

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS | EL RIO OPEN SPACE PRESERVE

How is this project funded?

- Some funding is being provided by the Town of Marana
- A Water Infrastructure Financing Authority Grant for \$35,000 has been awarded to the Town for the project
- Work will have to be phased, and completed as additional funding becomes available

What types of activities can be expected at a preserve facility?

- Passive recreation such as walking and wildlife viewing will be compatible with this area, since it is a regional wildlife linkage and a natural riparian area

Can we swim, boat, or fish in the lake/wet areas?

- The water includes stormwater runoff and occasionally overflow effluent from the Santa Cruz River, so it is not suitable for swimming, boating or fishing
- The proposed pond(s) will be created for waterfowl and other wildlife

Will the new park have ball fields, a place to fly drones, or a splash pad?

- This preserve is intended as an urban natural area and wildlife linkage, so there will not be any sports or activities that would detract from that goal

When will construction begin or be expected?

- Construction can begin once environmental and cultural clearances have been approved, possibly in the summer of 2017, depending on the weather

How long will the project take to complete?

- Several factors such as special permits, weather, and unforeseen geographical issues can prolong construction
- The project will probably be phased, so completion of a full plan may be 2-4 years into the future

Will there be lights at this facility?

- No lighting is anticipated at this site so that it will continue to function as wildlife habitat and as a wildlife linkage because many animals are active at night

Why can't this site be left as is, natural open space?

- The site will continue to be natural open space – it will just be improved by replacing some of the non-native species with native plants and by creating surface water areas that are permanent, to enhance wildlife habitat
- Trails will be defined and old, non-sanctioned trails will be removed
- Fencing and signage will help eliminate activities such as off-road vehicle driving, shooting, and off-leash dogs

Won't having permanent surface water increase the mosquito problem?

- Permanent water will be circulated to prevent mosquito eggs from hatching
- The pond(s) will be lined and 25-year bank protection will be installed to reduce flooding and debris piles where mosquitos can breed
- Fresh, non-potable water will be added as needed, which also helps prevent stagnation and mosquitos
- Monitoring and treatment will be implemented by the Town during the warm weather months
- Unfortunately, these improvements will not eliminate mosquitos from breeding in the Santa Cruz river

What will the operating hours be at the new park?

- The preserve will be open to visitors between dawn and dusk

When are community meetings/surveys taking place?

- In order to connect and hear from a greater number of residents, we are attempting to collect most public input online.
- We do expect to host at least one additional community meeting. Meeting details will be emailed to those on the email list and will also be posted on www.maranaAZ.gov/elrio.
- The Town invited other jurisdictions, residents of the area, conservation groups, and others to two Task Force meetings in the past year, to gain a direction for El Rio Preserve
- One neighborhood meeting has been held to date
- A meeting will be scheduled with local educators to gain input on incorporating features that will enable the site to be used for science curriculums

How do I receive updates about the park project?

- People can join an email list online to receive project updates. Visit www.maranaAZ.gov/elrio and scroll to the bottom of the page. Under "Notify," enter your email address and click "Sign Up"

Feel free to contact us with any additional questions.

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