

# Natural Resources in the Upper Gila Watershed



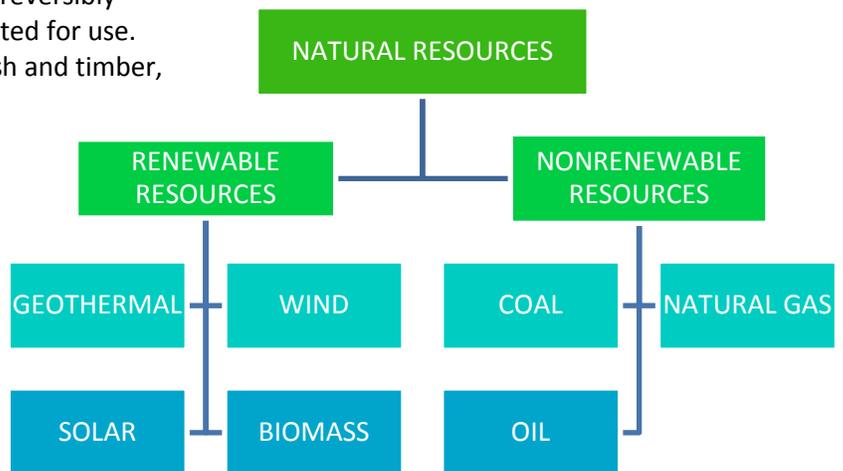
By Tim Goodman, Biologist for the Bureau of Land Management’s Safford Field Office

**A natural resource** is any naturally occurring substance or feature of the environment (physical or biological) that, while not created by human effort, can be exploited by humans to satisfy their needs or wants. Resources such as fossil fuels and minerals are considered “non-renewable resources” since they are irreversibly depleted as they are extracted for use. Other resources, such as fish and timber, are “renewable resources” and will be replenished if managed well.

There are two basic conditions for a substance or feature to be classified as a natural resource. First, the resource must exist naturally in the environment; that is, not synthetically produced by human beings, such as in a laboratory or factory. Second, the resource must be able to be exploited by humans to directly satisfy a

need or want.

Natural Resources have had the same reoccurring problem over the course of history. They are overused, mismanaged and exhausted. Humans end up using up their supply completely or damaging a renewable resource beyond its ability to bounce back to a renewable state.



There are many examples of resources being depleted throughout history, such as the Mayan people who completely deforested their lands in order to meet their demand for fuel, which is thought to be the reason they had to leave their homelands.

Another example is the passenger pigeon, which was once probably the most numerous bird on the planet.

Their flocks, which were sometimes almost 300 miles long, were so dense that they darkened the sky for hours and days as the flock passed overhead. Population estimates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century was close to 4 billion individuals, or approximately 40% of all birds in North America. This may be the only species for which the exact time of extinction is known. It was 1 p.m., September 1, 1914



**The Passenger Pigeon**

in the Cincinnati Zoological Garden.

All life on earth depends on our natural resources. Wildlife relies on our natural resources for their habitat, which includes food, cover, and water, to survive. Wildlife habitat is different and unique for every animal on the planet.



**Mayan Temple**

was 1 p.m., September 1, 1914

The Lesser Long Nosed Bat, which can be found in the Upper Gila Watershed needs two sets of resources in its habitat - suitable day roosts and suitable concentrations of food plants, are critical for the lesser long-nosed bat. Caves and mines are used as day roosts and these bats will often fly 10-15 miles each night to foraging areas. Like many other bats, this species uses night roosts for digesting their meals. These roosts include the bats' day roosts as well as other caves, mines, rock crevices, trees shrubs, and abandoned



**The Lesser Long Nose Bat**

buildings. Lesser long-nosed bats appear to be sensitive to human disturbance; a brief visit may cause many of them to temporarily abandon their roost and move.

The Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, which also makes its home in the Upper Gila Watershed, likes to breed in dense riparian habitats along rivers, streams, or other wetlands. One of the most important characteristics of the habitat appears to be the presence of dense vegetation.



**Southwestern Willow Flycatcher**



**The Lesser Long Nose Bat's habitat**



**The Southwestern Willow Flycatcher's habitat**

**Tim Goodman will be talking about the natural resources and wildlife habitat at the April 2014 meeting of the Gila Watershed Partnership.**

## Current Project Updates

FOR MORE INFO, SEE [WWW.GILAWATERSHEDPARTNERSHIP.COM](http://WWW.GILAWATERSHEDPARTNERSHIP.COM)

### ONGOING GRANTS:

#### Apache Grove Project

*...funded by the Arizona Water Protection Fund (AWPF) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW)*

- removed levees in order to restore optimal river flow, control erosion, and manage invasive species, while preserving agricultural land
- the rain last September cause damage to some of the newly-planted vegetation, which will be replanted

#### Clifton Restroom Project

*...funded by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)*

- will install restroom facilities in a recreational area along the San Francisco River

#### Eagle Creek Riparian Restoration at Filleman Crossing Project

*...funded by the Arizona Water Protection Fund (AWPF) and the U.S. Fish and the USFW Partners program*

- will construct a river crossing to stop frequent wash-outs, benefiting both residents and wildlife

#### Upper Gila Watershed Riparian Restoration Project

*...funded by The Walton Family Foundation (WFF)*

- will replace invasive tamarisk with native species to restore natural habitats
- we are identifying potential restoration sites

#### Youth Pathway Project

*...from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Great American Outdoors Grant, and USFW Partners program*

- to encourage careers in conservation and land management on public lands, through on-the-ground activities for school age kids high school through college
- a youth summit has been planned for April 22<sup>nd</sup> at Discovery Park

#### Water Conservation Project

*... funded by Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc.*

- this project is performing home and business water evaluations to help us all save water and money

#### Upper Gila Water Appraisal Study

*... funded by the US Bureau of Reclamation*

- this project will help us to better understand the water supplies and demands in the watershed

#### Developing Greenlee County as a Bird Watching Destination

*... funded by Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc.*

- A coordinator for the project has been hired

#### WRRC Water Needs Assessment and Planning Project

*... funded by the BOR Landscape Conservation Cooperative*

- a project to assess baseline water needs and potential impacts of future change and develop scenarios to address impacts identified by stakeholders

### NEW GRANT APPLICATIONS RECENTLY AWARDED

#### Menges Ranch Water System Maintenance

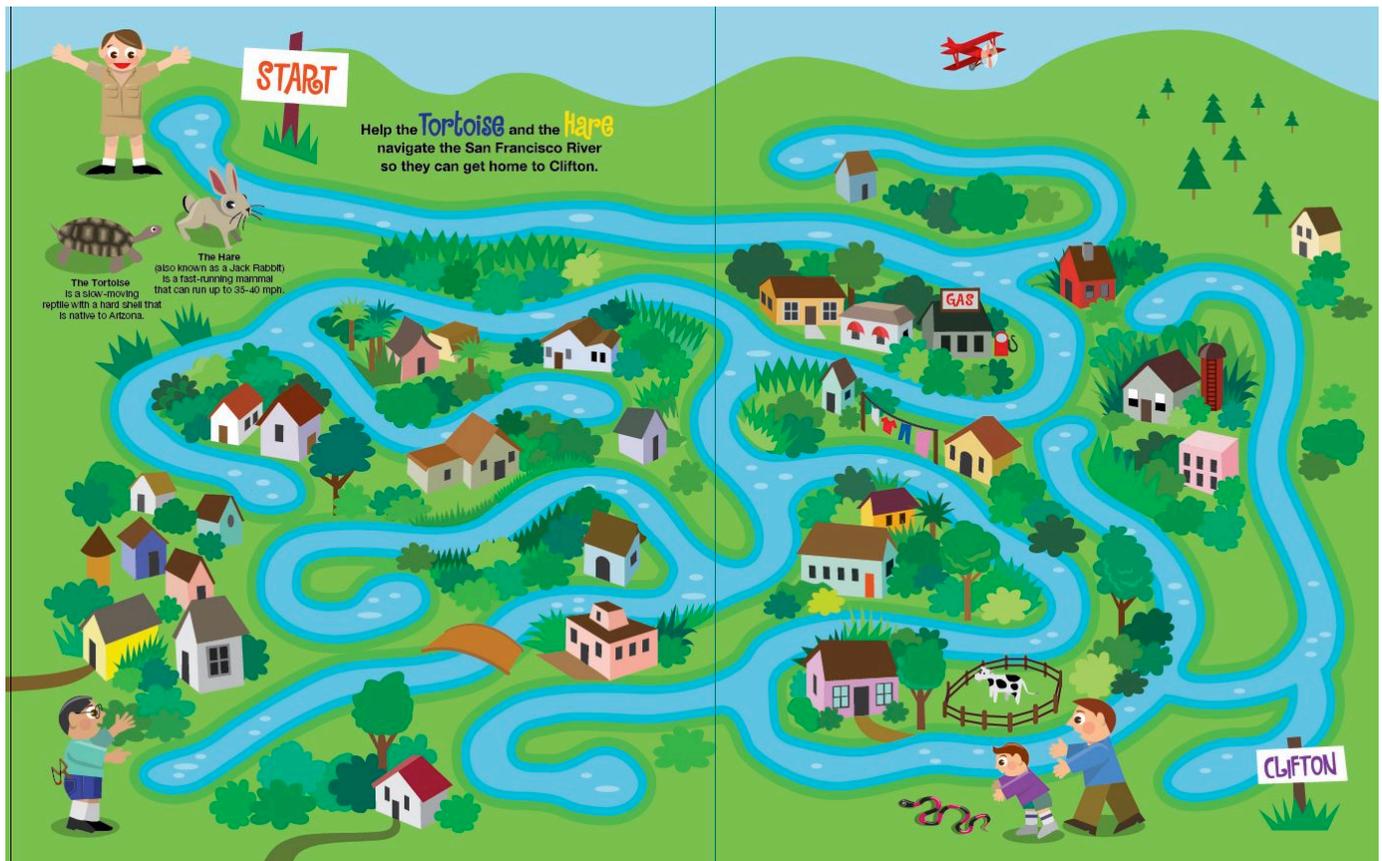
*... funded by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)* a project that will add solar pumps and a telemetry system to tell the landowner when the water system has a problem.

#### San Francisco River Restroom Project

*... funded by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)*

- a project that will install a second restroom for recreation on the San Francisco River Greenlee County to reduce the E.coli levels on the river.

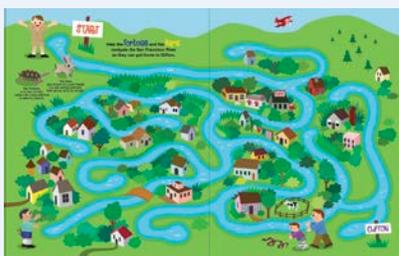




## Calendar of Events

**Wednesday, April 9, 7 p.m.** – Susan & Doug Syfert will present on the completed Wildlife Watering Hole, and local cub scouts will join us with their original posters. Tim Goodman, Wildlife Biologist for the Safford BLM will tell us about natural resources and endangered species.

**Wednesday, May 14, 7 p.m.** Kris Randall, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program will be telling us all about the wonderful projects the Partners program has funded over the years.



## Our partners include:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Arizona Department of Agriculture           | Eastern Arizona College                                      |
| Arizona Department of Environmental Quality | Farm Bureau  |
| Arizona Department of Transportation        | Gila Valley NRCD   |
| Arizona Game and Fish Department            | Freeport McMoRan Copper and Gold Inc.                        |
| Arizona Geological Survey                   | Graham County  |
| Arizona State Land Department               | Greenlee County  |
| Bureau of Land Management                   | Gila Valley Irrigation District                              |
| City of Safford                             | Natural Resource Conservation Service                        |
| Town of Thatcher                            | University of Arizona Cooperative Extension                  |
| Town of Pima                                | University of Arizona NEMO Project                           |
| Town of Clifton                             | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                               |
| Town of Duncan                              | U.S. Forest Service – Apache-Sitgreaves and Coronado Forests |
|   | U.S. Bureau of Reclamation                                   |
|   | And many community members                                   |

## Get involved in your watershed

For more information, contact Jan Holder at the Gila Watershed Partnership, 711 S. 14th Avenue, 85546, or email [gilawatershed@gmail.com](mailto:gilawatershed@gmail.com)

[www.gilawatershedpartnership.com](http://www.gilawatershedpartnership.com)