

Fire in the West

By Barbara Satink Wolfson, Southwest Fire Science Consortium



Group field trip showing the effects of a recent fire.

There are 15 regional fire science consortia or “exchanges” across the U.S., all funded by the Joint Fire Science Program as a way for managers, scientists, and policy makers to interact and share science. The goal of the Southwest Fire Science Consortium (SWFSC) is to see the best science used to make management decisions and scientists working on the questions managers need answered. The Southwest is one of the most fire-dominated regions of the U.S., and the SWFSC is the only regional organization focused on fire research and information dissemination across agency, administrative, and state boundaries. We bring together localized efforts to develop scientific information and to disseminate that to practitioners on

the ground and the Southwest community through an inclusive and open process. The purpose is to build relationships, communication, and information sharing among the community, researchers, and land managers, thus increasing the use of fire science in the Southwest.

To accomplish these goals, the SWFSC hosts field trips, workshops, webinars, and produces synthesis papers, factsheets, videos, and quarterly newsletters. The website provides a wealth of information on current fire management and research. One unique aspect of the SWFSC is that they solicit

proposals for events and products. Anyone can submit a proposal and the board will consider it. Over the past few years, several events began as proposals from individuals or groups within the Southwest fire community. The most recent event funded partially by the SWFSC was the “Fire effects: Restoration of watersheds and springs” held in Tucson in November in conjunction with the Society for Ecological Restoration Southwest Chapter conference. The proposal was submitted by the Sky Island Alliance, minor suggestions were made by the SWFSC board to make it more inclusive and the project moved forward. New partners and associations bring new ideas and the SWFSC is always looking for new partners. Anyone interested in fire science, from private landowner to federal land manager of any discipline, is welcome within the SWFSC.



**Fire of Change exhibit at the U of A Museum of Art
Photo by Tom Alexander Photography**

A SWFSC project currently in progress is the *Fires of Change* exhibition currently showing in Tucson at the University of Arizona’s Museum of Art. The project is a science and art collaborative project that first showed in Flagstaff

in September and October. Eleven artists attended a fire science boot camp in 2014 to learn basic fire ecology and management issues within a frequent fire regime in Northern Arizona and created artwork based on that experience. The goal was to bring science to the community in a novel way. The SWFSC is also working to create factsheets for the public and/or those who communicate with the public; taking scientific syntheses and boiling them down to one page of bullet points helps those who don’t have time or expertise to read scientific papers understand land management decisions.



Pinaleno Mountains field trip.

The next large scale event is a fire ecology conference with the Association for Fire Ecology in November 2016 in Tucson, Arizona. Calls for special session proposals and abstracts will come in February and topics related to fire and watersheds, springs, and/or riparian systems would be welcome!

Current Project Updates

FOR MORE INFO, SEE WWW.GWPAZ.ORG

Upper Gila Watershed Riparian Restoration

...funded by The Walton Family Foundation, US Fish & Wildlife Partners Program, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, and United Way of Graham County

- Will replace invasive tamarisk with native species to restore natural habitats.
- AZCC youth crews have cleared and retreated over 10 acres since Oct. 1 on 4 different sites.
- Scientific consultants are considering potential restoration sites in Greenlee County.

WRRC Water Supply & Demand Study

... funded by the US Bureau Of Reclamation & Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative

- Water Supply & Demand Workshop had a great turn out to discuss supply and demand numbers, alternatives for supply, and ways to lower demand in the future.
- The next working group meeting will be scheduled for January.
- Contact Dr. Kelly Mott-Lacroix for more information, klacroix@email.arizona.edu

Discovery Park Pollinator Garden

... funded by Eastern Arizona College, US Bureau of Land Management, US Fish & Wildlife Service Partners Program

- Installing pollinator garden at EAC Discovery Park campus, benefiting monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Hand crews have made progress on site!
- Volunteer day Jan 18th!

Developing Greenlee County as a Bird Watching Destination

... funded by Freeport McMoRan Inc., Town of Clifton, and United Way

- Work being done on trails, signage, maps, website, and brochures.

San Francisco River Restroom

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

- Will install a second restroom for recreation on the San Francisco River Greenlee County and reduce the E.coli levels on the river and make river recreation safer for our community.
- Restroom has been installed. Will be complete this month.
- Water quality monitoring on-going.



Restroom at the end of the San Francisco River Road

Clifton Restroom

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

- Installing restroom facilities in a recreational area just outside of Clifton.
- Ribbon Cutting was Nov 7th. Project is complete.

Botanical Etymology for Dummies

By Justin Johnson

Salvia lemmonii, or **Lemmon's sage** is an aromatic sage with showy pink tubular flowers. A favorite of hummingbirds, this sage is found in canyons or rocky slopes.

Salvia, ancient Latin name for sage, from *salvere*, to heal or to save, alluding to the medicinal properties.

lemmonii, for John Gill Lemmon (1832-1908), California botanist and husband of Sara Plummer Lemmon (1836-1923), who together botanized throughout the western United States.

John and Sara took a "botanical honeymoon" in Arizona after their wedding in 1881. During the trip, they scaled the Santa Catalina Mountains, christening the peak Mount Lemmon, after Sara, the first European-descended woman to climb the mountain.



Lemmon's Sage
Salvia lemmonii

EVENTS



GWP

ON FACEBOOK TO KEEP UP WITH
ALL OUR EVENTS!!

Jan 13th – GWP monthly meeting.

Speaker TBA 7-9PM.

Jan 18th – MLK Day of Service.

Pollinator Garden Volunteer Day

@ Discovery Park, 10AM-2PM

Every Thursday – Open Volunteer

Hours with GWP, 8-11AM @

Discovery Park Greenhouse

Thank you to our partners:

AZ Department of Agriculture

AZ Department of
Environmental Quality

AZ Department of
Transportation

AZ Game and Fish Department

AZ Geological Survey

AZ State Land Department

City of Safford

Eastern Arizona College

Farm Bureau

Freeport-McMoRan Inc.

Gila Valley Irrigation District

Gila Valley NRC

Graham County

Graham County Chamber
of Commerce

Natural Resource

Conservation Service

Southwest Decision Resources

Tamarisk Coalition

Town of Clifton

Town of Duncan

Town of Pima

Town of Thatcher

U.S. Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

U.S. Forest Service –

Apache-Sitgreaves and Coronado

U of A Cooperative Extension

U of A Water Resource

Research Center

Get involved in your watershed

For more information, contact us at
Gila Watershed Partnership

P.O. Box 1614, Thatcher, Arizona 85552

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and
Instagram or email us at info@gwpaz.org

www.gwpaz.org