



SOUTHEASTERN
ARIZONA
BIRD
OBSERVATORY

P.O. Box 5521
BISBEE, AZ 85603-5521
520/432-1388
sabo@SABO.org

Cochise County Board of Supervisors
1415 Melody Lane, Building G.
Bisbee, Arizona 85603

To whom it may concern,

This letter is written in support of Mary Jo Ballator and her Bed and Breakfast and bird feeding station in Ash Canyon. Birds and birding are a multimillion dollar economic force in Cochise County tourism and one of the unique aspects of birding in Southeastern Arizona has always been the hospitality of locals who open their yard to birders from around the world. In a tradition that began with the Spoffords home in Portal, through the Patons in Patagonia, Ramsey Canyon Inn and Beatty's Guest Ranch in the Huachuclas and others including our own Banning Creek Field Station, Ms Ballator's operation has always been a model for ecotourism with well maintained feeders, an affable and knowledgeable host and native landscaping. As a hummingbird researcher I can assure you that her operation is not detrimental to birds, quite the opposite, it provides a boost to local populations when times are hard. I have spent many happy hours in her yard sharing birds with visitors from around the world. The impact of her operation goes well beyond the boundaries of Ash Canyon or Cochise County.

As preserve manager at The Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve, I lived at a popular birding spot for 8 years. I know what a sacrifice Mary Jo has made to open her yard to visitors and it is considerable. With parking restricted to her property and the generally quiet and respectful nature of birders, her operation should have little or no impact on her neighbors. I hope we are not at the point where a person is not allowed to feed birds and invite others to enjoy their yard without interference.

The Southeastern Arizona Bird Observatory and its membership both local and national wholeheartedly support the operation of Ash Canyon Bed and Breakfast as it currently exists.

Tom Wood

Tom Wood
Director
Southeastern Arizona Bird Observatory

22 10 A 18 MAR 11 2011
RECEIVED
COCHISE COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS