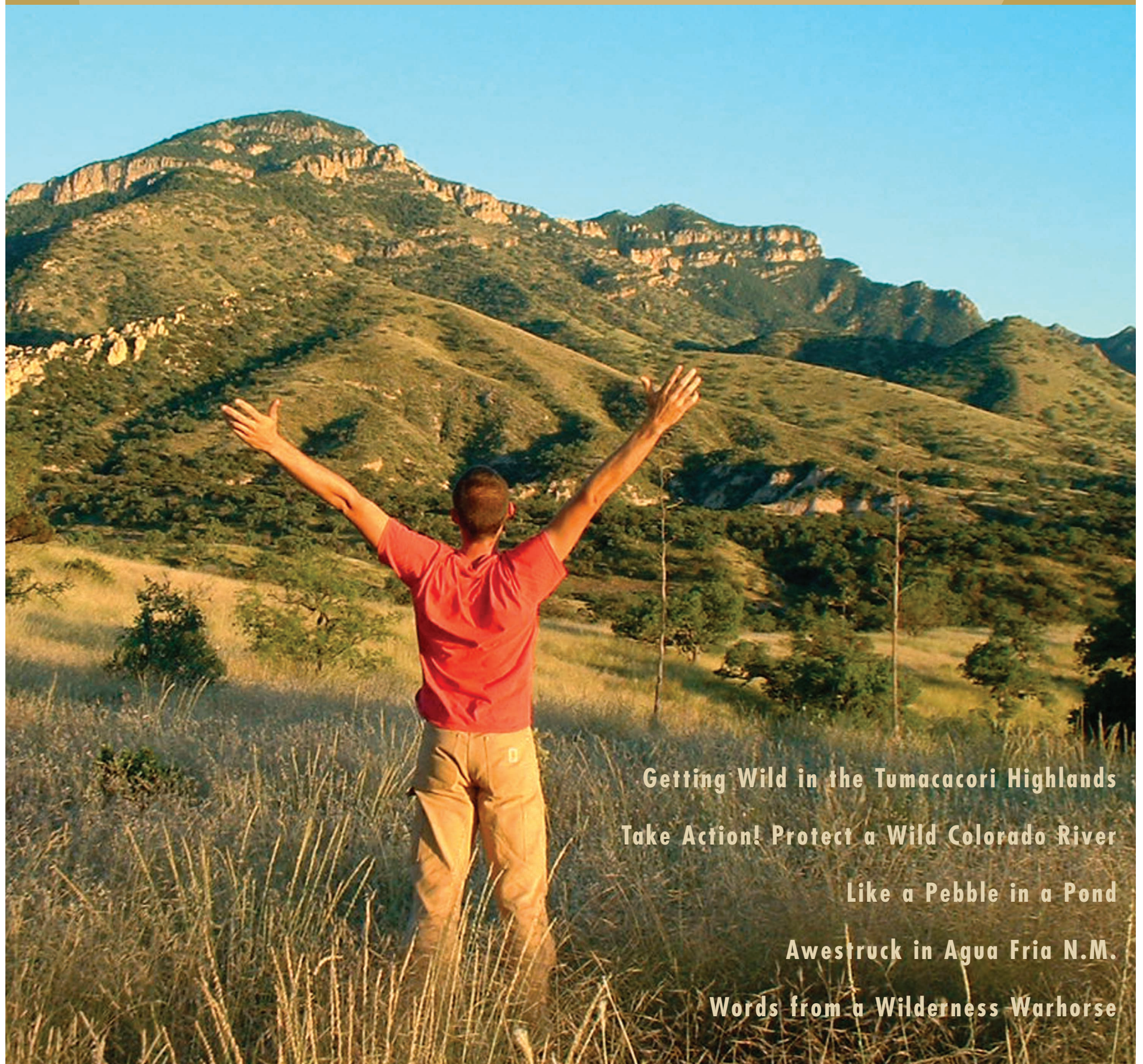


NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

# ARIZONA WILD



Getting Wild in the Tumacacori Highlands  
Take Action! Protect a Wild Colorado River  
Like a Pebble in a Pond  
Awestruck in Agua Fria N.M.  
Words from a Wilderness Warhorse

FALL/WINTER 2004-05

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**Mission Statement**

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition's (AWC) mission is to permanently protect and restore wilderness and other wild lands and waters in Arizona. We coordinate and conduct inventories, educate citizens about these lands, enlist community support, and advocate for their lasting protection.

We need your help! To get involved please consider joining the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. See back page for details.

**OUT OF THE BLUE**

**Wild Strides in a Big City**

**H**ello wild ones! This summer and fall have been busy — full of fun, celebration, and progress. I hope that some of you had the opportunity to enjoy your special wild places, as I have.

In August, I spent a few days backpacking in the Tumacacori Mountains—through areas that are within our wilderness proposal featured in this issue. I traveled with Dave Parsons, the retired director of the Mexican Wolf Recovery Program who led the effort to reintroduce the Mexican gray wolves back to the wild in eastern Arizona.



Photo: Janie Hoffman

We knew that Peck Canyon was the location where the last Mexican wolf had been captured before they became extirpated from the United States. That sense of history seemed like reason enough for going there. Within a relatively short hike, I was absolutely stunned by the beauty and solitude this area offers. While I have often hiked at these elevations in other parts of the state, I was completely surprised by the lushness and incredible diversity of this area — epiphytes hanging in the trees, water turtles in the creeks, and the thought that jaguars have begun to return to those hills.

I have also had the opportunity to hike in the Blue Range Primitive Area where I worked for much of my Forest Service career. It seemed that, with my new job, I had abandoned the Blue in recent years, even though I still live there. It was particularly interesting to see how quickly the forests are regenerating after the large fires that were allowed to burn during the past two summers. One of the wonderful benefits of wilderness and large undeveloped roadless areas is that the Forest Service can allow fires to fulfill their natural role when there aren't structures, campgrounds, power lines, and commercial timber to protect from fire. There are portions of the Blue Range where wild fires have been allowed to burn as many as five separate times since 1979, thus restoring a place where fire is occurring in near natural intervals.

This year marked the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, a milestone worth celebrating. In addition to the celebration that we co-sponsored in Flagstaff on September 3rd (the actual anniversary date), a group of us traveled to Washington, D.C., to take part in the national celebration. One of our Board members, Doug Hulmes, received accolades for his performance as John Muir before a crowd of wilderness supporters at The Wilderness Society. Later, during a gala dinner at the National Press Club, we

**What is Wilderness?**

Wilderness is an area of undeveloped federal land that appears "to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprints of mans' work substantially unnoticeable," as written in the Wilderness Act of 1964. Unlike national parks, wildlife refuges, or monuments, wilderness designation from Congress provides the highest level of natural resource protection available in the world. The Wilderness Act created the National Wilderness Preservation System to preserve the last remaining wild lands in America. Currently, about 4.7 percent of all available land in the United States is protected as wilderness. In Arizona, wilderness designation protects approximately 6.2 percent of our land and wildlife habitat.



From (l) to (r): Brian Segee, Defenders of Wildlife; Rachel Kondor, Office of Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ); Don Hoffman, AWC; Heather Wicke, Office of Sen. John McCain (R-AZ); Douglas Hulmes, Professor of Environmental Studies, Prescott College.

Photo: Gretchen Hoffman

learned from our national leaders and our elders that protecting wilderness was not a partisan issue forty years ago, and we realized that it shouldn't be that way today. We listened to Terry Tempest Williams, Robert Redford, Christopher Reeve, Senator Robert Byrd, Congressman John Dingell, and a fiery Stewart Udall, Secretary of the Interior during the formative years of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Fittingly, we shared our table with legislative staff from the offices of Republican Senator John McCain and Democrat Congressman Raul Grijalva.

For the next few days, our group of eight met with the offices of the entire Arizona Congressional delegation to educate them about the value of our existing wilderness areas (90 separate units in Arizona!) and about our Tumacacori Highlands proposal that deserve protection today. They asked hard questions, but the answers seemed to come easily to our group. Birdie Stable and Ellie Kurtz, who both reside near the Tumacacori Highlands, made a particularly compelling case in favor of wilderness designation.

I truly believe that wilderness areas benefit everyone and that the greatest obstacle to designating additional federal wilderness is misinformation. Our goal as an organization is to demonstrate strong local and business support for our wilderness proposals and to convince our elected representatives: designating wilderness is not only the right thing to do—it's a wildly popular thing to do.

For the Wild,

*Donald Hoffman*  
Executive Director

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Cover photo © Matt Skroch, Sky Island Alliance  
Design by Mary Williams/marywilliamsdesign.com

# At Grand Canyon, Theme Park Uproar Plagues Wild River

by Kim Crumbo

In the shadow of the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, National Park Service officials at Grand Canyon National Park continue to stomp on the letter and spirit of their own 1980 wilderness recommendation for managing the Colorado River. In the draft environmental impact statement for the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) released in early October (<http://www.nps.gov/grca/crmp>), the Park Service's alternatives continue to allow large motorboat tours and fail to protect the rapidly disappearing wilderness experience on the river. "The document presents the legal and moral grounds for why they should be protecting wilderness, but their preferred alternative does not acknowledge or accomplish that," says Kim Crumbo, Grand Canyon Regional Director for the Arizona Wilderness Coalition and former wilderness coordinator at Grand Canyon National Park from 1980 to 1999.

For 24 years, the National Park Service has labored under its own agency obligation to protect the Colorado River's wilderness attributes from harm—including subtle resources like natural quiet and the opportunity for solitude. The ponderous, 813-page Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the CRMP presents a variety of management options and offers a preferred alternative that fails once again to safeguard the river from the deteriorating effects of motorized use.

The new CRMP was supposed to address a variety of "Major Issues and Areas of Controversy," including protecting wilderness, for which the Grand Canyon Wilderness Alliance—a coalition of 23 organizations representing 5.5 million members—vigorously advocated. Yet the draft EIS avoids mentioning the preservation of wilderness character as an issue. The "Preferred Alternative" (Alternative H) simply perpetuates heavy motorized use at the expense of wilderness values such as wildlife, soils, archaeological sites, natural quiet, and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

The document states that existing motorboats are merely a "transient disturbance of wilderness values on the river" and do not preclude wilderness designation for the Colorado. Yet engines are the reason that a wilderness designation for the river has yet to be formalized. Motorboats will have to be phased out before full wilderness designation from Congress can be granted.

"It's very simple to see what they're doing here: by ignoring its duty to protect natural sounds and opportunity for solitude for the rest of the public, the park can cater to motors and large groups to continue operating on the river," says Crumbo. "You don't find the kind of wilderness that's in the Grand Canyon just anywhere, yet that's what the park has put on the chopping block in deference to river concessionaires' desire for excessive profits."

The Colorado River supports a \$29 million dollar-a-year tour industry that gives 70 percent control of recreational river access to motorized, large-sized trips. The park's preferred alternative still reserves the bulk of river access to motorized commercial companies. The majority of those who wish to enjoy a less crowded, slower wilderness river trip must wait in an uncertain lottery system.

"The issues that have plagued the river for the last 30 years are not addressed in this plan, including that of preserving the last greatest wilderness experience in the lower 48 states," says Jo Johnson, Co-Director for River



Boats crowd in for a landing spot at Havasu Eddy on the Colorado River.

Photo: Chris Brown, [chrisbrownphotography.com](http://chrisbrownphotography.com)

Runners for Wilderness, based in Colorado. "This is a feeble plan driven by political and economic pressure, rather than protection of the park's natural resources and wilderness experience."

Equally alarming, the river's popularity results in heavy, concentrated use at camps and favorite hiking locations, harming the canyon's fragile desert and riparian environments. Moreover, rumbling outboard motors and crowded boats diminish the wild, isolated experience of floating the river. Many dories and non-motorized rafts drift solitarily and undisturbed, until two or three motorized parties pass to disrupt the natural peace of their trip. With more trips passing each other, boat congestion builds up at popular trails and campsites, creating crowds of people on an otherwise remote trip.

"It is clearly possible to manage this international treasure in a manner that allows for human enjoyment while protecting the premier wilderness river experience in the world," says Don Hoffman, AWC's Executive Director. "AWC has repeatedly provided the Park managers with a progressive wilderness alternative that would maintain the current visitor-use levels for commercial passengers, but also would reduce noise, reduce group size, reduce encounters with other groups, improve resource conditions, increase self guided boating opportunities, and phase out motors over a reasonable time. The Grand Canyon deserves that and so does the public."

## Craft-Your-Own-Letter Talking Points

1. In your letter, tell the Park Service that their preferred "Alternative H" is unacceptable because it fails to restore the Grand Canyon wilderness experience on the Colorado River and perpetuates noisy, crowded motor trips.

2. Ask the Park Service to select Alternative B/C — the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) non-motorized "Alternatives B and C," plus some critical changes necessary to protect wilderness character.

Unlike the agency's "Preferred Alternative H," **Alternative B/C:**

—**Protects the Wilderness Character of the Colorado River in Grand Canyon by providing levels of recreational use consistent with a wilderness experience.** The Park Service's current "Preferred Alternative H" fails to protect the unique wilderness values of the Colorado River in Grand Canyon. Ask the Park Service to protect the river's natural, cultural, and experiential values, including wilderness.

—**Reduces group size to less than 20 people.** The agency's insistence for group size of 32 people in the preferred "Alternative H" is contrary to providing a wilderness experience. As Park Service research confirms, the overwhelming majority of river runners prefer to travel in groups of less than 20 people (DEIS, Appendix G). The group size of people traveling together is an important factor that the NPS can control to protect the Park's wilderness character (DEIS, p.29). The size of one's group is an important consideration in the field of recreational use management and affects each boat passenger, as well as other groups encountered (DEIS, p. 29). As also emphasized in the DEIS, group size also affects park resources because larger groups need more space for activities. When large groups camp at ever-diminishing beaches, they are forced to spread out into the old high-water zone. This intrusion puts sensitive resources at risk. Smaller groups have flexibility to use small or large sites. Larger groups are more likely to disturb larger areas. Ask the Park Service to reduce the maximum group size to 20 people or less.

—**Phases out the use of powerboats.** In 1980, over 90% of Grand Canyon National Park was recommended for designation as wilderness. The Colorado River corridor was recommended as potential wilderness pending the removal of motorboats as a use that is incompatible with wilderness values [DEIS, page 6]. Powerboats seriously impact the wilderness experience (NPS 1979:1-25) and Park Service policy requires the agency to remove

## TAKE ACTION Support Wilderness for the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park!

Attend an open house and submit comments. Comments on the draft EIS will be accepted through **January 7, 2005**.

Write a letter to the Park Service that supports a wilderness alternative for managing the river. Use the talking points to include in your letter. Add personal touches and experiences you have had at the river.

Pay special attention to the comment guidelines laid out by the Park at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/crmp/public/index.htm>. If comments do not follow their format, they may potentially be discarded.

Please send your comments in writing to CRMP Project, Grand Canyon National Park, PO Box 129, Grand Canyon AZ 86023, or comment online at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/crmp>.

All meetings will be in an open house format, and there will be no formal presentation. The public is invited to stop by at any time from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

### Monday, November 22 Flagstaff, Arizona

Coconino Community College,  
Administration Building 2800  
S. Lone Tree Rd. [www.coconino.edu/campuses/lonetree.html](http://www.coconino.edu/campuses/lonetree.html)

### Tuesday, November 30 Phoenix, Arizona

Glendale Community College,  
Student Lounge, 6000 W. Olive  
Avenue, Glendale  
[www.gc.maricopa.edu/map/](http://www.gc.maricopa.edu/map/)

this “non-conforming” use (NPS 2001). Non-motorized craft (oar-powered craft, dories, and paddleboats) easily provide a safe, enjoyable wilderness experience for all river runners (Myers et al. 1999). In spite of the agency’s requirement to eliminate motors, the Park Service’s preferred alternative perpetuates powerboat use for the next ten to 15 years (DEIS, page 51). Ask the Park Service to phase out motorized use over a reasonable time period not to exceed 10 years.

—Reduces the number of encounters between boats to a level that is compatible with a wilderness experience. The Park Service’s own research shows the majority of river users prefer less than three encounters with other groups each day. The preferred “Alternative H” grossly exceeds this level. Motor trips generally experience more river encounters per day because they travel faster and farther (DEIS Appendix G). Studies in wilderness and backcountry settings show agreement among visitors that encounter levels should be low in wilderness (DEIS Appendix G). In general, wilderness preferences are for fewer than 2 or 3 encounters per day, with many preferring no encounters at all (DEIS Appendix G). Reducing the number of daily launches to no more than four non-motorized trips per day should reduce the number of encounters to acceptable levels (Shelby and Nielson 1979). Ask the National Park Service to reduce the number of encounters expected between groups of river runners to 3 or less a day.

—Eliminates noisy helicopter passenger exchanges. Grand Canyon’s natural soundscape is considered a disappearing resource that requires restoration, protection, and preservation so that natural sounds are not masked or obscured by the wide variety of human caused noise impacts (DEIS, p. 128). Natural sounds are considered an inherent component of the scenery, natural and historic properties, and proposed wilderness that constitute the bulk of the park (94%), and consequently natural sound, the DEIS concludes, is vital to the visitor experience at the park. Natural sounds can provide valuable indicators of the health and “naturalness” of the ecosystems found here (DEIS, p. 127). Although the NPS admits helicopter noise significantly impacts the natural soundscape of the wild canyon, the preferred “Alternative H” allows for up to 10,000 people on 2,000 flights in and out of the river corridor each year. Viable alternatives including the use of horses or mules—a wilderness-compatible, traditional use— should be addressed. Ask the Park Service to eliminate helicopter exchanges in Grand Canyon.

—Provides Appropriate Levels of Commercial River Running Services. The Park Service should provide commercial services only when they are demonstrated as necessary and appropriate and the minimum required for providing recreational rafting opportunities consistent with the purposes of wilderness. Only then should the agency establish use allocation between commercial and non-commercial river runners. Ask the Park Service to open up the river for the general public, including more trips for low-income, disabled, and non-commercial boaters, and reduce the 20-year waiting period for public use of the park.

Thank you! Please continue to check our website at [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org) for additional information.

\* \* \* \*

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Shelby, Bo, and Doug Whitaker. 2004. River Running in the Grand Canyon: Current Situation and Social Impacts of Alternatives (Draft). Colorado River Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement Technical Memorandum.

National Park Service. 1979. Final Environmental Statement: Proposed Colorado River Management Plan, Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona. Copy on file at the Grand Canyon National Park Science Center.

National Park Service. 2004. Draft Environmental Impact Statement Colorado River Management Plan (<http://www.nps.gov/grca/crmp>).

**“Woke up this morning on an island in the sky, surrounded by clouds. Wild swirling banks of vapor, flowing and passing to reveal brief glimpses of rocky crags, dripping trees, the golden grassy hillsides far below.”**

Author/vagabond Edward Abbey, from atop Atascosa Lookout in the Tumacacori Highlands



## Getting Wild in the Tumacacori Highlands

### The Lowdown on Arizona's Next Wilderness Area

by Matt Skroch

Photo: Matt Skroch

The tenacious roar of the elusive jaguar pierces the moist night air as coatis and white-tailed deer twitch and nervously blink in the darkness. A five-foot long arboreal vine snake – bright yellow and green – slithers through the trees with its forked tongue seeking out the next tree branch for lizard à la carte. Elegant Trogons squawk from sycamore trees, while blackhawks fly overhead searching for frogs. This is nature at its best. This is what you may find in the Tumacacori Highlands of south-eastern Arizona.

There are places so unique in this world that the thought of altering their majestic features borders on blasphemy. The Tumacacori Highlands undoubtedly fall into this category. Located fifteen miles northwest of Nogales, Arizona, in the Sky Islands region of the Southwestern United States, the Highlands encompass a swath of broken, sub-tropically influenced country comprising three adjacent mountain ranges. Here, the Pajarito, Atascosa, and Tumacacori Mountains combine to form the largest remaining unprotected roadless area in all of Arizona’s six national forests. Once recommended for wilderness designation by the U.S. Forest Service, but overlooked when the train left the station in Washington D.C., the Tumacacori Highlands have been patiently awaiting their turn to belong to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

In 1998, the Sky Island Alliance began its volunteer inventory in the Highlands. Not knowing exactly what they’d find, the Tucson-based nonprofit was interested in checking

old maps and roadless boundaries to determine just what had occurred on the landscape during the last twenty years. What they found, after all the pieces were put together, was shocking. The roadless area remained completely intact. In fact, some of the roads on old maps had even disappeared. Notwithstanding the relatively few illegal roads cut by ATVs and four-wheelers, the Tumacacori Highlands had stood still in time. The biological data on the Highlands was even more impressive. The place, as of today, hosts the last three confirmed jaguar sightings in the United States - most recently this past summer.

Numerous other species, such as the five-striped sparrow, Sonoran chub, Mexican vine snake, and Santa Cruz beehive cactus don’t occur anywhere else in the United States. The list for sensitive or endangered species in the Tumacacori Highlands is longer than Fife Symington’s rap sheet. In fact, the area hosts one of the highest diversity of plants and animals in the entire United States. That’s just the beginning.

In 1968, when the famous author and vagabond Edward Abbey chose the Tumacacori Highlands for his summer fire lookout position, he didn’t know much about the area. Perched at 6,200 feet on Atascosa Lookout in the heart of the wilderness, Abbey’s ramshackle lookout afforded views of the vast and wild landscape around him. It didn’t take him long to appreciate the Highlands glory. While America mourned the death of Robert Kennedy on June 5th of that year, Abbey took note of it and lazily added “A great grimy sunset glowers on the west. Plains of gold, veils of dust, wind-whipped clouds.



Elegant Trogon

Photo: Cheryl Fisher



The Mexican vine snake, a subtropical species found nowhere else in the U.S., makes its home in the Tumacacori Highlands in southern Arizona.

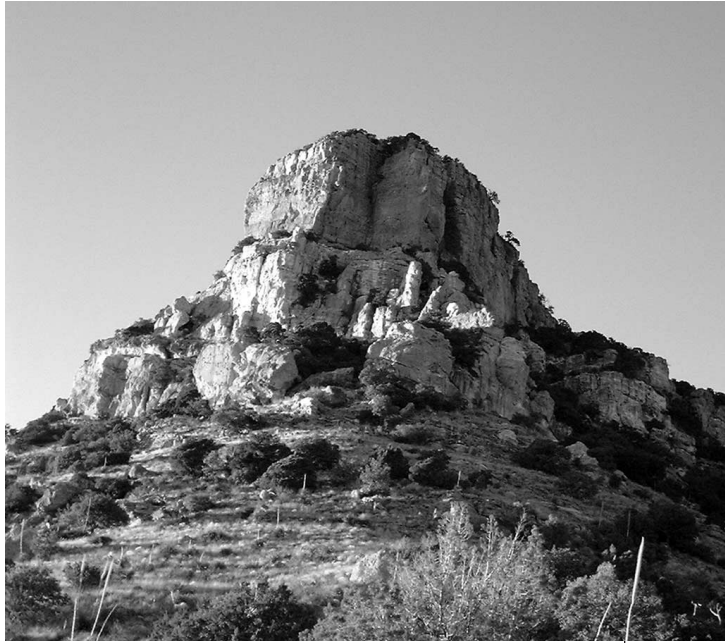
Photo: Trevor Hare



Jaguar have been sighted frequently in the Tumacacori Highlands— captured on film by several night vision cameras.

Photo: Rick Williams

lazily added “A great grimy sunset glowers on the west. Plains of gold, veils of dust, wind-whipped clouds.



*Atascosa Lookout, where Ed Abbey made a brief home in the Tumacacori Highlands.*

*Photo: John Gilroy*

The big aching tooth of Baboquivari far and high on the skyline.” Insulated from the mechanized world around him, Cactus Ed was in his element atop the Tumacacori Highlands.

Folks still have the same opportunity that Abbey did then – the fire lookout remains standing, with the only maintained trail for miles around leading up to it. Some have even proposed naming the remains of the outhouse there the “Ed Abbey Memorial Shithouse.” I suspect Ed would be proud of his old throne’s new honor. Regardless, the hiking trail up to Atascosa Lookout stands out as one of Arizona’s finest. With views across lichen-drenched cliffs, deep into Mexico, visitors hike down with a sense of awe. Huge old growth sub-tropical oaks dot the rolling hills underneath the peaks, while precipitous canyons such as Hell’s Gate funnel water through the mountains on their way to the Santa Cruz River or Rio Altar in Mexico. It’s a place of constant adventure and amazement, only best described through the eyes, ears, and nose of those willing to bounce along on dirt roads to reach its core. What we can be assured of is the Tumacacori Highlands incredible sense of solitude –



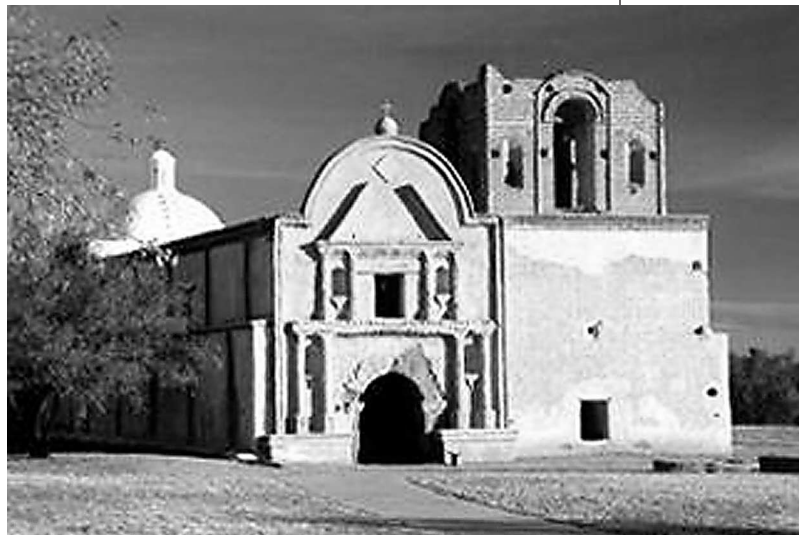
*Many in the Santa Cruz River Valley are supporting the wilderness proposal for the Tumacacori Highlands, seeing it as a tribute to the ancient cultures that once thrived in the valley and a boost to the local quality of life and economy.*

*Photo: Santa Cruz Valley Chamber of Commerce*

the essence of true wilderness that affords the soul something so rare that when we bask in its unnamed glory, we can only smile and soak it in.

The Tumacacori Highlands is not a place untouched

by humans, although western Europeans have had little influence there. Immediately east of the area, the Santa Cruz River Valley hosts one of the richest American Indian and Spanish cultural zones in the United States. If you look hard enough, you’ll find echoes of the past scribbled on cave walls or left in chards on the mesas. The area remains as an important site for the Tohono O’odham tribe—ancestors of the Sobaipuri Indians that inhabited the Highlands – and they continue to advocate for the area’s protection against the power of development. Father Kino—the heralded explorer, founder of Tucson, and Jesuit missionary—passed through or very near the Highlands on his trek northward into the upper Santa Cruz River Valley in 1691, where he founded the first Spanish Mission in the Southwest—San Cayetano de Tumacacori.



*The historic Tumacacori Mission stands as a relic of early European settlement in Southern Arizona.*

*Photo: National Park Service*

The rich cultural heritage, incredible array of plants and wildlife, and outstanding opportunities for hiking, hunting, backpacking, horseback riding, photography, and exploring put the Tumacacori Highlands on the short list for Congressional Wilderness designation.

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is working to ensure that this jewel remains wild far into the future. Along with more than 100 other organizations and businesses, AWC and the Sky Island Alliance are working with the Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands to designate the area as Congressional Wilderness. With this designation, only then will future generations rest assured in the womb of time that this landscape will remain without a road, powerline, or other blight that may reduce their opportunity to enjoy the grandeur of such a place.

Support for Wilderness in the Tumacacori Highlands is overwhelming. Recently the Arizona Republic declared that “(w)e can give future generations one more reason to thank us by adding another jewel to our wilderness treasures: Tumacacori Highlands. When the time comes, the entire delegation should line up firmly behind it. Far into the future, Arizonans will be saying “thank you.”” In Tubac alone, a historic town within a stone’s throw of Tumacacori Peak, 60 of 61 local businesses contacted about the proposal have pledged their support. Thousands of individuals help out with action alerts and writing letters to our congressional

delegation. A small minority remains opposed to a wilderness designation, as always with any proposal that has guts. They include a small number of misinformed ranchers, treasure hunters looking for lost gold, and miners who’d rather take a bulldozer to the mountain.

The Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands continues to work with Representative Raul Grijalva (D), Representative Jim Kolbe (R), Senator John McCain (R), and Senator Jon Kyl (R) to smooth the way for passage of a bill in Congress. Representative Grijalva, whose district encompasses the future Wilderness, remains committed to the proposal and continues to advocate for its designation.

Senator McCain, who worked with the late Representative Morris K. Udall (D) on the 1990 Arizona Desert Wilderness Act, continues to encourage a collaborative process to garner support for a Tumacacori Wilderness. Honest, open, and constructive dialogue has been paramount from the beginning.

While the Senator has not yet expressed his explicit support for the proposal, Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands are dedicated to reaching that end. The same goes for Representative Kolbe, whose district includes surrounding areas such as Green Valley.

Wilderness has always been a bipartisan effort. It is a concept and goal that rides above the trenches of politics and speaks to the ideals and values that Americans hold dear. “Of what avail are forty freedoms,” wrote naturalist and conservationist Aldo Leopold, “without a blank spot on the map?” We seek to continue this uniquely American tradition of conservation and wilderness preservation. The

Tumacacori Highlands are the next step.

\* \* \* \*

To find out how to get involved with the Tumacacori Highlands campaign for Wilderness, visit [www.tumacacoriwild.org](http://www.tumacacoriwild.org), or call the Sky Island Alliance at 520-624-7080.

*Matt Skroch is the Field Director for the Sky Island Alliance and sits on the board of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition.*



*Photo: Matt Skroch*

# The Bad, The Good, and the Not-So-Ugly

by Jason Williams

**W**ilderness has had an interesting year: a 40th anniversary and an ongoing attempt from the current Administration to take away the public's ability to protect our wilderness heritage.

## The Bad News...

On the not so celebratory side of things, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) here in Arizona and at the national level has gone from protecting Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs)—areas with wilderness characteristics that await official designation from Congress—to possibly deleting the word “wilderness” from their Resource Management Plans, which guide protection mandates for a variety of public lands. In April 2003, Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton entered into a settlement with the state of Utah that trashed protections for 2.6 million acres of land that had been inventoried and recommended for WSA status. It also gave up the agency's obligation to protect any area of BLM land as a Wilderness Study Area across the country. The settlement leaves approximately 12 million acres of BLM lands in Arizona open to mining, logging and off road vehicle use, and none that will be considered for wilderness.

After the Utah settlement, BLM was given new direction that allowed them to consider citizen wilderness proposals and manage wilderness “characteristics” such as solitude, primitive recreation, and naturalness, but offered no protections that would maintain an area's eligibility to become wilderness in the

future. The Arizona State Office of BLM made an attempt to offer a limited level of protection by issuing guidance to their field offices that gave them authority to create “Areas Managed for Wilderness Character.” In a late summer visit to the Arizona Strip north of Grand Canyon, BLM Director Kathleen Clark expressed some dissatisfaction with this terminology. It is now uncertain if the word “wilderness” will even appear in final BLM Resource Management Plans. As of this printing, the Arizona BLM offices are holding their breath for an answer from the current Administration.

## The Good News...

The good news is that current Arizona Wilderness Coalition citizen inventories indicate that more than 6 million acres of Arizona public lands are eligible and worthy of wilderness designation. We anticipate that the current Administration's backward policies will be reversed, either through a pending lawsuit or through a change in the White House.

The better news is that our established wilderness areas present us with many reasons to celebrate. No administrative policy change can undo what Congress has enacted, which makes wilderness the most protective designation for any area of public land. This year, Arizona celebrated 40 years of wilderness for 90 congressionally established areas totaling 4.5 million acres in here in Arizona.

This acreage is a direct result of local citizens working tirelessly—compiling inventories and collaborating with local and national politicians to recommend

approximately double the acreage that agencies have historically recommended for wilderness protection. The way to celebrate is to get out and defend some of Arizona's unprotected wilderness.

Edward Abbey said, “The idea of wilderness needs no defense. It only needs more defenders.” The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is calling for more defenders.

## Get involved!

Interested in volunteering in one of Arizona's spectacular wilderness areas? Contact your local regional office of AWC today!

\* \* \* \*

Jason Williams is the Central Mountains-Sonoran Regional Director. (928) 717-6076, [jwilliams@azwild.org](mailto:jwilliams@azwild.org)



AWC volunteers are instrumental in helping with wilderness inventory work.

Photo: Scott Koch



Escudilla Wilderness encompasses the upper reaches of Escudilla Mountain. Aspen trees regrowth from a terrible fire in 1953, cover about 40 percent of the area. It was here that Aldo Leopold arrived at the side of a wounded wolf “in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes,” an experience that changed his life.

Photo: Jay Krienitz



## Send Us Your Thoughts!

We want to hear from you. If you have comments or wish to express a point of view on any of the topics we discuss in our newsletter, please send us an email at [azwild@azwild.org](mailto:azwild@azwild.org), with a subject line “Letters.” Please keep your letters relevant and brief. Thank you! We look forward to hearing from you.

# Like a Pebble in a Pond

The conservation community lost a true wilderness hero in early September with the passing of Al Carr, a dedicated follower and interpreter of Aldo Leopold's wilderness wisdom. He is an Arizona Wilderness Coalition "Wilderness Hero"—both in spirit and action.

Al Carr was born March 26, 1946, in the back hills of Tennessee, by his estimation, "the second-youngest and best-looking of 12 children." He moved to Prescott, Arizona, in 1995, where, drawn by its focus



Al performing Leopold at AWC's summer retreat in 2002.

Photo: Don Hoffman

on experiential education, he planned to enroll at Prescott College. Shortly thereafter, he was diagnosed with melanoma and given 6 weeks to 6 months to live. His response? "They aren't talking about me." And with that knowledge and the faith of his fiancée, Rita Cantu, he married and became stepfather instead.

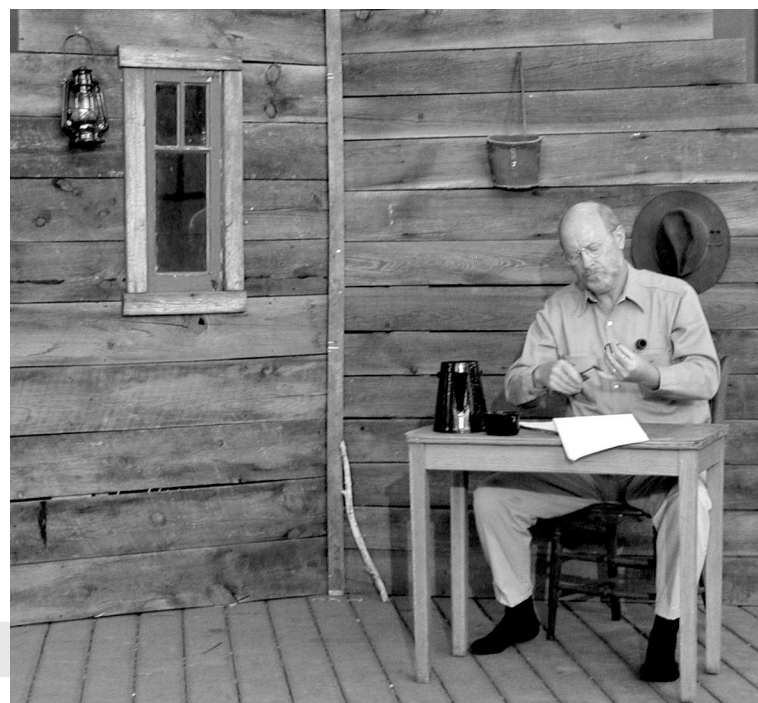
Al worked throughout Prescott as a Prescott College mentor, group facilitator, designer, carpenter, restorer of historic homes, and community activist. He also worked as a paramedic and wrote books on Emergency

Medical Services. Throughout his life, Al enjoyed hiking, running, bicycling, and was an avid reader. Among his favorites was the poetry of 14th century mystic poet, Hafiz, whose words somehow presaged Al's own when Hafiz wrote, "I rarely let the word, 'No' escape from my mouth, because it is so plain to my soul that God has shouted, 'Yes! Yes! Yes!'" to every luminous movement in existence."

Al dedicated the last decades of his life to fostering a love for the land, catalyzing people, and exhibiting a joy of life infectious to everyone around him. A primary endeavor was presenting the life and teachings of fellow-conservationist Aldo Leopold in chautauqua performances at national parks, schools, and other venues from California to Tennessee. Al performed his famous version of Leopold at the Arizona Wilderness Coalition's Wilderness Retreat on the Blue River two years ago.

"I am very honored that Al called me to say good-bye and ask that I help his wife, Rita, to maintain the presence of the Aldo Leopold Foundation here in the West," says Donald Hoffman, AWC's executive director. "I don't believe I have ever met someone so universally loved as Al Carr. He was a bridge to people with very diverse backgrounds and his unassuming persona and power as an educator will be sorely missed."

Al brought to his character a warmth and credibility based upon his own sincerity, passion for the land, and warm, intimate style. Bringing Aldo Leopold to life allowed Al to share his own passionate commitment to conservation, as well as Leopold's groundbreaking concept of the "land ethic," with audiences across the stunning country that nurtured both Leopold and Carr. For his work, Al received the

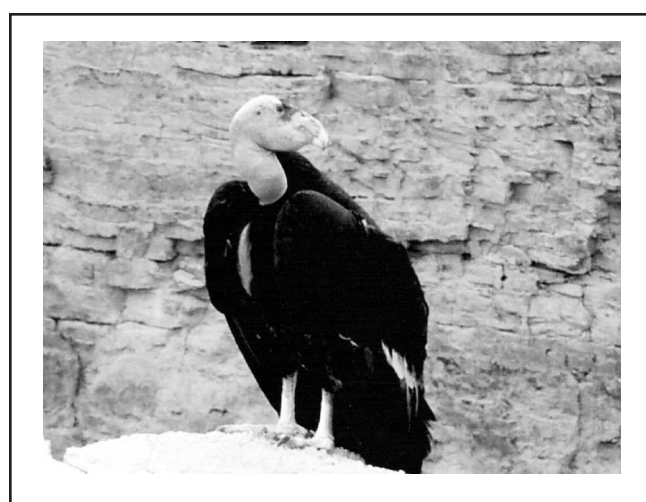


Al gave uncanny performances of Aldo Leopold in front of many enraptured audiences.

"Teacher of the Year" Award from the Leopold Foundation in September of this year.

Among the wisdom Al passed on through the character of Aldo Leopold are these words: "Possibly in our intuitive perception, which may be truer than our science and less impeded by words than our philosophies, we realize the indivisibility of the earth, its soils, mountains, rivers, forests, climate, plants and animals, and respect it collectively...not only as a useful servant, but as a living being."

In a speech before a Prescott College graduating class, Al began, "I wonder if you are aware of how powerful you are? How many lives you touch everyday? Like a pebble in a pond, your thoughts and actions ripple outward to touch lives in ways you may never know."

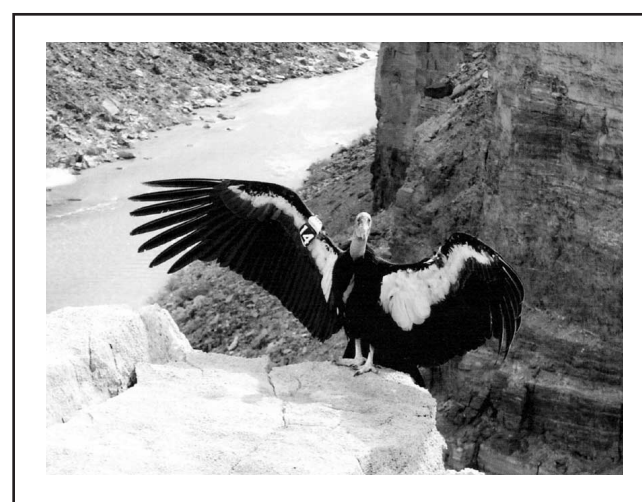


## Arizona Condors?

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To order your cards please contact:

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\* A percentage of all Condor Card sales from this add will be donated to the Arizona Wilderness Coalition.

## WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

# Backcountry SUV

by Tom Taylor

Nothing beats a good backpack trip into the backcountry... except for one problem - the backpack. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) had my solution: the Adopt-a-Wild Horse or Burro Program. I adopted my wild burro in 1989, tamed and trained her to take a halter and lead rope, and then to carry a packsaddle. In turn, she took the load off my back!

Now we (I mean Hualapai and myself) can hike multiple days with fresh food and beverages. We hike with loads measured in pounds and don't fret about which freeze-dried meal tastes best or how many ounces it weighs.

Coming off the public rangelands, BLM wild burros are sure-footed and tolerant of extreme climates and terrain, and yet within a short period of time, they become people-friendly. Hualapai became a willing partner in the backcountry. Often when we meet other trail hikers weary from traveling with loads on their backs, they marvel at my formerly wild burro. Hualapai welcomes the attention she gets from these encounters.

Hiking with Hualapai has also been instrumental toward introducing my children to backcountry travel

and camping. Their initial exposure to backcountry travel has been a positive experience. They've always traveled with lighter loads and appreciate the people-friendly qualities in Hualapai.

The BLM adoption process is clear and direct, and the staff is accessible and helpful. Just like the credit card slogan says, "don't leave home without it," I too would say to backcountry travelers "adopt a BLM burro, and don't leave home without her!"

Tom Taylor is a dedicated AWC member and BLM Volunteer. Tom is happy to provide more information or answer questions about wild burro adoption and backcountry travel.

Email: [Arizonadeserttom@aol.com](mailto:Arizonadeserttom@aol.com)

Phone: (480) 964-6482

For more information on the Wild Horse and Burro Program visit:

[www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov](http://www.wildhorseandburro.blm.gov)  
or call 1-866-4MUSTANGS

Burros on our public BLM lands remind us of the history that first brought settlers to the West. When the mining boom began in the late 1800s in Arizona, there were no cars, roads, or railroads to transport supplies and ore to and from the mining camps. Burros became the most reliable form of transportation because they could carry heavy loads and survive harsh desert conditions. When mines closed or other means of transportation were eventually provided, many burros were simply let go or escaped into the wilds of the Arizona desert. Burro populations have survived in the desert for the last one hundred years. A herd can reproduce at a rate of 15-20% per year and achieve a doubling in population every 3-4 years.

In 1971, Congress passed the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act. This law gave direction on the protection, management, and control of wild horse and burro populations. Since 1971, scientists have found that burros on our public lands have dramatic impacts to vegetation and native wildlife. The Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 gave further direction on the management of wild horse and burro populations. Under this law, the BLM is directed to monitor rangeland conditions and remove wild horses and burros where rangeland conditions are not satisfactory. There are many Herd Management Areas on BLM lands throughout Arizona, and many of these areas overlap with wilderness areas created in the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990. The Harquahala Mountains Wilderness is one of these areas where burros frequent many of the water sources inside the wilderness. Burros are very possessive around water sources and many times restrict access to other wildlife such as desert bighorn sheep, and mule and whitetail deer.

The BLM is currently taking a closer look at many of the Herd Management Areas in their Resource Management Plan revision processes. The agency must abide by the mandates given to them under the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, but many of the rangeland conditions are unsatisfactory. Managing for large burro populations is a goal that conflicts with protecting many of the threatened, endangered, and sensitive species that are native to the Arizona desert, so a reduction in herd numbers is necessary.

Your comments supporting these decisions will help protect our wilderness heritage and the native species that depend on these areas. The great part about removing burros from our BLM lands is that a well-organized and humane choice exists through the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Program (see above).

Jason Williams

Jason is AWC's Central Mountains-Sonoran Regional Director.

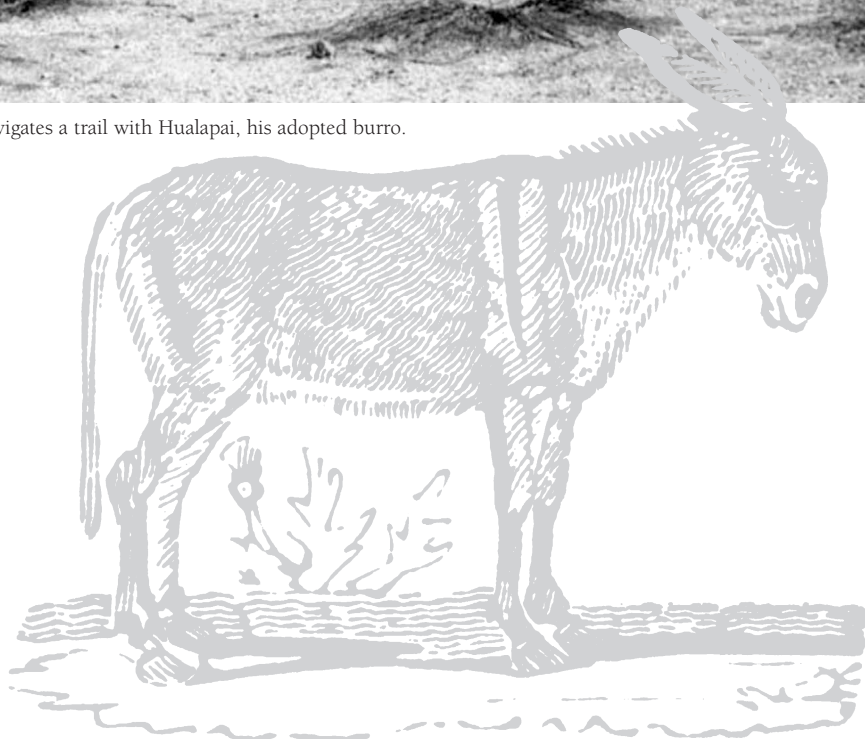


Wild horses and burros can be found in the Harquahala Mountains Wilderness.



Tom Taylor navigates a trail with Hualapai, his adopted burro.

Photo: John Beckett





# Agua Fria: A Truly Monumental Experience

by Marc Wise

The day glistened in the gentle morning heat of Arizona sunshine. I stepped down from the van to view my new surroundings. As part of Doug Hulmes' Basic Ecology class from Prescott College, we had driven approximately forty-five minutes to the Agua Fria National Monument. There, classic Sonoran Desert landscape collided with chaparral and it stirred with life. Junipers stood on the northward hillside gazing out over their age-old companions, the saguaros of the southern slope. Color bounced off the burnt red grooves of the canyon from delicate blooms of native wildflowers. Indian paintbrush, soft orange globe mallow, the deep purple of heliotropes, and white asteraceae shimmered in a slight morning breeze. Below the exposed mesas—sun-brushed with rusty hues—lay a canyon of historical value.

"Well over 400 archeological sites have been protected through the conservation of this land," our substitute instructor for the day—Jason Williams of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition—told us.

A stout, friendly fellow with a passion for conservation, Jason held our attention, pointing out the intricate ecological details of our current environment. He provided insight into the ancient Hohokam tribes, as well as the many other native people who at one time called this place home more than a thousand years ago. Inhaling a deep breath of desert air, we followed Jason down the dry wash of Badger Springs trail.

The pebbles of the wash ground beneath my footsteps as I followed close behind our guide. I was hoping to catch sight of any wildlife that we had not already scared into hiding. The trail met the Agua Fria River at the one of the many points of interest and reasons for designating this area a national monument. A mural of rock art had been preserved on a brushed sandstone canvas beside the trail. Stick figures of antelope, elk, and bear danced with the ancient hunters, their creators, in a historical record of a lost people. Mesquite and metates—large, smooth stones shaped into concave bowls for grinding corn—scattered the land. Ancient visitors to this special place found protection from the heat of the southern sun under the cradling walls of the canyon, from the perennial flow of water, and from the large seep willows that droop their branches lazily over the riverbank.

From the junction, we could trace several ridges overlooking individual canyons. A current theory explains that ancient tribes had set up a system of communication from highpoint to highpoint. More than three thousand people of the Perry Mesa culture once thrived here. Jason had previously informed the class that before federal protection, the land fell victim to rifle practice and off-road recreation, and now bore

the scars of scattered shotgun shells and tire tracks. Federal management has always been a controversial issue and, in this particular case, monument designation has been a good thing. We will look back 20 years from now and be thankful that this special place was protected for its natural and cultural magnificence. And if we protect at least a portion of the monument as wilderness, it will look very much like it did when the people of Perry Mesa walked the washes and hunted the hills. As we continued down the trail, a web of interconnected life opened up before us. The canyon wren serenaded us down the trail sending their enlightening songs echoing through the canyon. A Gila woodpecker stuck its nose out of the nest it had burrowed into an elder saguaro cactus. The cactus and the woodpecker have a mutual relationship. The woodpecker, in exchange for a nice home and a good meal, pick the bugs off the cactus as if it were an old cow. In turn, when the woodpecker decides to move on to another home, a new species of bird will take advantage of the insulated, cool nesting spot that only the Gila woodpecker can build. This gives the woodpecker the honorary title of "keystone species," because it plays an essential

role in the Sonoran ecosystem. We also learned about the nocturnal pollination of the saguaros nightly bloom by the starlit flight of the bats.

I regretfully trudged back to the Prescott College van, leaving many mysteries left unexplored. The feeling lingering with me as I bumped along up highway 17 reminded me of what it felt like to be alive. For these retreats I am very grateful, because many people do not have this opportunity. They sit in classrooms and can only imagine the landscape they have read about, the ancient people spoken of in lecture that day, or the call of the canyon wren. I experience it, take it in, and remember what I am here to protect.

I know what the essence of ecology is truly about. I do not memorize the ecological cycles: I smell them



Petroglyphs dot the landscape at Agua Fria National Monument, where ancestors of today's Pima Indian culture once thrived. Photo: John Beckett

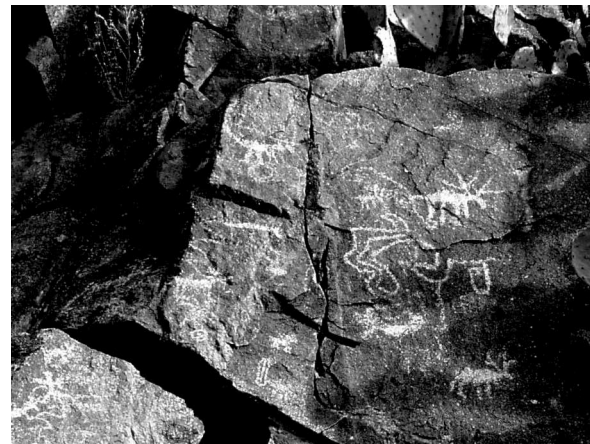


Photo: Tyler Kokjohn

in the air, taste them in bitter leaves, feel them in the wind across my face, and record them as memories. I wish this experience for all people because it is this connection to the land that reminds us of what it means to be alive.

\* \* \* \*

Marc Wise is an Environmental Studies student at Prescott College interested in understanding human relationships to nature and our role in ecological systems. This article was originally written in April 2004 as a field reflection about his visit to the Agua Fria National Monument. Prescott College offers Bachelors' and Masters' degrees, as well as teacher certification. Learn more at [www.prescott.edu](http://www.prescott.edu) or call 800-628-6344.



The gila woodpecker is an important keystone species in Arizona desert environments. Photo: USFWS



Photo: Mark Miller

## WATCH!

**Wilderness to Watch:** The Arizona Wilderness Coalition recommends 38,213 acres in three contiguous units for consideration as Wilderness Study Areas in the Agua Fria National Monument. AWC proposals make up less than 50% of the total monument, allowing for many other management areas within this spectacular national treasure.

Visit [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org) for updates on BLM planning for this monument.

## SHORT TAKES

### Good News for the Blue Range!

The Blue Range Primitive Area is one of the great, if little known, wild places in Arizona. I spent the majority of my Forest Service career as its wilderness manager. One of my last projects with Forest Service was to try to acquire a very special 15 acre parcel of private land at the end of the Blue River Road which forms a cherry stem—or non wilderness corridor—penetrating into the Primitive Area. The last portion of the road literally followed the stream bed, which is also designated critical habitat for the endangered loach minnow. This place was begging me to return it to the wild.

In 2001, the landowner had indicated that he would like to exchange or sell that property, known as the Smith Place, to the Forest Service. I had told the landowner that the Forest Service would be very interested in acquiring that land as it would extend the portion of the Blue Range managed as wilderness by nearly two miles. We agreed that it would be a shame for that land to ever lose its wild character to human development. Unfortunately the bureaucratic wheels moved too slowly to satisfy the landowner. I retired to work for the AWC and he abandoned the idea.

In 2002, as an AWC wilderness advocate, I asked the landowner if he was still interested in turning that property over to the Forest Service, and he gave me 6 months to make it happen. Fortunately I contacted Charlie O'Leary at the Trust for Public Land (TPL) who took an immediate interest in the acquisition. We were quickly able to work out an agreement where the generous landowner would benefit from the tax advantages of donating the property to TPL. TPL would then go through the tedious process of selling the land to the Forest Service. I couldn't have been more pleased.

In September 2004, TPL was able to finalize the sale of the land to the Forest Service. Literally out of the Blue, I received a call from Charlie O'Leary to inform us that the wild core of the Blue Range Primitive had been expanded as we had anticipated. Charlie then indicated that his Board of Directors had decided to make a very significant grant to the AWC to reward us for caring for the Blue Range and to support our current work. This was totally unexpected and very humbling. It confirms that our mission to protect Arizona's wild places is appreciated by a broad range of partners, citizens, and fellow advocates.

—Don Hoffman

### Upcoming Event: John Muir Comes to Scottsdale!

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is pleased to welcome wilderness legend John Muir to Scottsdale, February 3, 2005, at the Civic Center Library Auditorium, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Refreshments and mingling beginning at 6 p.m.

Complete with Scottish brogue, character actor and chatauqua expert Doug Hulmes portrays the life and times of history's most famous wilderness advocate, giving audiences a glimpse into the beginnings of conservation ideology in 19th century America. Mr. Hulmes is currently professor of Environmental Studies at Prescott College, where he teaches courses in ecology, environmental education, and environmental history and philosophy. He is the co-recipient of the 1990 National Wilderness Education Award, sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service and the Izaak Walton League. He has received numerous other awards for his John Muir presentation. Mr. Hulmes currently sits on the board of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition.

This educational event is open to the public and will raise funds for the Arizona Wilderness Coalition to continue its valuable wilderness protection work. Call 602-571-2603 for more information on tickets and event details, or visit [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org).

### Open Houses for Colorado River: We Need You There!!

See story on page 3. We need your support for managing the wilderness character of the Colorado River through Grand Canyon National Park. The park's preferred alternative, released in October, does not protect natural resource and wilderness values; instead, motors will stay on the Colorado River despite park claims to manage "for a wilderness-type river experience".

The Park Service has recommended most of the park—including the river corridor—for wilderness protection since 1980, when they first proposed to phase out raft motors to restore the wilderness experience. Yet the park's current recommended alternative and six others continue motorized use on the river. The proposed plan seems more about allowing motorized industries to operate unconditionally than it is about protecting the river and providing an enduring wilderness experience for present and future generations.

**PLEASE ACT NOW:** Write comments and come to the open-houses. A strong showing will help turn the tide towards real protection for the heart of Grand Canyon National Park.

**For the DEIS go to:** <http://www.nps.gov/grca/crmp/>. **For talking points** to help you craft a personalized letter to Park Service officials, please refer to story on page 3.

#### Open House Schedule:

Monday, November 22, 2004  
4:00-8:00pm (Any time during this time frame.)  
Flagstaff, Arizona  
Coconino Community College  
Administration Building – Commons Area  
2800 S. Lone Tree Rd.  
[www.coconino.edu/campuses/lonetree.html](http://www.coconino.edu/campuses/lonetree.html)

Tuesday, November 30, 2004  
4:00-8:00pm (Any time during this time frame.)  
Phoenix, Arizona  
Glendale Community College  
Student Lounge  
6000 W. Olive Avenue, Glendale  
[www.gc.maricopa.edu/map/](http://www.gc.maricopa.edu/map/)

Comments will be accepted through January 7, 2005. Please send your comments in writing to CRMP Project, Grand Canyon National Park, PO Box 129, Grand Canyon AZ 86023, or comment on-line at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/crmp/>.

### Need Gift Ideas for the Holidays? Look No Further.

#### *The Enduring Wilderness: Protecting Our Natural Heritage Through the Wilderness Act*

by Doug Scott, Policy Director, Campaign for America's Wilderness, Fulcrum Publishing, August 2004, 200 pages, \$12.95

An up-to-the-minute look at how America has preserved nearly 106 million acres of diverse wilderness areas in 44 states by statutory law ... and how much more will be preserved. Written by a wilderness lobbyist (since 1966), strategist, and historian, this book is a one-stop place for activists, students, and others to learn what wilderness preservation is all about. All royalties for this book go to grassroots environmental organizations.

What others have said about this book:

"Holy, Holy, Holy!"

—Kurt Vonnegut

"An invaluable guidebook to saving America's wilderness. A must for ordinary citizens who care about saving our wilderness heritage for future generations. Hopeful, practical, and compelling."

—Christopher Reeve

"Doug Scott is a coyote who is as comfortable in the halls of Congress as he is in the great wilds of this nation. This book is a celebration not only of the 40th anniversary of the 1964 Wilderness Act by one of our great advocates of conservation, but an astute reminder as to why open space matters to the soul of America. Beautiful wild words from a wild mind."

—Terry Tempest Williams,

Author of *The Open Space of Democracy* (Orion, 2004)

To order "The Enduring Wilderness," please email or call Don Hoffman at [dhoffman@azwild.org](mailto:dhoffman@azwild.org), 928-339-4525, or mail your check to Box 529, Alpine, AZ 85920. The cover price is \$12.95 plus \$4.00 for shipping and handling up to two books.

#### *Rewilding North America*

by Dave Foreman, Founder and Director of The Rewilding Institute

Dave Foreman sets out a vision that is bold, scientifically credible, practically achievable, and hopeful. It is a vision and strategy based on the functional role of large carnivores in maintaining and restoring healthy ecosystems and the need for conservation action on a continental-scale.

What others are saying about this book:

"If 'Rewilding North America' can't stop the rising tide of extinction, then nothing will. Realistic in its assessment of the causes of extinction and the challenges ahead, Foreman's ethically leavened and scientifically grounded arguments for rewilding promote hope. More than a 'book of the year,' *Rewilding North America* makes clear the conservation and restoration agenda for the century."

—Max Oelschlaeger,

author of *The Idea of Wilderness*, FB. McAllister Chair of Community, Culture & Environment, Northern Arizona University

"You know that proverbial squirrel that could walk halfway across the continent without ever leaving a tree? Dave Foreman is plotting to make sure it happens again—a long time in the future doubtless, but if we get behind his efforts it will be a real possibility."

—Bill McKibben,

author of *Enough: Staying Human in an Engineered Age*

To order a copy, visit <http://rewilding.org/>. Signed copies available. Proceeds to benefit the Rewilding Institute.

#### T-Shirts Make Perfect Gifts!

Show your support for Arizona Wilderness with these sporty athletic blend t-shirts, featuring the colorful tapestry logo of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition.

Cost: short sleeve = \$15.00, long sleeve = \$20.00. Add \$3.00 shipping and handling per shirt. To order, email [dhoffman@azwild.org](mailto:dhoffman@azwild.org) or call 928-339-4525.



# Words from a Wilderness Warhorse

by Bart Koehler

I've been blessed to be able to follow my calling by helping to permanently protect many areas and millions of acres of wild places over a span of 33 years since the 1970s. As I look back at all these adventures, and look out to the wild horizons ahead, I wanted to share a few nuggets of wilderness wisdom after all these years of venturing along rough and rocky campaign trails.



(l) Bart Koehler with good friend Dave Foreman (r).

Photo: Don Hoffman

## The Dynamics on Capital Hill

Interestingly enough, our halls of government retain the same basic ratios of House and Senate seats to the number of constituents as we did more than 200 years ago. With our growing population, the multitudinous demands on Congress, combined with unimaginable workloads, travel schedules, and hectic daily lives, it's absolutely amazing that laws of any substance are enacted in Washington.

We are now seeing statesmen like Senator Harry Reid (D-NV) building bigger bills that combine several issue-related proposals into one hefty piece of legislation, including the designation of significant new wilderness areas as an integral part of the package. It makes sense that, when you package a number of key pieces of legislation together, you have more horsepower to ultimately reach the critical approval needed for enactment.

## Purist vs. Pragmatist:

### A Lesson on Compromise

A close look at the history and content of the Wilderness Act shows that it is riddled with hard-fought compromises. I revere this landmark law, but I also know that it is neither pure nor perfect. Even if it were perfect in our wildest dreams, it never would have made it to Lyndon Johnson for his signature 40 years ago. Many of the wilderness areas subsequently enacted into law included one type of compromise or another.

Some may view the history of wilderness laws as a series of major compromises that shore up a long list of losses we'll never regain. A quick and dirty list: hard-rock mining exemptions; water use and the President's authority to approve dams and other projects; grazing in the 1964 bill and then adopting subsequent Congressional Grazing Guidelines in 1980 & 1990 legislation; wildlife management language in the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990; and exceptions for pre-established motorized use in places like the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. This list can go on and on...and on.

Others see the Wilderness Act in a more positive light: that indeed, there were deliberate and careful compromises made in the original Wilderness Act, but that they were made in a responsible way. If the additional areas added to the National Wilderness Preservation System were both significant and worthwhile—compromise or not—then it would be far better to have them protected as Wilderness, however imperfect they may be, rather than watch Congress

cast these areas aside, assuring them a perilous future.

Pure "hard line in the sand" approaches have worked well in Southern Utah's Redrock Country and along Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Coastal Plain. But the more pragmatic "get what you can and live to fight another day" approaches without hesitation have also worked well in Black Rock and Clark County, Nevada; Priest and Three Ridges, Virginia; California; and the Tongass Timber Reform Act. Currently, a number of us are following these approaches in our work on the Owyhees, Lincoln County, Nevada, and the Boulder White Clouds.

But frankly, if we absolutely insist that all future wilderness bills must be as pure as the driven snow then we'll simply get frozen out of the public process, labeled "extremists" and every other stereotypical anti-environmental tag known to man.

Moreover, it is my strong belief that wilderness advocates then and now have not damaged the basic initial integrity of the Wilderness Act during decades of hard-won battles. I'll say this now, and say it again: I have an ever-growing sense of urgency that if we do not protect a very significant number of meaningful new wilderness areas in a rapid-fire way, we will lose more and more unprotected wild places to motorized recreationists. What did Aldo Leopold say? "Wilderness is a resource which can shrink but not grow. ...the creation of new wilderness in the full sense of the word is impossible."

## Anti-Wilderness Foes, Who Are Ye?

Over time, I've come to strongly believe that wilderness advocates should make an honest effort to help small rural communities and rural citizens who are located adjacent to proposed wilderness areas. Helping these people become less fearful of wilderness and more secure within their work and communities should serve to open doors and attitudes to wilderness over time.

In the past we routinely fought big sawmills, hard-rock mining multi-nationals, behemoth oil and gas corporations, and sometimes a snowmobile group here or there. Today it seems, our battles are being fought against a different array of interests - - some of which didn't even exist when the Wilderness Act became law. Here are a few of them:

**Mountain Bikers:** We can thank the authors of the Wilderness Act for prohibiting mechanical transport. Each year these users lay claim to additional trails that penetrate deeper into special places, yet we have had some successes working with local leaders in important areas.

**Snowmobilers:** With new and lighter machines, they can go further and higher into the wilds.

**Off-Road Vehicle Users:** (Also ATVs and Motorcycle users) With brand names such as "Grizzly", these sleeker, bigger, and faster machines can access further into intact wilderness areas. Tragically, in a number of key Forest Service-proposed wilderness areas, these machines and their riders have established use in the area for a generation or more, making it doubly difficult to remove their constituents when a wilderness bill is on the table.

**Ranchers:** Once we could usually rely on many ranchers to support Wilderness and actually help lead the charge toward passage. Today, pro-Wilderness ranchers are few and far between. This is partly due to the fact that many conservation groups abandoned their earlier emphasis on working with grassroots and

rural citizens, and thus left this territory wide open for the so-called "wise use" groups to move in and gain foothold. Wilderness advocates must work proactively with people who live and work in rural counties.

**Outfitters and Horse Packers:** These folks were once in the vanguard of wilderness advocacy actions. Some feel badgered by watchdog groups, and many have been driven away from working coalitions. We still find a rare supporter among these folks, but sadly many of them simply refuse to support Wilderness, as they did years ago, sometimes because of ever-rigid restrictions brought to bear by agencies and some groups. It's important to note that praise for the tradition of horse use in wilderness can be traced back to The Wilderness Society (TWS) founder Aldo Leopold in the early 1920's.

## So Many More Conservation Groups Across A Very Wide Spectrum:

Back when I first worked for TWS, there were very few groups out there working on wilderness protection. So, being organizers at heart, we helped jumpstart many grassroots groups. Today, it seems as though if you have an email address and maybe a working website, your group is granted instant legitimacy — sometimes with disastrous, splintering results.

## Meeting the Challenges Ahead

The Wilderness Society has set a tremendous goal of adding millions and millions of acres to the National Wilderness Preservation System. We at the Wilderness Support Center work at the "Art of the Possible," to take advantage of existing conditions to get where we want to go - - or create new conditions to help get us there. We also follow the concepts of what I call "Coyote Planning:" when you see the possibility of protecting a special wild place, pounce on it, then pick it up and run with it all the way across the Capitol Hill lawn, down Pennsylvania Avenue, and up and over the fence to the White House Lawn.

We strive to see the day when Congressional leaders of every stripe can fully engage in efforts to enact progressive wilderness laws. By involving our lawmakers more in the process of creating a momentum toward wilderness legislation, they may actually come to enjoy enacting new wilderness laws. With every new Congressional session a "time in the sun" for deserving wilderness laws, we hope to reach our laudable goal of 200 million new acres of wilderness.

We know that this will be no easy task. It's a heck of a lot easier to say "no" than to take a deep breath and say "yes" to wilderness. But I believe that when you bask in the sun, you can't be afraid of your own shadow. And if things get really rough, always remember to ride a bucking horse uphill.

*Bart Koehler serves on the AWC Board of Directors and is Director of The Wilderness Support Center in Durango, Colo.*

# JOIN US!

Yes! I want to help the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. Together, we can build a lasting legacy of Arizona wild lands for this and future generations. You may make tax-deductible donations payable to "The Arizona Wilderness Coalition." Enclose your check with this card to: The Arizona Wilderness Coalition, P.O. Box 529, Alpine, AZ 85920. Questions? 928-339-4525

Tell us about yourself!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I wish to receive your e-mail alerts and newsletter. Sign me up! (Your email is necessary for us to send you our electronic alerts and event notices, but we will not share your email address outside of AWC.)

\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my one-time donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_ I wish to make a monthly donation to the AWC, in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Card Type \_\_\_\_\_ Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

By sharing your interests and hobbies with us, we can be more accurate in sending you alerts, event notices in your region, and requests for volunteer help. Please take a few minutes to fill out the information below. Thank you!

### Hobbies or Skills (please check all that apply):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Volunteer                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Wild Land Inventory    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter Writing                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography/Art/Design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing /Publishing/Newsletter Help |   |

### Mailing Preferences (please check all that apply):

- |   |  |                                       |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Only    | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter and Alerts                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> All Mailings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Action Alerts Only | <input type="checkbox"/> No Mailings: I prefer to visit your website for news. |                                       |

### Region of interest (please check all that apply):

- |  |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central Mountains–Sonoran |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grand Canyon              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Deserts Region    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sky Islands–Southeastern  |

On behalf of Arizona's Wilderness, Thank You.

Arizona Wilderness Coalition  
P.O. Box 529  
Alpine, AZ 85290



even after  
40 years  
IT NEVER GETS OLD

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