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Central Arizona Land Trust Statement re Ecosa's Forever Dells Campaign

This year, the Central Arizona Land Trust (CALT) celebrates 30 years of land trust work in the heart of Arizona. Since our beginnings in 1989, when we dedicated our first conservation easements on the face of Thumb Butte, we have been devoted to maintaining our grassroots legacy and our deep commitment to permanent protection of the places we all love. No other form of protection, for example a deed restriction, is permanent and enforceable.

In partnership with private landowners and local governments, CALT holds conservation easements on over 4,500 acres in central and northern Arizona. In Arizona, land trusts hold conservation easements on 54,959 acres* or 47.24% of all easements providing permanent protection on a mix of private and public lands that protect important natural areas and habitat, water resources, working farms and ranches, as well as public open space. For more information on our work, please go to www.centralazlandtrust.org.

In 2017 the Ecosa Institute approached CALT regarding holding a conservation easement on 45-acres along Willow Creek in Granite Dells. Ecosa sponsored a fundraising campaign to raise \$65,000 to support transaction and stewardship funds to permanently protect this lush riparian corridor of wetlands and iconic granitic formations providing refuge and habitat for resident and migratory wildlife.

CALT's Board accepted Ecosa's Letter of Intent for permanent conservation on the Granite Dells property and did preliminary work toward planning the conservation easement once the fundraising goal was met. We did so with the expectation that establishing a conservation easement on the Ecosa property could be a keystone to inspire other landowners to consider permanent land protection in the Dells.

In July 2019, the Ecosa Institute was acquired by Prescott College along with the 45 acres of open space. Prescott College has determined that a conservation easement on the property is not in their best interests at this time.

CALT's core values include being transparent in our work with willing landowners, our conservation partners, and our community. While CALT respects the College's decision regarding the former Ecosa property, we are disappointed that permanent protection of the property does not appear likely and that the intent of donors to the Forever Dells campaign, large and small, will not be honored in the manner originally stated by Ecosa.

Contributors to the Forever Dells Campaign should contact Prescott College directly with any inquiries about how these funds will be utilized.

**National Conservation Easement Database, State Profiles, 2019.*

Preserving the Land You Love in the Heart of Arizona since 1989
www.Centralazlandtrust.org

