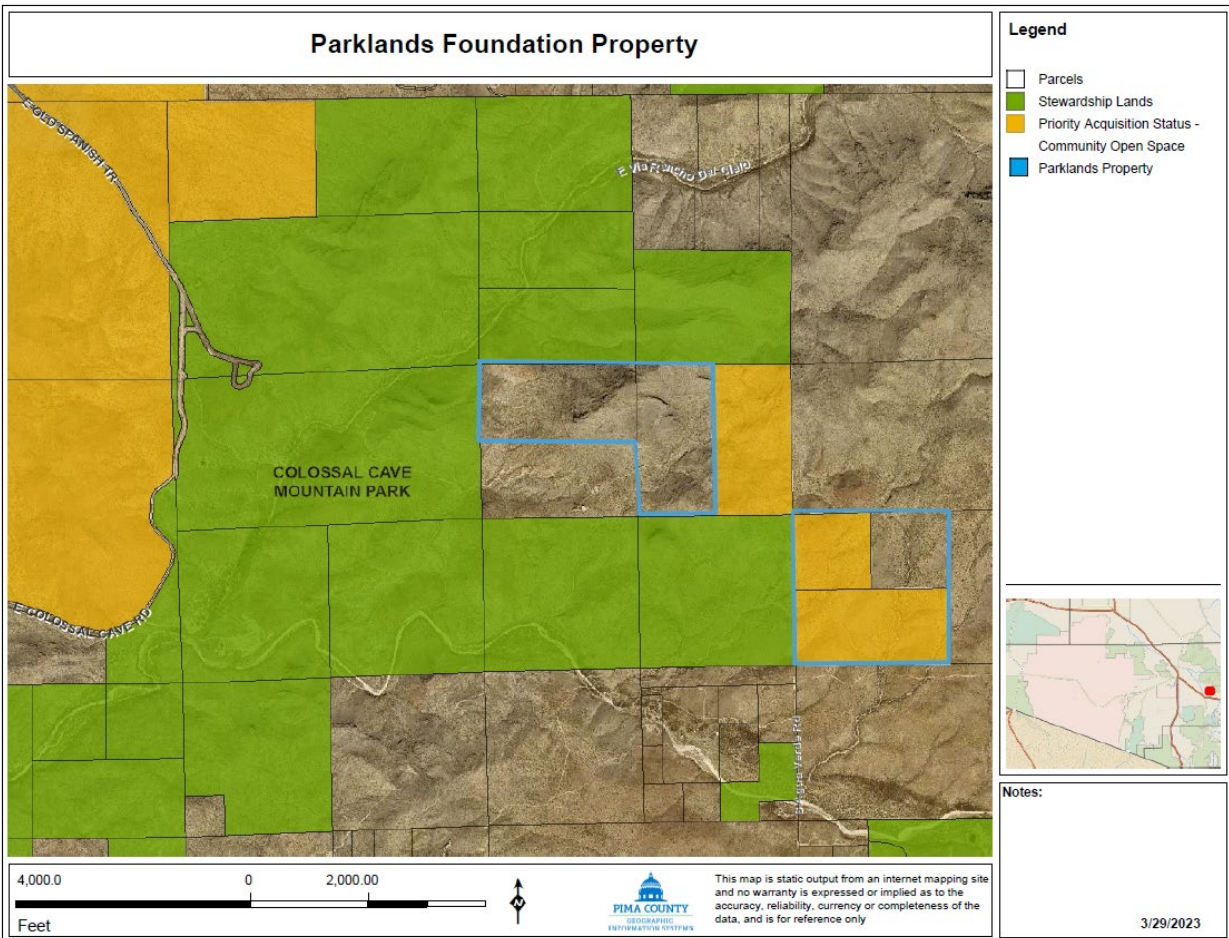


Figure 2. Parklands Foundation property in relation to Colossal Cave Mountain Park and Priority Acquisition Properties.

Estimated property monitoring and management costs include removal of structures, basic property inventory, and property stewardship are approximately \$21,540 for the first year. For the next four years costs drop to about \$4,000 annually largely due to the property’s rural setting and low presence of buffelgrass.

CLAT anticipates acquisition of the Parklands Foundation property would occur in FY2023/2024.

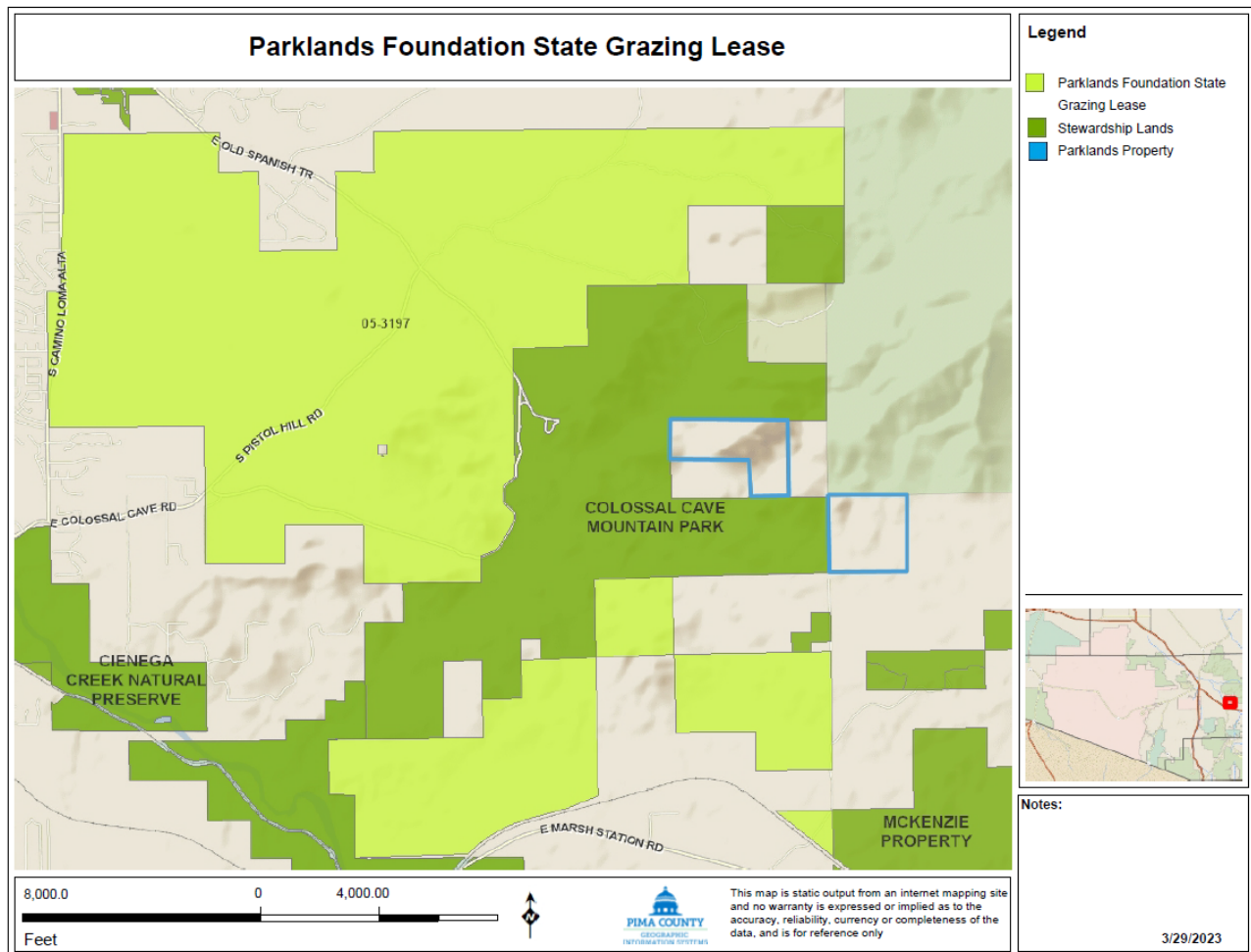


Figure 3. Parklands State grazing lease (No.05-3197) relative to the fee acres and colossal Cave Mountain Park

Lande

This approximately 5-acre parcel within Supervisor District 5 is privately owned with a willing seller (Figure 4). It is adjacent to Tucson Mountain Park – Robles Pass Unit and lies within the CLS - Multiple Use Management Area. Acquisition would expand what is currently a narrow connection between two sections of the Robles Pass Trails Park.

Additionally, it falls within an area that the Arizona Game and Fish Department identified as important for the movement of wildlife between the Tucson Mountain Park, the Tohono O’odham San Xavier District, and the Santa Cruz River. If acquired, these recreational and biological characteristics would contribute to the SDCP’s Critical Habitats and Biological Corridor element as well as the Mountain Parks and Recreation element.

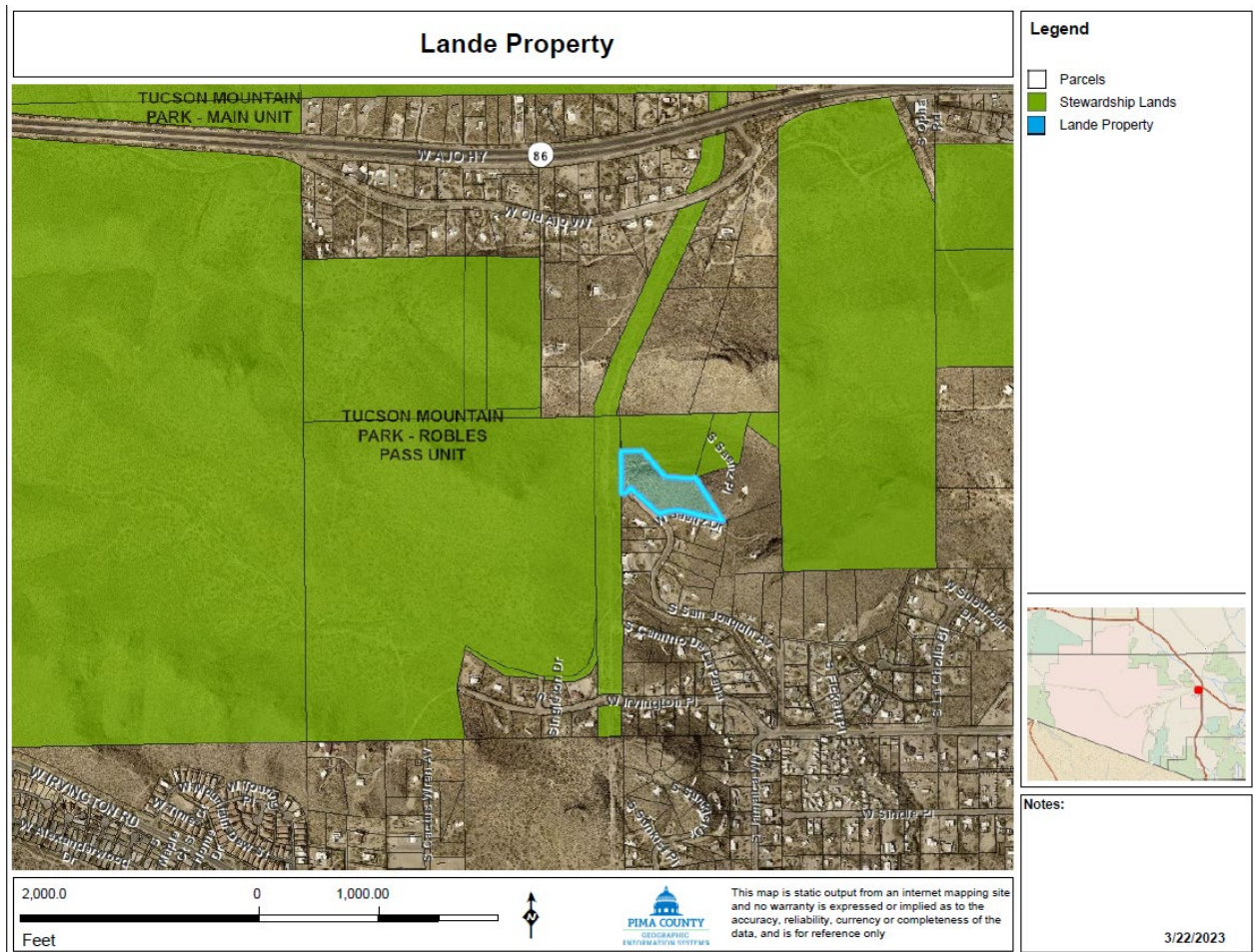


Figure 4. Lande Property in relation to Tucson Mountain Park – Robles Pass Unit.

The property is undeveloped except for a confined area along West Saenz Drive that has been cleared of vegetation and used for occasional vehicle parking. The site supports plentiful saguaros; however, it is also heavily infested with buffelgrass, a problematic invasive species which NRPR views as a contributing source of the buffelgrass invasion of Tucson Mountain Park. County ownership of the Lande property would give NRPR the ability to curb the on-going spread of buffelgrass that originates from this site.

Upon acquisition, the Lande property would be incorporated into the Tucson Mountain Park - Robles Pass Unit and provide opportunities for neighborhood level access to the existing trail system (Figure 5).

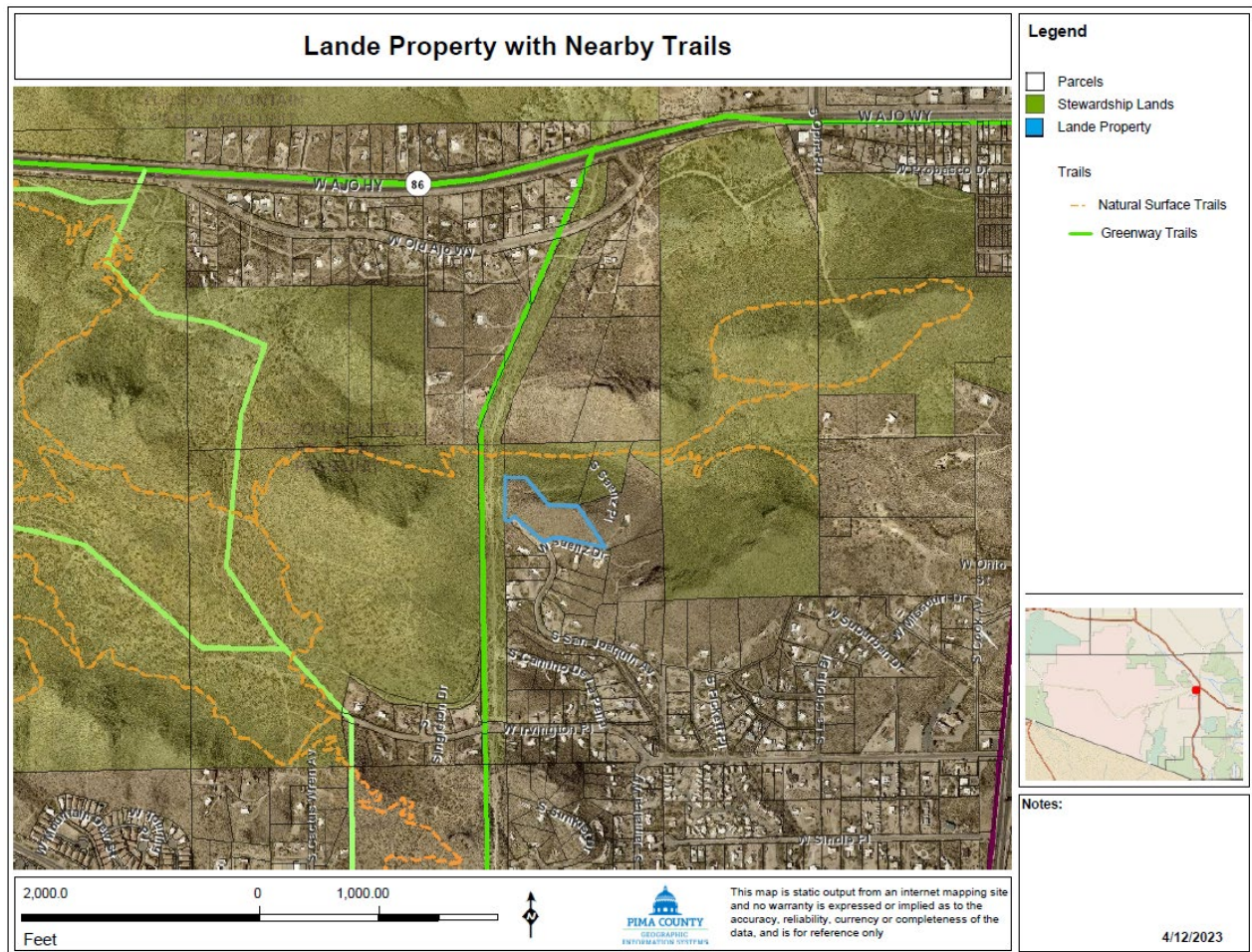


Figure 5. Lande Property in relation to public trails.

Management of the property would be primarily related to buffelgrass control and treatment as well as curtailing proliferation of social trails. NRPR estimates property monitoring and management costs for the first year following acquisition at approximately \$16,340 with subsequent annual costs for the next four years at approximately \$12,245. This includes establishing a baseline property inventory, assessment, initial property clean-up, and extensive initial buffelgrass treatments followed by annual routine land stewardship actions.

Real Property Services obtained an appraised value for this property at \$123,000. Acquisition of the property could occur as soon as the first quarter of FY2023/2024.

Operation and Management Costs

Monitoring and management costs for the properties previously authorized for acquisition and the new ones proposed herein vary based on size, expected use, and identifiable challenges. The total financial need to perform necessary land and resource management on these properties for the first year following acquisition is approximately \$172,220 with annual costs for the next few years estimated at \$115,500.

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These cost estimates are only for acquired fee acres; cost estimates related to re-establishing livestock grazing on the Parklands Foundation State grazing lease will be evaluated in the future provided the County obtains the lease land and the County decides to re-establish livestock grazing.

Operation and management costs for acquisition of properties discussed herein will be absorbed by the NRPR budget. However, as future acquisitions occur, allocation of a percentage of the annual acquisition funds or a department base budget increase would be needed to sustain operations and management of new lands.

Future Preferred Selection Criteria

The Preferred Selection Criteria established in September 2022 has guided the evaluation and assessment of properties for potential acquisition with the FY2022/2023 budget allocation for conservation land. Based on this experience, CLAT has identified additional factors that could expand acquisition opportunities to address existing gaps in the management of the County's current conservation land portfolio. CLAT proposes to use the following expanded Preferred Selection Criteria to guide the identification of potential acquisition properties should the Board approve a second round of funding in the FY2023/2024 Final Budget (new criteria are shown in *italics*):

- Privately owned land
- *State Trust land that also meets other selection criteria*
- Pursue fee title acquisition
- *Pursue partial property rights (leases, conservation easements) when appropriate*
- Property is listed as an Acquisition Priority, especially Community Open Space
- Property is near or within urban areas
- Property has potential to provide or expand public recreation opportunities (trails, parks, etc.)
- *Acquisition would reduce/remove private in-holdings internal to a County conservation property*

FY2022/2023 Fund Status

Calculations based on a running tabulation of real and projected costs suggest total acquisition costs for all properties discussed herein will potentially exceed the \$2 million FY2022/2023 budget allocation. Reimbursements from the HCP grant should help mitigate a potential exceedance, along with any funding approved by the Board for FY2023/2024. As individual negotiations settle on purchase prices, more will be known on how many and which of the above properties can be acquired.

Summary

To date, County Administration has directed that CLAT pursue acquisition of three properties totaling seven parcels and approximately 60 acres. Two acquisitions totaling 40 acres (four parcels) have been completed. Negotiations for the remaining 20 acres is on-going.

CLAT is advancing three additional properties (eight parcels) for acquisition totaling approximately 328 acres of fee land and nearly 7,100 acres under a state grazing lease. These acquisitions would represent

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a continued investment in the SDCP's focus on habitat and biological corridors, mountain parks and recreation, and ranch conservation.

Should all the properties discussed in this update be acquired, NRPR would incur new monitoring and management obligations. Collectively, first year costs are expected to total approximately \$172,220 and subsequent annual costs estimated at \$115,500.

Not all properties discussed herein can be acquired by the end of FY2022/2023; some acquisitions will extend into FY2023/2024. CLAT projects that, if successful, acquisitions could be completed as follows:

<u>FY2022/2023</u>	<u>FY2023/2024</u>
TNC (completed)	CAP Land Bridge - Larsen
Tuck 20 (completed)	CAP Land Bridge - Redstone
Buckelew (completion pending)	CAP Land Bridge - Christensen
	CAP Land Bridge - Banda
	Lande
	Parklands Foundation

According to this schedule, approximately half of the \$2 million FY2022/2023 allocation is expected to fund acquisitions made in FY2022/2023 with the remaining balance available for acquisitions occurring in FY2023/2024.

If the Board approves the FY2023/2024 budget allocation for the continued acquisition of conservation land, CLAT recommends applying a revised set of Preferred Selection Criteria to guide the identification of potentially suitable properties. These revisions are intended to expand acquisition efforts to address existing gaps in the management of the County's current conservation land portfolio while still contributing to the vision of the SDCP.

Next Steps

Subject to your approval, staff intends to pursue the following:

- Continue negotiations with the owners of Buckelew Inholding to conclude the acquisition in accordance with the Board-approved acquisition agreement.
- Continue discussions with the owners of Lande, Christensen, and Parkland Foundation properties to determine acceptable purchase prices. Should these negotiations succeed, acquisition agreements will be drafted and submitted to the Board through the normal processes.
- Continue discussions with the owners of Banda, Larsen, and Redstone properties to determine acceptable purchase prices. Should these negotiations succeed, acquisition agreements will be drafted and submitted to the Board through the normal processes after all documents necessary to execute the federal HCP grant are completed and approved by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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- Apply an expanded set of Preferred Selection Criteria should the Board provide a final approval of the FY2023/2024 budget allocation for the continued acquisition of conservation land.

Concur / Do Not Concur

Approve / Do Not Approve

Carmine DeBonis, Jr.
Deputy County Administrator, Public Works

Jan Leshner, County Administrator

Attachments – Evaluations of Property Acquisition Potential

cc: Victor Pereira, Director - NRPR
Eric Shepp, Director - RFCD
Jeff Teplitsky, Director – Real Property Services
Conservation Land Acquisition Team Members

Attachment 1:

Evaluation of CAP Land Bridge (Redstone and Christensen) Acquisition Potential

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23
CAP Land Bridge – Redstone and Christensen
Evaluation of April 2023**

APN No(s): Redstone - 21107010H; Christensen - 21107011M
Township, Range, Section: T14S, R11E, Section 03
Current Owner(s): Johanna Redstone; Kay-Christensen Family Trust

Requirements for Acquisition Eligibility

- Privately owned? **Yes**

Evaluation Parameters

2015 Priority Acquisition Map Status:

- Specify 2015 Map category: **None.**

Transactional Information:

- Willing Sellers?
**Both property owners are interested in selling.
Redstone property is actively being marketed for sale.**
- Timeframe for acquisition?
**Redstone – FY2023/2024
Christensen - Current fiscal year**
- Owner requesting concessions?
Neither owner has identified any at this time. None of the parcels are occupied.
- Property rights to be acquired?
Fee ownership.
- Phase I Assessment related issues/concerns?
Phase I Assessment has not been ordered; issue/concerns TBD

Property Details:

- Acreage?
**Redstone – 8.4 acres
Christensen – 4.1 acres**

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**

***CAP Land Bridge – Redstone and Christensen
Evaluation of April 2023***

- Approximate distance to nearest County Conservation Land?
3000-4000 feet to Tucson Mountain Park through BOR Tucson Mitigation Corridor land.
- Approximate distance to the nearest Federal or State Preserve?
Adjoins Bureau of Reclamation's CAP corridor at designated wildlife crossing. Both properties lie within the state's Tucson Mountains Wildlife Area.
- Access?
Legal and physical access is provided to both all parcels; Redstone access is from a by County dirt roads (Sin Agua) to a private easement. Kay-Christensen parcel is accessed from a County dirt road.
- Type and extent of on-site development?
None.

SDCP Elements:

- Critical Habitats & Biological Corridors –
The CAP Land Bridge area was first identified as a Critical Landscape Connection for wildlife during the development of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan. As designated in the Conservation Lands System, it is also part of a Special Species Management Area for Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, an Important Riparian Area, and Multiple Use land. In recognition of its significance, U. S. Fish and Wildlife has awarded a Habitat Conservation Plan grant of up to \$266,744 to acquire certain properties, including Redstone (Christensen is not presently eligible for the grant). Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) submitted the grant application on Pima County's behalf. Protecting properties within the Land Bridge has been endorsed by National Park Service, U. S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection.
- Mountain Parks & Recreation – Property has potential to expand existing or create new recreational opportunities?
No, but development of the parcels would detract from views from the adjacent CAP trail. A trailhead is located on Sandario Road.
- Ranch Conservation – Is Property part of an existing ranch or farm?
No.
- Historical & Cultural Preservation – List applicable SDCP modeled cultural sensitivity categories:
The parcel is currently mapped as an area of low archaeological sensitivity due. Parcel 211-07-011M was surveyed in 1986 as part of the Tucson Aqueduct project and no sites were identified. Parcel 211-07-011H has never been surveyed. Ancestral Native American settlement and migration in the Altar Valley is not well documented, however based on

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**

***CAP Land Bridge – Redstone and Christensen
Evaluation of April 2023***

existing data, parcel 211-07-011H is currently considered to have low potential for cultural resources.

- Riparian Areas – List classifications of applicable mapped riparian areas under Pima County Code Chapter 16.30, *Watercourse and Riparian Habitat Protection and Mitigation Requirements*: **The presence of an Important Riparian Area Class C is notable because the CAP canal has significantly reduced runoff to much of the Tucson Mountains piedmont. The wash enriches the biological productivity of both parcels. The presence of ironwood and palo verde trees and large saguaro cacti enhances its potential to serve as habitat for many species, including the pygmy owl.**

Cost:

- Asking Price less than or equal to Real Property Budget Estimate?
**Real Property Services obtained appraisals for both properties:
Redstone appraised for \$125,000; current listing price is also at \$125,000
Christensen appraised for \$99,000**
- List potential funding sources (e.g., grants, LWCF):
Up to \$266,744 in federal Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition funds has been awarded by USFWS as a pass-through grant to AZGFD and Pima County. Pima County Conservation Acquisition Funds (\$93,720) would be used as match and an additional \$5,000 in in-kind services from AZGFD, which will administer this as a pass-through grant to Pima County. Acquisition costs incurred to purchase Redstone are eligible for reimbursement from this grant.
- Estimated Monitoring/Management cost per acre?
Cost estimates reflect a projection of expected monitoring/management activity that requires an initial, first year investment (baseline inventory, assessment and clean up), followed by routine management/monitoring for years 2-5.
 - 1st year of ownership - \$333/acre @ 12.5ac = \$16,340
 - 2nd year of ownership - \$508/acre @ 12.5ac = \$12,245
 - 3rd year of ownership - \$508/acre @ 12.5ac = \$12,245
 - 4th year of ownership - \$508/acre @ 12.5ac = \$12,245
 - 5th year of ownership - \$508/acre @ 12.5ac = \$12,245**Five-year TOTAL \$42,387**
- List management concerns:
Little to no buffelgrass on site, which reduces management/monitoring costs.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23
CAP Land Bridge – Redstone and Christensen
Evaluation of April 2023**

Additional information:

Habitat Conservation Plan grants from US Fish and Wildlife Service provide funding to States to acquire land associated with approved and permitted HCPs, such as Pima County's Multi-species Conservation Plan. These grants do not fund the mitigation required of a permittee; instead, they support land acquisition by the State or subrecipients that complement mitigation requirements.

Summary:

These two properties will increase the security of the CAP Land Bridge and functionality of the wildlife crossing at this location and both are ripe for acquisition. The Board of Supervisors previously approved an acquisition agreement for certain properties in the CAP Land Bridge and negotiations with owners of other properties in this area are on-going. The Redstone property will likely go back on the market for residential development if not acquired by the County.

The County's funds would leverage up to \$266,744 in federal funds for land acquisition that will be passed through AZGFD. Conserving properties in the CAP Land Bridge is an outgrowth of the Avra Valley Wildlife Working Group, which includes agencies as well as other conservation organizations working to improve wildlife connectivity between Ironwood Forest National Monument and the Tucson Mountains Wildlife Area.

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CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23
CAP Land Bridge – Redstone and Christensen
Evaluation of April 2023**

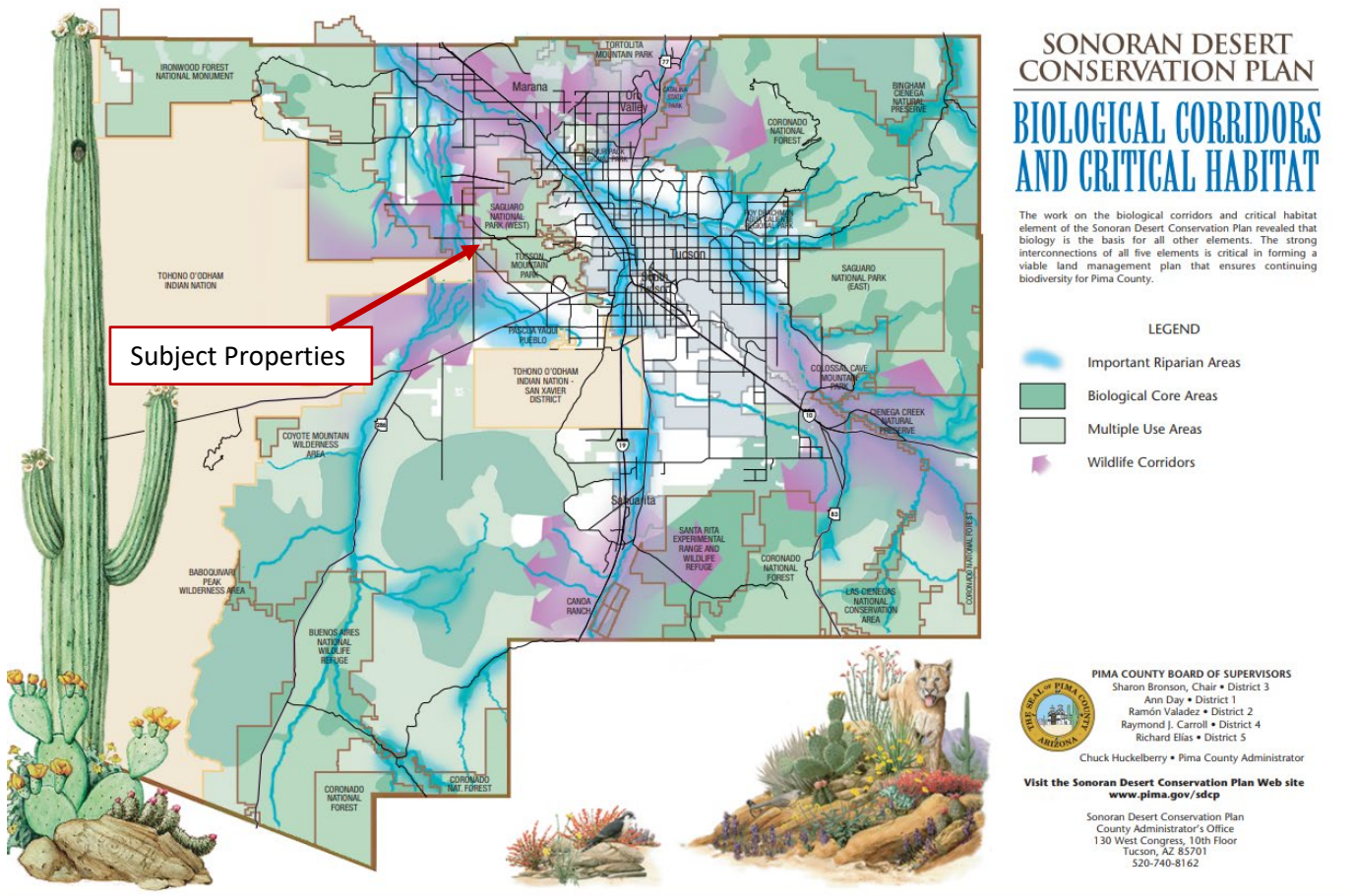


Figure 1. Regional location of Redstone and Christensen properties relative to Biological Corridors and Critical Habitat element of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**
*CAP Land Bridge – Redstone and Christensen
Evaluation of April 2023*

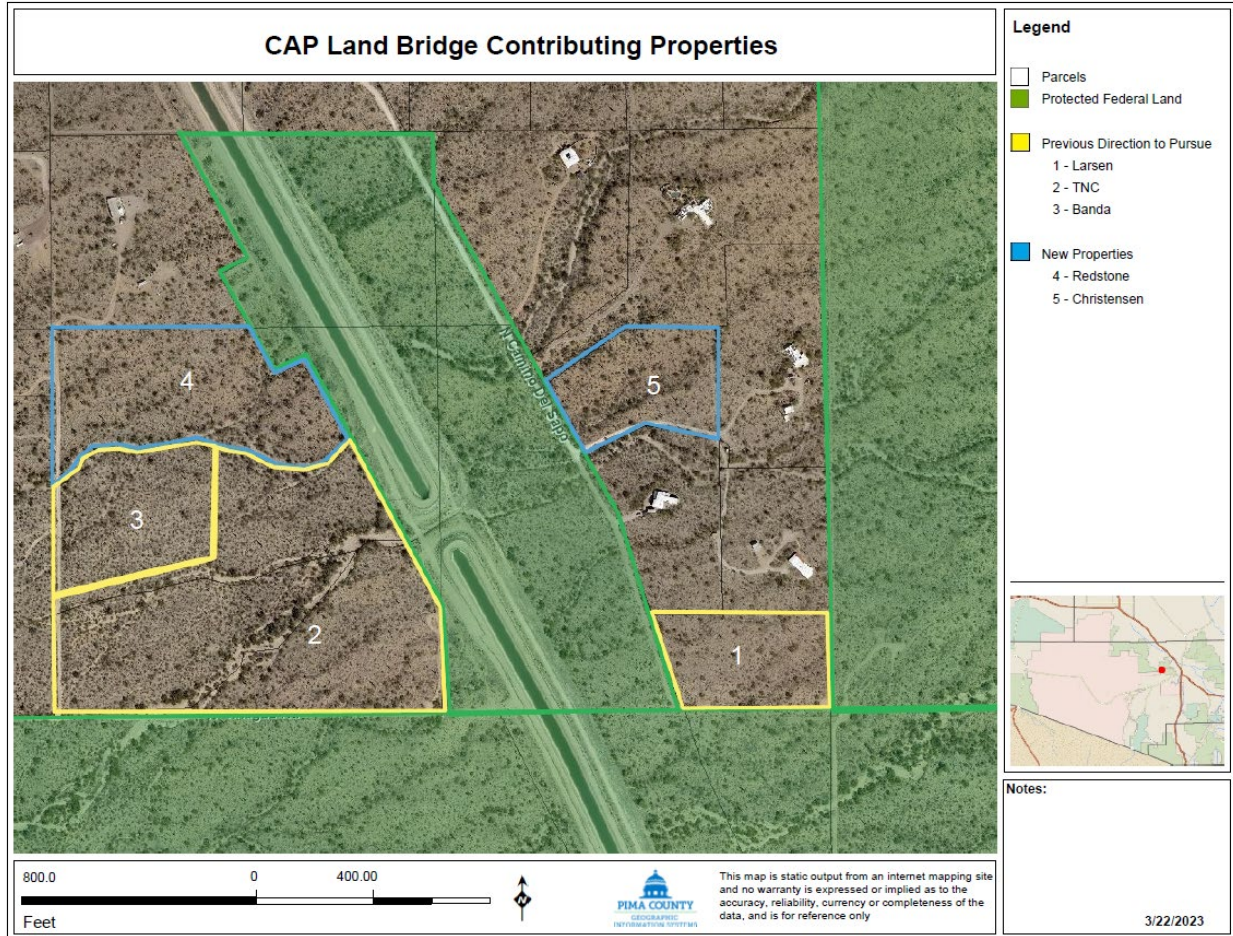


Figure 2. Relationship of Redstone and Christensen parcels with other CAP Land Bridge parcels.

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CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**
*CAP Land Bridge – Redstone and Christensen
Evaluation of April 2023*



Figure 3. Ironwood and desert hackberry growing in a wash representative of the subject properties. Open, desert scrub seen in the foreground.

Attachment 2:

Evaluation of Parklands Foundation Acquisition Potential

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23
Parklands Foundation Property
Evaluation of April 2023**

APN Nos.: 30601003B, 30601002B, 30601005E, 30601005F, 30601005G

Township, Range, Section: T16S, R17E, Sections 9 & 10

Current Owner(s): Parklands Foundation

Requirements for Acquisition Eligibility

- Privately owned? **Yes**

Evaluation Parameters

2015 Priority Acquisition Map Status:

- Specify 2015 Map category:
2 parcels designated as Community Open Space (30601005E & 30601005G) specifically for Colossal Cave Mountain Park (CCMP) Expansion.

Transactional Information:

- Willing Seller? **Yes**
- Timeframe for acquisition? (specify: current fiscal year; phased over multiple years; future)
Ideally by the end of FY2022/2023, but more likely in FY2023/2024.
- Owner requesting concessions? (e.g., life estate, partial donation, etc.)
None requested at this time
- Property rights to be acquired? (specify: fee, easement, combination, other)
Fee title to 311 acres plus 7,093 acres of State grazing lease
- Phase I Assessment related issues/concerns?
Phase I has not yet been ordered; issues/concerns TBD

Property Details:

- Acreage
Total of 311 fee acres; 7,093 acres State grazing lease
- Approximate distance to nearest County Conservation Land?
All parcels but one (30601005F) abut and share at least one boundary with Colossal Cave Mountain Park.
- Approximate distance to the nearest Federal or State Preserve?
East Unit abuts Coronado National Forest – Rincon Mountain Wilderness Area

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23
Parklands Foundation Property
Evaluation of April 2023**

- Access? (specify: legal; physical; legal & physical; none)
There does not appear to be existing legal access via road to any of the Parklands fee parcels. Property could be accessed from CCMP on foot or horseback. There is a ranch road from CCMP, going across privately owned parcel 30601003A (Maierhouser et al.), and connecting to Parklands West Unit parcels (30601002B, 30601003B) but that would require crossing private land. No existing roads connect to Parklands East Unit parcels (30601005E, 30601005F, 30601005G). There are no notes on the parcel layer about any access easements
- Type and extent of on-site development?
One existing ranch road on parcel 30601002B. One building ruin, outhouse, chicken coop, 55-gallon drums and dumped building materials are also present on parcel 30601002B. Otherwise, no known additional developments on any of the Parklands fee parcels.

SDCP Elements:

- Critical Habitats & Biological Corridors – List all applicable CLS categories:
All fee parcels are designated as Biological Core Management Areas; an Important Riparian Area crosses the southeast corner of the East Unit of the property. The addition of fee acres and State grazing lease to the County’s conservation land portfolio will significantly expand protection of the Cienega Creek and Agua Verde Creek watershed and create greater landscape connectivity between Cienega Creek Natural Preserve and the federally protected Rincon Mountains, an area considered by the Arizona Game & Fish Department to be an important wildlife linkage between the Rincon and Whetstone Mountain ranges.
- Mountain Parks & Recreation – Property has potential to expand existing or create new recreational opportunities?
Yes, there is potential to develop trails to connect with CCMP’s existing trail system.
- Ranch Conservation – Is Property part of an existing ranch or farm?
No. However, Parklands Foundation holds the nearby State grazing lease no. 05-3197, which is intended to be assigned to Pima County upon the sale of the associated fee parcels. There is no water source on this grazing lease; neither does it have a perimeter fence to contain cattle within the grazing lease. Perimeter fencing and adequate water sources would be needed to manage livestock and the health of the grazing lease rangeland if in the future the decision is made to graze cattle.
- Historical & Cultural Preservation – List applicable SDCP modeled cultural sensitivity categories:
All parcels are currently mapped as areas of low-moderate archaeological sensitivity. Modeling using data from Colossal Cave Mountain Park estimates that these lands were used seasonally for resource acquisition (hunting and plant gathering) as opposed to semi-permanent or permanent settlement.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23
Parklands Foundation Property
Evaluation of April 2023**

- Riparian Areas – List classifications of applicable mapped riparian areas under Pima County Code Chapter 16.30, *Watercourse and Riparian Habitat Protection and Mitigation Requirements*
All washes drain north to south and are tributaries to Agua Verde Creek.
 - **One wash designated as Important Riparian Area with underlying Xeroriparian Habitat - Class B crosses the very southeastern corner of the East Unit.**
 - **One wash designated as Xeroriparian Habitat - Class B crosses near the mid-point of the East Unit**
 - **One wash designated Xeroriparian Habitat – Class C crosses the West Unit.**

Cost:

- Asking Price less than or equal to Real Property Budget Estimate? (Y/N)
Real Property Service’s appraised value is \$1,060,000; \$3400 per acre
- List potential funding sources (e.g., grants, LWCF):
Board allocation(s) for acquisition of Conservation Land.
- Estimated Monitoring/Management cost per acre?
These cost estimates reflect a projection of expected monitoring/management activity that requires an initial, first year investment (baseline inventory, assessment and clean up), followed by routine monitoring/management in subsequent years. The cost projections are estimated for the first five years of ownership:

1st year of ownership - \$69.26/acre @ 311ac	= \$21,540
2nd year of ownership - \$12.86/acre @ 311ac	= \$ 4,000
3rd year of ownership - \$12.86/acre @ 311ac	= \$ 4,000
4th year of ownership - \$12.86/acre @ 311ac	= \$ 4,000
5th year of ownership - \$12.86/acre @ 311ac	= \$ 4,000
Five year TOTAL	\$37,540

Note: These estimates are for management and monitoring of the 311 fee acres only. Costs will need re-evaluation should the State grazing lease be transferred to the County.

- List management concerns (e.g., OHV use, social trails, dumping, homeless encampments, invasive species, etc.): **OHV use, social trails, dumping, homeless encampments, invasive species, illegal target shooting.**

Additional Information:

Parklands Foundation is amenable to transferring the State grazing lease at no cost to the County.

Currently there are no cattle on the grazing lease. If the County acquires the grazing lease and decides to graze cattle, recruitment for a ranch partner could be initiated after fencing and water source issues have been addressed.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
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Parklands Foundation Property
Evaluation of April 2023**

Summary:

Should all five parcels be acquired, 311 acres would be added to and managed as part of Colossal Cave Mountain Park and upon transfer, the grazing lease lands (approx, 7,093 acres) would be incorporated into NRPR's Ranch Management Program (Figure 3). The addition of 311 acres to Colossal Cave Mountain Park is a significant expansion of the park's recreational value and aligns with the SDCP's Mountain Parks & Recreation element.

The addition of fee acres and State grazing lease to the County's conservation land portfolio would significantly expand protection of the Cienega Creek and Agua Verde Creek watershed and create greater landscape connectivity between Cienega Creek Natural Preserve and the federally protected Rincon Mountains. This connection is considered by the Arizona Game & Fish Department to be an important wildlife linkage between the Rincon and Whetstone Mountain ranges.

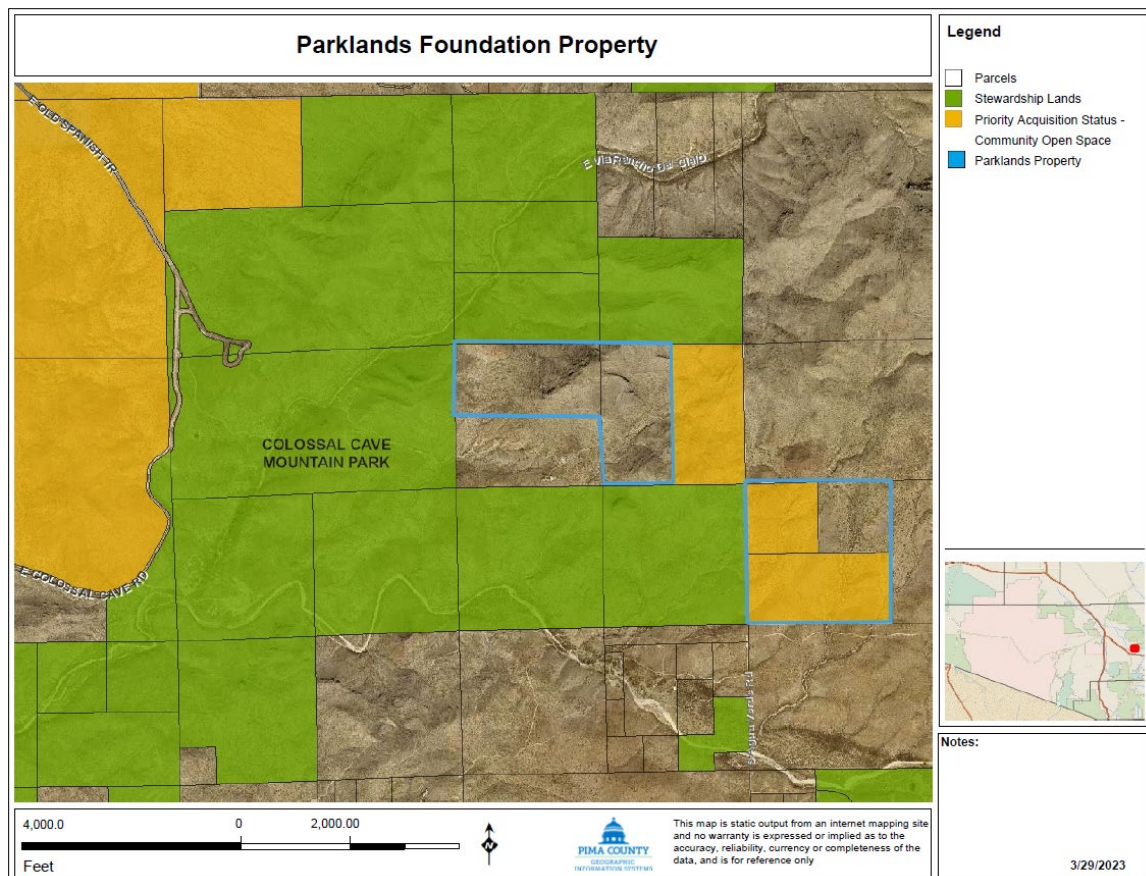


Figure 1. Location of Parkland fee acres relative to Colossal Cave Mountain Park also showing those parcels identified as Priority Acquisitions.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**
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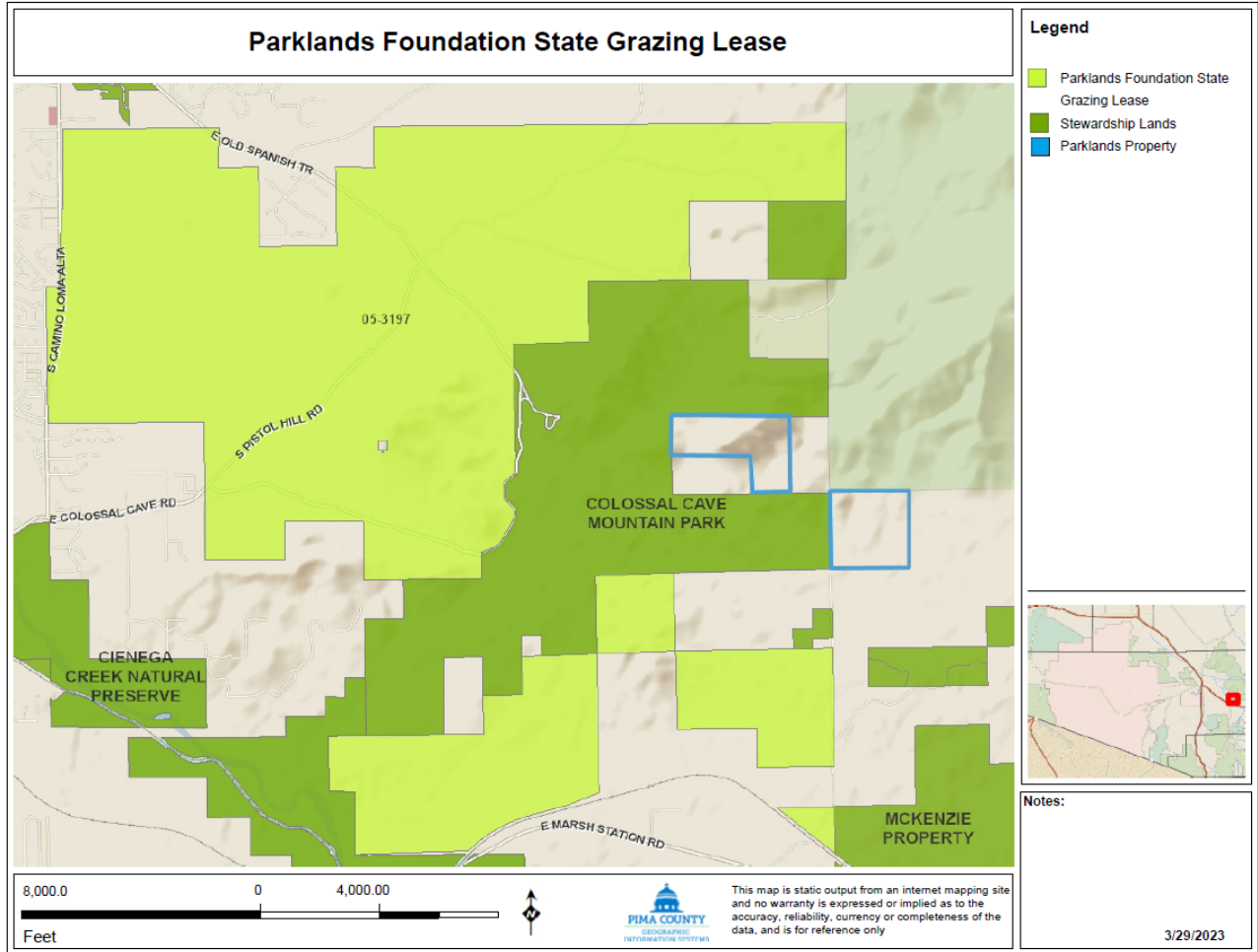


Figure 2. Parklands State grazing lease (No.05-3197) relative to the fee acres and Colossal Cave Mountain Park

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**
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Figure 3. Photo of West Unit area with building ruin and chicken coop in the foreground.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
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Attachment 3:

Evaluation of Lande Acquisition Potential

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**

*Lande Parcel
Evaluation of April 2023*

APN No.: 11935179E

Township, Range, Section: Township 14S, Range 13E, Section 33

Current Owner(s): Andrew & Lynn Lande

Requirements for Acquisition Eligibility

- Privately owned? **Yes**

Evaluation Parameters

2015 Priority Acquisition Map Status:

- Specify 2015 Map category: **None**

Transactional Information:

- Willing Seller? **Yes**
- Timeframe for acquisition? (specify: current fiscal year; phased over multiple years; future)
Possibly FY2022/2023
- Owner requesting concessions? (Y/N) (e.g., life estate, partial donation, etc.)
Currently, none have been requested
- Property rights to be acquired? (specify: fee, easement, combination, other)
Fee Title
- Phase I Assessment related issues/concerns? (Y/N)
Phase I Assessment has not yet been ordered; issues TBD

Property Details:

- Acreage
5.31 acres
- Approximate distance to nearest County Conservation Land?
West and northern parcel boundaries abut Tucson Mountain Park – Robles Pass Unit.
- Approximate distance to the nearest Federal or State Preserve?
Less than ½ mile north and slightly east of the Manzanita Park Extension owned by the Bureau of Land Management but managed by NRPR.
- Access? (specify: legal; physical; legal & physical; none)
Physical access from S San Joaquin Ave and W Saenz Dr, both public ROWs.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**

*Lande Parcel
Evaluation of April 2023*

- Type and extent of on-site development?
One cleared area large enough to fit 4-6 vehicles otherwise the property is undeveloped.

SDCP Elements:

- Critical Habitats & Biological Corridors – List all applicable CLS categories:
Entire parcel is designated as Multiple Use Management Area. It also lies within an area that the Arizona Game & Fish Department identified as important for the movement of wildlife between the Tucson Mountain Park, the Tohono O’odham San Xavier District, and the Santa Cruz River.
- Mountain Parks & Recreation – Property has potential to expand existing or create new recreational opportunities? **Yes**
 - **Trails/public park access: Property acquisition would provide the public an additional “neighborhood” access point to the Robles Pass trails via public road ROW. Would require NRPR to improve an existing social trail at this location to minimize additional social trail development.**
 - **Administrative County access: Property acquisition would provide County staff/volunteers access to Robles Pass for activities such as trail maintenance and invasive species mitigation.**
- Ranch Conservation – Is Property part of an existing ranch or farm?
No
- Historical & Cultural Preservation – List applicable SDCP modeled cultural sensitivity categories:
The parcel is currently mapped as an area of low archaeological sensitivity due. Modeling using data from surrounding areas estimates that if cultural resources are present, that these lands were used seasonally for resource acquisition (hunting and plant gathering) or historic mining/prospecting, as opposed to semi-permanent or permanent settlement.
- Riparian Areas – List classifications of applicable mapped riparian areas under Pima County Code Chapter 16.30, *Watercourse and Riparian Habitat Protection and Mitigation Requirements*
There are none

Cost:

- Asking Price less than or equal to Real Property Budget Estimate? (Y/N)
Appraisal is in progress
- List potential funding sources (e.g., grants, LWCF):
Board allocation(s) for acquisition of Conservation Land.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
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*Lande Parcel
Evaluation of April 2023*

- Estimated Monitoring/Management cost per acre?
The cost estimates reflect a projection of expected monitoring/management activity that requires an initial, first year investment (baseline inventory, assessment and clean up), followed by an extensive effort to mitigate buffelgrass invasion over the next four (4) years.
 - 1st year of ownership - \$3,077/acre @ 5.31ac = \$16,340
 - 2nd year of ownership - \$2,306/acre @ 5.31ac = \$12,245
 - 3rd year of ownership - \$2,306/acre @ 5.31ac = \$12,245
 - 4th year of ownership - \$2,306/acre @ 5.31ac = \$12,245
 - 5th year of ownership - \$2,306/acre @ 5.31ac = \$12,245

Five-year TOTAL \$65,320

These costs are associated with the high level of buffelgrass invasion on the Lande Property. An initial, extensive effort to control the buffelgrass population in year one (\$3,077/acre), is followed by extensive follow-up control efforts in the second to fifth year (\$2,306/acre).

- List management concerns (e.g., OHV use, social trails, dumping, homeless encampments, invasive species, etc.):
 - **Potential dumping on the cleared area located on the SE corner of the property (one large tire and one pallet present on 3/22/2023.)**
 - **This property has buffelgrass present with nearly 100% cover.**
 - **Potential for social trail development, i.e. unofficial trails created by incursion into TMP**

Additional Information:

The Lande property is a significant source of buffelgrass invasion into Tucson Mountain Park. Currently, NRPR staff are working with volunteers and grant funding to control buffelgrass in Tucson Mountain Park in the vicinity of the Lande Property. County ownership of the Lande Property would allow staff to better control buffelgrass invasion throughout TMP by providing access to a significant source of the invasive grass that is on the Lande property.

Summary:

The Lande property is ripe for acquisition. It abuts and would expand the Tucson Mountain Park-Robles Pass Unit by about 5 acres as well as increase the County's conservation of land within the CLS and within a designated wildlife movement area. Saguaros are numerous and appear relatively healthy. The 100% infestation of buffelgrass is concerning as it is a fire hazard to the existing native saguaro vegetation community. NRPR also views this property as a contributing source to the spread of buffelgrass within the Robles Pass Unit. Acquisition would allow NRPR to exercise control and eradication measures to mitigate on-going spread of buffelgrass into TMP and further reduce the loss of saguaros. There are also opportunities to provide neighborhood level access to the existing trail system although this would require more site development to minimize proliferation of social trails.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**

*Lande Parcel
Evaluation of April 2023*

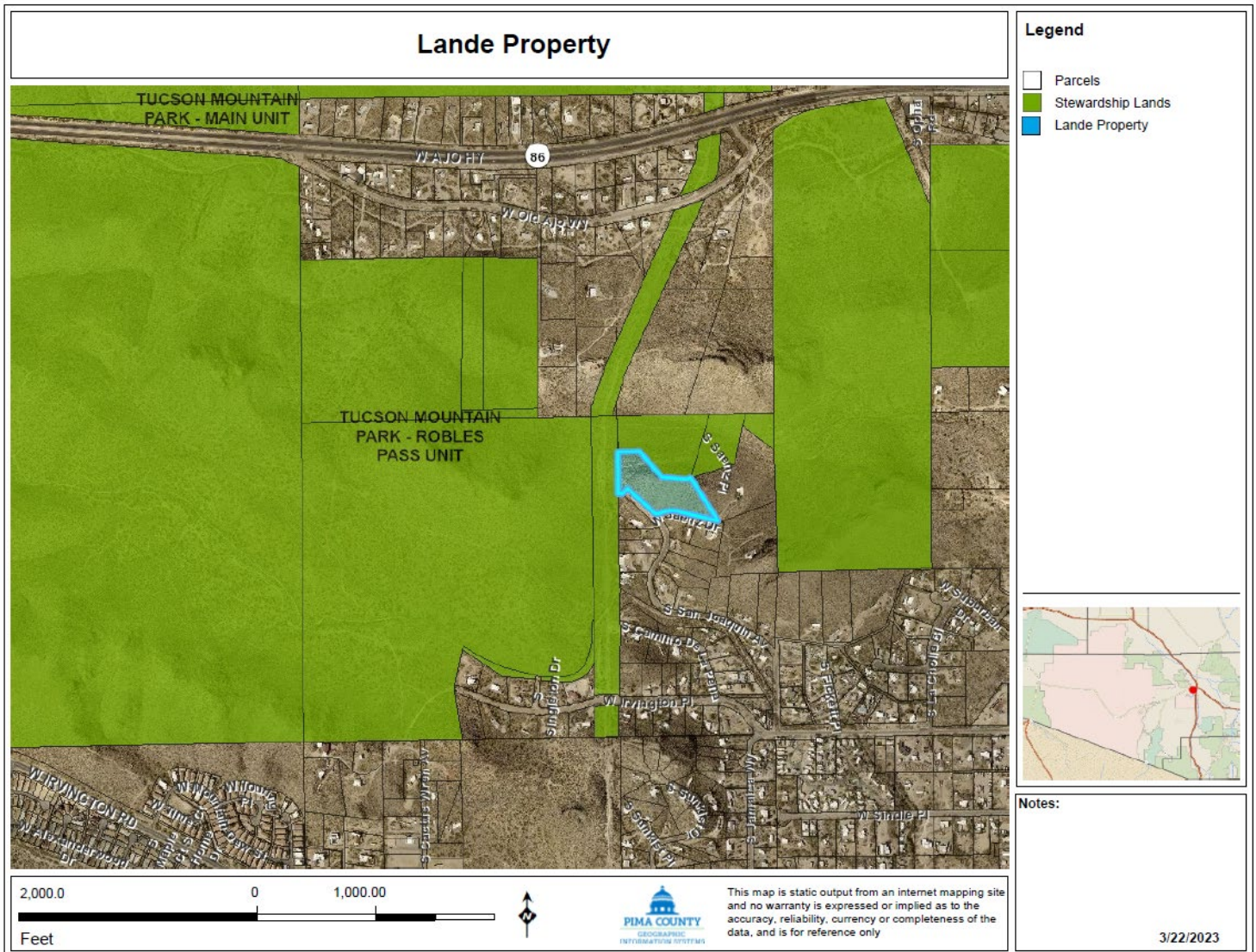


Figure 1. Lande Property location relative to Tucson Mountain Park – Robles Pass Unit

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**

*Lande Parcel
Evaluation of April 2023*



Figure 2. Representative photo of Lande Property showing hillside vegetation including saguaros.

**GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE ACQUISITION POTENTIAL OF CANDIDATE
CONSERVATION LAND FY22-23**
Lande Parcel
Evaluation of April 2023



Figure 3. Photo of cleared area and saguaro-covered hillside.