

GWP Hopes to Expand Restoration Efforts

By Rachel More-Hla & Stillwater Sciences



The Gila River at Pima Bridge. Photo courtesy of Shawn Stone.

Stillwater Sciences has been providing the Gila Watershed Partnership with technical direction for the Gila River Riparian Restoration Project since 2013. Through their scientific analysis of the Gila River, the GWP can focus restoration efforts to improve native habitat along the river in areas with high probability of success. Stillwater sciences created a restoration framework in 2014 that highlights high and medium priority areas along the river, where restoration should be focused. That framework focused on the Safford Valley.

This fall, Stillwater Sciences began the expansion of the restoration framework to include potential sites in the Duncan Valley. Zoey Diggory and Glen Leverich of Stillwater Sciences will present an overview of their ongoing work with the Gila Watershed Partnership to guide riparian

restoration activities along the Upper Gila River. The main objective of the project has been to plan and prepare for the restoration of native riparian habitat for listed avian species, such as the southwestern willow flycatcher and western yellow-billed cuckoo, in advance of the expected arrival of the tamarisk leaf beetle and subsequent defoliation of existing nesting habitat. Stillwater will present on past and ongoing activities, including restoration planning and permitting in the Safford Valley, and recently initiated planning in the Duncan Valley.

Current Event Updates

FOR MORE INFO CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!



GWP Staff and SEACAB Volunteers helped clean up the San Francisco River

The Gila Watershed Partnership hosted a volunteer clean-up event on 11/7/2015. The volunteer effort was part of a continued effort to clean up the San Francisco River. The Gila Watershed Partnership recently finished the installation of a restroom facility in a high recreational use area. The funding for the restroom installation is from an Environmental Protection Agency grant through the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. These agencies are dedicated

to cleaning up the rivers that are impaired. In 2012 a Watershed Improvement Plan was created with hope to improve the water quality along the San Francisco and Blue Rivers. These rivers are impaired due to unsafe levels of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) bacteria. Testing of the source of the *E. coli* was completed and found that humans and cows were contributing to the natural levels that might be found from just the presence of wildlife. By installing restrooms along high recreational use areas, the hope is to lower the amounts of human caused *E. coli* contamination in the river.



Ribbon Cutting of the Clifton Restroom

There will be a second restroom installed at the end of the San Francisco River Road by this December. The town of Clifton and Greenlee County have partnered with the GWP to help with the maintenance that is required to keep these facilities working. The Gila Watershed Partnership plans to continue monitoring the *E. coli* levels along the San Francisco River and plans to continue the partnership with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality.

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 8 acres since Oct. 1



AZCC Field Coordinator advising Youth Crew

WRRC Water Needs Assessment and Planning

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

- Water Supply & Demand Workshop Dec 2nd 10am-2pm @ Discovery Park Ranch House.
- Contact Dr. Kelly Mott-Lacroix for more information, klacroix@email.arizona.edu

Clifton Restroom

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

- Installing restroom facilities in a recreational area just outside of Clifton.
- Ribbon Cutting Nov 7th.
- Water quality testing being done near site.

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 facility delivered to site for installation.
- Water quality monitoring on-going.



Restroom delivery on San Francisco Road

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, and brochures.

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!

Botanical Etymology for Dummies

This month's species is *Clematis drummondii*, or **Old-man's beard**, a twining vine known for creeping up various shrubs and trees in riparian galleries. During the fall, the showy plumes are difficult to miss.

Clematis, Greek *klematis*, for various climbing plants.

drummondii, for Thomas Drummond (1790-1831), Scottish botanical explorer, naturalist, and nurseryman, curator of the Belfast Botanic Garden, and made many collections in western North America.

Drummond spent nearly two of the final years of his life attempting to make a complete botanical survey of Texas. After collecting 750 plants and 150 birds, Drummond died while venturing to Cuba to conduct another survey.



Clematis drummondii
Old-man's beard

EVENTS



GWP

ON FACEBOOK TO KEEP UP WITH
ALL OUR EVENTS!!

Nov 7th – Greenlee County Fall Clean-Up @ Cosper Loop in York, AZ & in Clifton, AZ along the San Francisco River.

Nov 7th - 9th – Colors of Copper in Clifton, AZ.

Nov 18th – GWP General Meeting, 7-9PM. Guest speakers from Stillwater Sciences and the BLM.

Dec 2nd – Water Supply & Demand Workshop 10AM-4PM @ Discovery Park Ranch House.

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 NRCDC
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 follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram

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