

Enhancing the Potential for Sustainability through Participatory Environmental Assessment

Invitation to participate

One of the greatest challenges to agricultural sustainability on western rangelands is the risk of desertification, which is the reduction or loss of biological or economic productivity on drylands. A combination of scientific discovery and improved mitigation and restoration practices like grazing methods, vegetation management, and erosion control structures, provide the means to reduce this risk.

Effective implementation of these methods requires **Environmental Assessment**, which traditionally involves a team of technical experts who make recommendations to land managers and producers. Unfortunately, the adoption track record of these traditional assessments, unless mandated by law or regulations, is poor, largely because local perspectives, interests, needs, and knowledge are rarely considered.



PRACTICE is an international project that aims to evaluate the effects of mitigation and restoration actions to combat desertification through the participation of multiple stakeholders. **We define a stakeholder as anyone who is involved with or impacted by a restoration or mitigation action. This includes implementers, land users, extension specialists, and sponsors.**

The San Simon watershed has been selected because has a) experienced severe land degradation in the past, b) undergone efforts to mitigate the degradation and restore the landscape, c) collected long-term monitoring data, and d) formed an active multi-stakeholder platform.

WHY TO PARTICIPATE:

The project assumes that all stakeholders have local insights, perspectives and expertise to contribute to an environmental assessment, and therefore, should be part of the evaluation team.

Our goal in conducting this research is to combine local and scientific knowledge to improve future mitigation and restoration efforts in the San Simon Watershed.

We want to identify representative stakeholders who are interested in participate. However, there are no foreseeable direct personal benefits or risks in participation. Participation is completely voluntary, both in a general sense, and at the point of any topic or question.

However, there are indirect benefits to your participation:

- You will exchange perspectives and knowledge with other stakeholders including scientists and other technical experts about practices that influences your watershed to have your opinions be heard and included in the assessment.
- You can contribute to and benefit from potential social learning through the group interaction.
- The assessment results will have the potential to support sustainable land use practices.
- The overall outcomes will be made available to others through Educational Materials, which we will exploit online collaborative tools (e.g., Google Site, Google Maps) for information sharing.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

- First, we will ask you about your opinion on some of the mitigation and restoration actions in the San Simon Watershed in a short individual discussion.
- Second, using an interactive and fun method, we will ask you about your view on some selected aspects of an assessment.
- Then, when we have all the information of each action and the opinion of all the stakeholders we have talked to, we would like to invite you to be part of a group discussion with other stakeholders, including scientists.

This research project is being conducted in the San Simon Watershed by the University of Arizona. The research is independent of all private and public management entities other than this research institution.

If you have any further questions, our contact information:

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