

Rio de Flag group discusses fate of stream

Nov 14, 2004 0

The Eastside Rio de Flag Study Group met Wednesday at the County Administration Building. Formed by county supervisor Deb Hill a year ago, the group meets monthly to discuss ways to keep a minimum flow in the stream in order to sustain area wildlife.

The Doney Park portion of the Rio de Flag contains treated effluent from the city of Flagstaff's Wildcat Hill Wastewater Treatment Plant. Residents have complained of decreased flow in recent years, and they claim some residents are pumping vast amounts of water from the Rio.

The study group has recently discovered that the county has enforcement authority over certain uses of the stream. County officials will meet Nov. 22 to discuss how to implement enforcement of illegal water usage and unlawful changes of the streambed.

Each year, the Audubon Society performs a Christmas bird count on the Rio de Flag in Doney Park. Results of these analyses will help group members to ascertain if recent low water levels have affected bird populations along the stream.

Participants in the study group have included those with interests in the eastern portion of the Rio de Flag: the city of Flagstaff and Coconino County officials, Burlington Northern and Santa Fe

Railway, the Audubon Society, Arizona Game and Fish and area residents.

The next meeting of the Eastside Rio de Flag Study Group is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 8. For more information, call Deb Hill's office at 779-6764.

HISTORY CORNER

From the Coconino Sun, Nov. 4, 1932:

"Ben Doney, 89-year-old Flagstaff pioneer and Civil War veteran who was aboard one of the lesser Union vessels in the historic duel between the Monitor and Merrimac at Hampton Roads, Va., died at his ranch near here Sunday night from injuries sustained when he fell from the porch of his house. The body was found sprawled over a discarded wagon wheel in the yard by neighbors Monday morning, Doney having struck his head on the hub.

"Dr. E. S. Miller, Coconino county health officer, said Doney suffered a fatal head wound when he fell from the porch, approximately four feet. In attempting to regain the house, Doney stumbled over the wagon wheel where he died.

"The death of Doney took one of the two remaining members of Flagstaff's G.A.R. [Grand Army of the Republic] post, which was organized in 1884 with a membership of 75 veterans.

"A daughter of Mr. Doney had left here Saturday for California in a light automobile. She has not been notified of the death.

"A son who left Flagstaff about 30 years ago, according to Smith, is believed to be in Utah, but he has not been heard from for two or three years.

"Doney was well known to most Flagstaff residents. In addition to ranching, he spent much time prospecting, and had located several mining properties, none of which he profited from. He was active until he died, in town nearly every day, his slight, erect figure and vigorous walk denying his extreme age."

Special thanks to NAU's Cline Library, Special Collections.

Gamin Summers is interested in news and history of Doney Park, Timberline-Fernwood and surrounding areas. Phone 890-7628 or e-mail dproundup@commspeed.net.

— Arizona Daily Sun