

NOMINATION FOR THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE

KEEP SEDONA BEAUTIFUL

A non profit conservation organization founded in 1972

“Keep Sedona Beautiful promotes conservation of the greater Sedona area, and, by all practical means, seeks to preserve the unique natural environment and to enhance the quality of life for future generations.”

Accomplishments and History

Since 1972, through the financial support from individuals, Keep Sedona Beautiful, a 501(c)3 headquartered in Sedona, Arizona, has made great strides in the preservation of the Red Rock Country of Sedona, considered by USA Today as one of the most scenic places in the world. Some highlights of their accomplishments:

- Acquiring **more than 513 acres** to add to the Coconino National Forest using Land and Water Conservation funds, with the most recent addition of Thomas Point, a 27-acre parcel in Oak Creek Canyon, added in June of 2005.
- Hosting and educating over 2000 homeowners through its **Annual Native Plant Workshop**. Since 1979, KSB has worked with thousands of community members to increase the use of native plants and low water use landscaping (xeriscaping).
- Tirelessly pursuing the designation of the **Sedona-Red Rock National Scenic Area (NSA)** for the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest area around Sedona to conserve it for future generations, and protect it from development.
- Annually recognizing excellence in building designs, landscaping, and community service through its **Annual Awards Program**, and publishing a free design guide for new home builders to build in harmony with our environment.
- Protecting the **area's renowned star-filled night skies** through outdoor light pollution monitoring and control. Creating stricter lighting ordinances with city and county government.
- Advocating **safe and quiet skies** through encouragement and cooperation with Sedona Airport and Yavapai County, and in 2004 helped to prevent a private heliport in the Village of Oak Creek.
- Hosting the **KSB Speakers Series** - bringing authorities before our community to share their views on pertinent nature and conservation issues.
- Managing the famous **KSB Litter Lifters**, a corps of more than 120 volunteers who clean up litter from more than 60 miles of streets and roads in the area, which saves local government nearly \$500,000 each year.

Keep Sedona Beautiful Objectives

- To assist in the preservation of the natural beauty of Sedona and its surroundings by all practical means.
- To promote the orderly growth and development of this community.
- To encourage the construction or remodeling of buildings, as well as the utilization of colors in harmony with the character of this area and its natural environment.
- To encourage the preservation and planting of native trees and shrubbery by residential and commercial property owners, builders and developers.
- To encourage tasteful signs in recognition of the letter and spirit of local ordinances.

- To emphasize and demonstrate the attractiveness of a litter-free community.
- To maintain awareness of developing environmental problems, and to support city, county and federal efforts toward practical solutions.
- To provide recognition of those who have done an outstanding job in building design, sign treatment and landscaping, or have contributed to significant improvement in the physical appearance of this community in any other manner.
- To stimulate a spirit of civic pride among all residents, and to encourage their participation and support with regard to the activities and objectives of Keep Sedona Beautiful, Inc.

These objectives originally were stated in 1972, when the establishment of Keep Sedona Beautiful, Inc. was supported by more than twenty community organizations. With minor revision, these objectives still are valid today, but with even greater emphasis on environmental concerns within and beyond the Sedona city limits.

KSB Projects

- Annual Awards
- Dark Skies
- Land Preservation Task Force
- Landscape Design
- Litter Lifters
- Litter Prevention
- National Scenic Area Designation
- Native Plant Workshop
- Noise Abatement
- "Capture the Wonder" Photo Contest
- Scholarships
- Water Conservation
- Volunteer

Environmental Education Efforts

One of many examples of stewardship for their landscape is the Keep Sedona Beautiful **Native Plant Workshop**. The full day workshop has been conducted annually since the 70's to educate the public about native desert landscaping in order to conserve water and co-exist in harmony with the environment. Expert speakers have been invited over the past several years to address topics such as the following:

- Xeriscape principles
- Protecting trees, plants and soil when you undertake a construction project
- Single tree protection from bark beetles
- Invasive weeds of Northern Arizona
- Easy to grow native plants for Sedona and the Verde Valley
- Wildlife in your garden – friend or foe
- Creating gorgeous landscape designs with native plants
- "Managing Seeds, Soils, Flowers and Native Plants in a Drought"
- "Native Grasses for Sedona's Elevation"
- "Sedona's New Native Tree Preservation, Protection and Planting Ordinance"
- "Infrastructure and Water Harvesting: How to Keep Water on Your Lot"

All attendees at the workshop leave with a native plant as a gift in order to encourage planting native species. Keep Sedona Beautiful partners with local nurseries and other organizations to educate and promote native plant landscaping.

Another example is the ***Residential Guidelines Booklet*** published as a guide to creating architecture and landscaping in harmony with the Sedona environment. Keep Sedona Beautiful published the booklet which is given to builders when they seek a permit at the city offices and booklets are available at KSB headquarters. Included in the booklet are native plant landscaping recommendations.

A Sample of Current and Past Activities from the KSB Archives and Events Calendar

Speaker Series: Supervisor Matt Ryan Discussed Environmental Challenges facing Coconino County, May 11, 2006, 5:30 - 7 pm at Keep Sedona Beautiful.

Fossil Creek Area for Stewards of Public Lands Cleanup May 13. The Stewards of Public Lands planned a fun day in the forest and a cleanup of the Fossil Creek area on Saturday, in cooperation with the Coconino National Forest and Arizona Game and Fish.

Representative Tom O' Halleran Presented Legislative Outlook. On January 11, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. at KSB headquarters, it was another high point in the thirty-four-year old organization's ongoing Speaker series: Representative Tom O'Halleran of State District 1, represents an area which includes Sedona, Prescott, the Verde Valley and the area around Flagstaff.

KSB 35th Anniversary Awards of Excellence, Sunday, February 11. Since the early 70's, Keep Sedona Beautiful has recognized individuals, businesses and organizations in the greater Sedona area for harmonious architectural designs, landscaping, lighting, signage and special community service that contribute in a significant way to its goal of keeping Sedona beautiful.

KSB's Annual Native Plant Workshop: Saturday, March 31. This very popular annual workshop brings together experts to share their knowledge and advice about creating beautiful landscaping with low water-use native plants, how to recognize and remove invasive weeds, how to manage and care for your landscaping to live in harmony with our high-desert environment. It's not too early to mark your calendar and to reserve your place, last year there was a waiting list!

"Capture the Wonder" 35th Anniversary Photo Contest. To further its theme of Preserving the Wonder of Sedona, Keep Sedona Beautiful Inc. is introducing a photo contest for 2007. If one should ask "What is the wonder of this area?" the entrants photos will help to define it natural and scenic, wonders great, wonders small. The photos will be judged on creativity and their relevance to the contest theme, Capture the Wonder of this Red Rock region. Photos will be professionally judged in three divisions: professional, amateur, and children in grades K-8.

National Advocacy

National Scenic Area Designation: Conserving Scenic Sedona's Red Rock Legacy – Since 1998, KSB has been raising awareness to the need for scenic protection, advocating for a National Scenic Area designation for the Coconino National Forest. KSB has held public education meetings, worked with local representatives and governments, worked with their Congressional representatives to draft legislation, gathered 3000 statements of support from residents and visitors.

Currently, KSB is working with their Congressional representatives to introduce a bill in Congress to declare the 160,000 acres of National Forest Land as a National Scenic Area to protect the

land from unwanted land trades and development. The purpose of the designation would be to preserve the unique scenic values of our natural environment for now and for future generations. Their efforts have already shaped federal policy in managing the area for scenic values through influencing **USFS Forest Management policy**. As a testament to their efforts, several of the local jurisdictions have joined in their support of the designation. This is an ongoing effort of stewardship and vigilance to maintain the area's scenic quality and economic vibrancy.

An Excerpt from KSB Advocacy Efforts on the Designation:

On Thursday, October 26th at Keep Sedona Beautiful from 6 - 7:30, learn what the **National Scenic Area legislation** is all about and why it's important to you. Working together, we can work to create The Sedona-Red Rock National Scenic Area (NSA). As the U.S. Forest Service begins its revision process for regional existing Forest Management Plans, public awareness and involvement are crucial.

One hundred sixty thousand acres of National Forest surrounding Sedona, The Village of Oak Creek, and Big Park are now protected, but not permanently. The NSA designation will permanently preserve that land and our irreplaceable scenic beauty, small town character, and property values while enabling the community to provide needed schools, roads and other public necessities in the future.

Preservation of Sedona's incomparably beautiful Red Rock Country is a high priority to the community's citizens and has been for many years. A dramatic increase in forest use by residents and visitors over past decades, however, threatens to degrade this national treasure and destroy the ambience of our uniquely scenic and inspirational area.

Addressing this threat, in 1998, the Forest Service, with the cooperation of the community, **created Amendment 12**, an amendment to the Coconino Forest Plan for the management of 160,000 acres of the most spectacular Red Rock lands in the Sedona area. In a campaign lasting over two years, with community-wide input, an amendment to the Coconino National Forest Management Plan dealing specifically with National Forest lands in the Sedona area was produced and implemented.

This plan, known as Amendment 12, delineates conservation and protection of these most spectacularly scenic lands in America. It was recently announced however, by the U.S. Forest Service, that revisions to the current forest plan which protects our area against land trades is now underway, and may be in place as early as 2009. To find out more about the revision process, visit www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/plan-revision.

A significant element of this management plan is **conservation of forest lands** in the greater Sedona area. The amendment allows exchange of forest land in the area, only for privately owned land within the area. Forest management plans, however, are often amended. The revision process could ultimately change Amendment 12, and a less protective plan could be adopted. A National Scenic Area (NSA) designation by Congress would help to ensure that the provision of Amendment 12 would be more durable. And the time is now to make sure it happens.

The NSA designation would apply only to the Coconino Forest lands in the area. It does not affect any private, state, or municipal lands. The Forest Service would continue to manage this area in accordance with their management plan, and no new administrative authority will be required.

As citizens, we have a special responsibility to protect this uniquely beautiful area. Furthermore, the local economy depends on conservation of the area's natural beauty.

Congress will act on this issue only if there is a clear mandate from the community. Surely this is an initiative to which we can give our unqualified support. In the coming months, public meetings will be held to present and discuss this proposal for NSA designation of these specific National Forest lands. If you love “Red Rock Country,” it is time for you to help insure its preservation. Statements of support have already been signed by the following:

- Big Park Regional Coordinating Council
- Coconino County Board of Supervisors
- Mayor and Council of the City of Sedona
- Red Rock-Dry Creek Community Plan Committee
- Yavapai County Board of Supervisors

Recent Advocacy directly related to Landscape Architecture

Keep Sedona Beautiful supported maintaining the scenic roadway designation for State Route 179. When the Arizona Dept of Transportation (ADOT) announced plans to build a 4 lane highway in 2001, KSB members and Board were very vocal. KSB was the birthplace of **Voice of Choice**, which became a separate organization of citizens who wanted a voice in the process.

The Governor listened, ADOT listened and Voice of Choice and ADOT conducted an extensive public process that resulted in the **Needs Based Implementation Plan**, the **Corridor Management Plan**, and an improved highway (now under construction) that reflects community values. Voice of Choice insisted that a **Landscape Architect** be an integral part of the planning, design, and construction. The resulting design is not a 4-lane superhighway through the Village of Oak Creek and the Coconino National Forest, but a multi-modal roadway fit into the landscape. Their advocacy resulted in the ability to bring **urban design and pedestrian/bicycle mobility** to unincorporated Village of Oak Creek, and to introduce **context sensitive design** and **effective public participation** to ADOT roadway planning.

Legacy of a Landscape Architect

Wayne Iverson, FASLA (deceased), originator of the **USFS Visual Management System**, was a very active member, working behind the scenes to advocate for appropriate design & planning, and as a professional resource to the group. Iverson worked on the Design Team as the **SR 179 Context Sensitive Design Coordinator** until his death in 2005. KSB held a Memorial Service honoring his contribution to the organization and his legacy as an advocate for landscape architecture and scenic resource protection. His wife Barbara is a former president of Keep Sedona Beautiful.