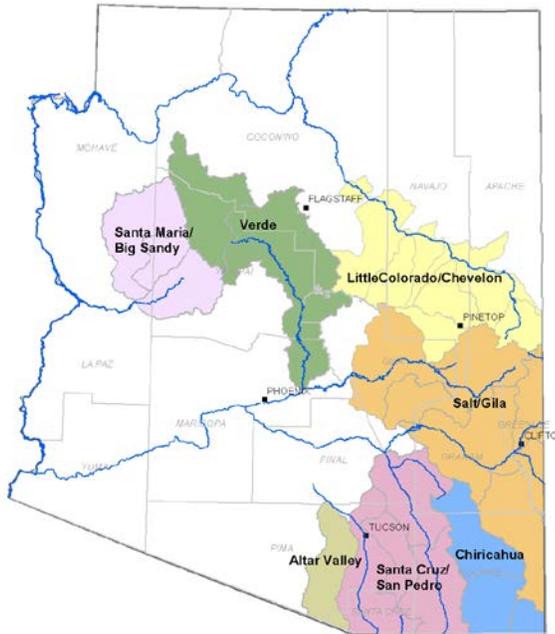




Apache Grove in October 2013

**Partners for Fish & Wildlife Focus Areas**



The Partners for Fish and Wildlife (Partners) Program serves a vital role in fulfilling the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) of working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service formed the Partners Program as a means of providing financial and technical assistance to willing

private landowners and tribes who conduct on-the-ground wildlife habitat improvements for Resources. The importance of working with private landowners is recognized since nationally, half of the listed species have at least 80% of their habitat on private lands. Arizona has a high number of native species, and is third in the nation for the number of native bird species, second for reptiles, fifth for mammals, and eighth for overall vertebrate animal diversity (Stein, et. al 2000). Partners prioritized areas in the state to focus our limited funding and resources into seven Focus Areas.

These the benefit of Federal Trust focus areas are:

- 1) Santa Maria/Big Sandy,
- 2) Verde,
- 3) Chevelon,
- 4) Salt/Gila,
- 5) Chiricahua,
- 6) Santa Cruz/San Pedro, and
- 7) Altar Valley.

The focus areas are delineated by the 84 8-digit Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs) that represent drainage basins in Arizona. The Gila Watershed Partnership is located within the Salt/Gila focus area.

Since 1992, there are 271 Partners projects implemented in Arizona. Of those, 10 projects have been conducted in the Gila watershed. The following is a brief description of these projects.

#### **Bronco Gulch**

The San Carlos Apache Tribe was the cooperator for this project funded in 2002. The objective was to increase the survival of Emory oak seedlings and to restore the disturbance regime in Bronco Gulch.

#### **Point of Pines**

In 2004, the first agreement was signed with the Gila Watershed Partnership. The agreement was also signed by the San Carlos Apache Tribe since the project occurred on both private and tribal lands. The objective was to install fence to limit access by cattle to Eagle Creek and the associated riparian area. A cattle guard was installed at the road access.



**The release of tadpoles at the Discovery Park renarium**

#### **Discovery Park – Chiricahua Leopard Frog Refugia**

This 2008 project is an outstanding example of partnering – Eastern Arizona College, Arizona Game and Fish Department, US Forest Service, and the Boy Scouts of America. What started as an Eagle Scout project to bring agencies together, resulted in the construction of a renarium at the Eastern Arizona College Discovery Park to rear egg masses of Chiricahua leopard frogs. Numerous releases have occurred from the Discovery Park renarium contributing to the recovery efforts for this threatened species.

#### **Apache Grove Riparian Restoration**

Although this project was funded in 2008, work finally started in 2011. With \$796,748 awarded from the Arizona Water Protection Fund, the project removed a levee, re-contoured the bank slope, removed non-native vegetation, and planted native riparian vegetation. Partners worked closely with Jan Holder of the GWP to obtain the Formal Section 7 Biological Opinion that was needed in order for the Army Corps of Engineers to issue the Section 404 permit. The Section 7 addressed impacts to the southwestern willow flycatcher, a federally listed endangered bird. Partners biologists conducted the required pre-project flycatcher surveys in 2010 and continue doing surveys with the permission of the landowner. This project was recently highlighted in a national Department of Interior publication titled *Restoration Returns: The Contribution of Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and Coastal Program Restoration Projects to Local U.S. Economies*.



**Bonita Creek**

### **Native Fish Refugia Pond**

In 2009, a private landowner was approached by the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) to construct a 1.5 acre pond that would serve as refugia and grow-out pond for two native fish - desert topminnow and desert pupfish. AGFD plans to use the native fish from this pond for stocking in other water bodies in eastern Arizona.

### **Filleman Crossing at Eagle Creek**

The objectives of this project were to enhance Eagle Creek by improving and stabilizing the road crossing and thus reducing stream erosion and to restore native vegetation and stream function. State funds from the Arizona Water Protection Fund (AWPF) provided over \$292,000.



**Filleman Crossing**

### **Water for Wildlife**

A project to improve an existing cistern on private land was implemented in 2012. Two other organizations, Bat Conservation International and the Center for Wetlands and Stream Restoration conducted the project. The land owners mounted a camera at the cistern and have some pretty spectacular photos of bats, bobcats, and a bear coming to the area.

### **Discovery Park I**

In 2001, funding was provided to install an underwater viewing blind at the pond at Discovery Park. At the time, the Park was looking to obtain a Safe Harbor Agreement so they could stock native fish. The project would help educate the public on the importance of native fish. Over time, the viewing blind and pond have not been maintained.

### **Pipeline for Vegetation Watering**

In 2012, funding from Partners and AWPF were used to improve a well and install pipe to provide water to a landowner's farmland. Runoff from the farm field was captured in constructed ditches that were planted with riparian vegetation.

The Partners program has provided financial and technical assistance for these projects. Leveraging of our funding has been tremendous. We appreciate the opportunity to work with the Partnership and the people living and working in this area. We look forward to continue working together to do good projects that benefit wildlife and improve quality of life for everyone.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Cooperator</b>	<b>FWS Partners</b>	<b>Matching Funds</b>
Discovery Park I	2001	Mount Graham International Science and Culture Foundation	\$8,575	\$2,000
Bronco Gulch	2002	SCAP	\$24,000	\$19,766
Point of Pines	2004	GWP and SCAT	\$15,000	\$5,000
Discovery Park CLF	2008	Eastern Arizona College	\$11,000	\$2,300
Apache Grove	2008	GWP, Private, AWPF, NCD	\$25,000	\$796,748
Native Fish Refugia Pond	2009	Private, AGFD	\$25,000	\$72,600
Eagle Creek Crossing	2011	GWP, Private, AWPF	\$18,100	\$292,436
Water for Wildlife	2012	GWP, Private, BCI, WSR	\$5,925	\$10,940
Riparian Vegetation	2012	GWP, Private, AWPF	\$19,500	\$68,460
In Development	2014	Project in Development	\$18,300	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$164,500</b>	<b>\$1,271,250</b>

## Project Updates

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

### Apache Grove Project

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

- removed levies in order to restore optimal river flow, control erosion, and manage invasive species, while preserving agricultural land
- the new pipeline to a deeper well is complete

### Clifton Restroom Project

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

- is installing restroom facilities in a recreational area just outside of Clifton

### 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
- cutting cottonwood poles to root out in the greenhouse in a hydroponic solution to ready them for planting in the coppice fields
- we have identified our first five restoration sites with many more to come



Hiking through the dense tamarisk on the Gila River

### 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 through on-the-ground activities for school age kids high school through college
- the local youth crews are cutting cottonwoods and willows for planting
- a youth summit was a big success 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

### 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

### Developing Greenlee County as a Bird Watching Destination

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

- A coordinator for the project has been hired

### NEW GRANTS AWARDED:

#### Menges Ranch Water System Maintenance

*... funded by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and the Arizona Water Protection Fund (AWPF)*

- a project that will replace diesel pumps with solar and a telemetry system that will send a message to the landowner when the water system is down to

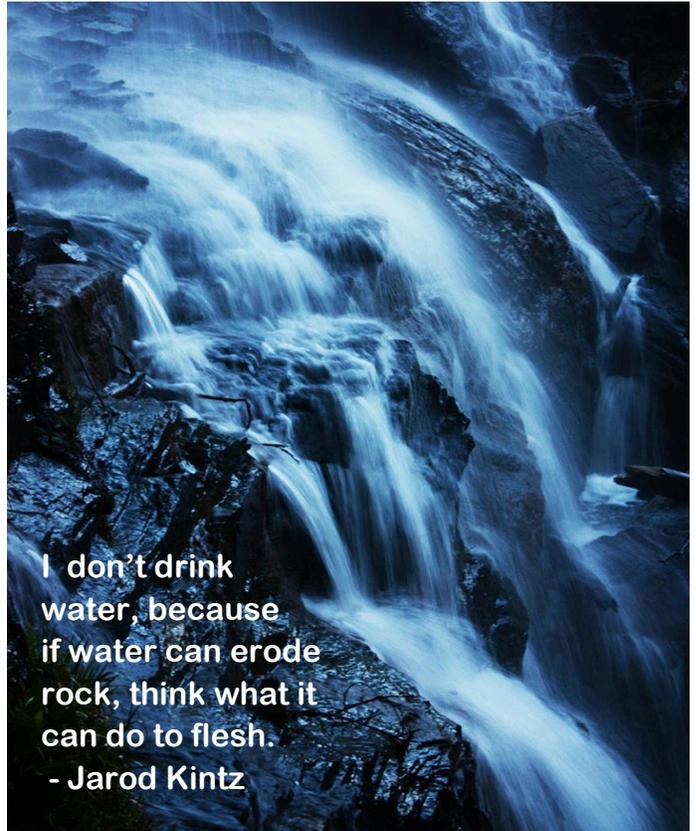
reduce livestock presence in Bonita Creek and the San Francisco River

- will reduce the *E.coli* impairment in the San Francisco and Gila Rivers

### San Francisco River Restroom Project

... funded by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and the Arizona Water Protection Fund

- 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 and make river recreation safer for our community



I don't drink water, because if water can erode rock, think what it can do to flesh.

- Jarod Kintz

## Calendar of Events

**The Water Counts program can perform a home or business water use analysis for you and save water for our community while saving water for you this summer!**



### Our partners include:

Arizona Department of Agriculture  
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality  
Arizona Department of Transportation  
Arizona Game and Fish Department  
Arizona Geological Survey  
Arizona State Land Department  
Bureau of Land Management  
City of Safford  
Eastern Arizona College  
Farm Bureau  
Freeport McMoRan Copper and Gold Inc.  
Gila Valley Irrigation District  
Gila Valley NRCD

Graham County  
Graham County Chamber of Commerce  
Greenlee County  
Natural Resource Conservation Service  
Town of Clifton  
Town of Duncan  
Town of Pima  
Town of Thatcher  
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
U.S. Forest Service – Apache-Sitgreaves and Coronado Forests  
University of Arizona Cooperative Extension  
University of Arizona NEMO Project

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)  
Join us on Facebook "Facebook.com/gilawatershedpartnership"

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