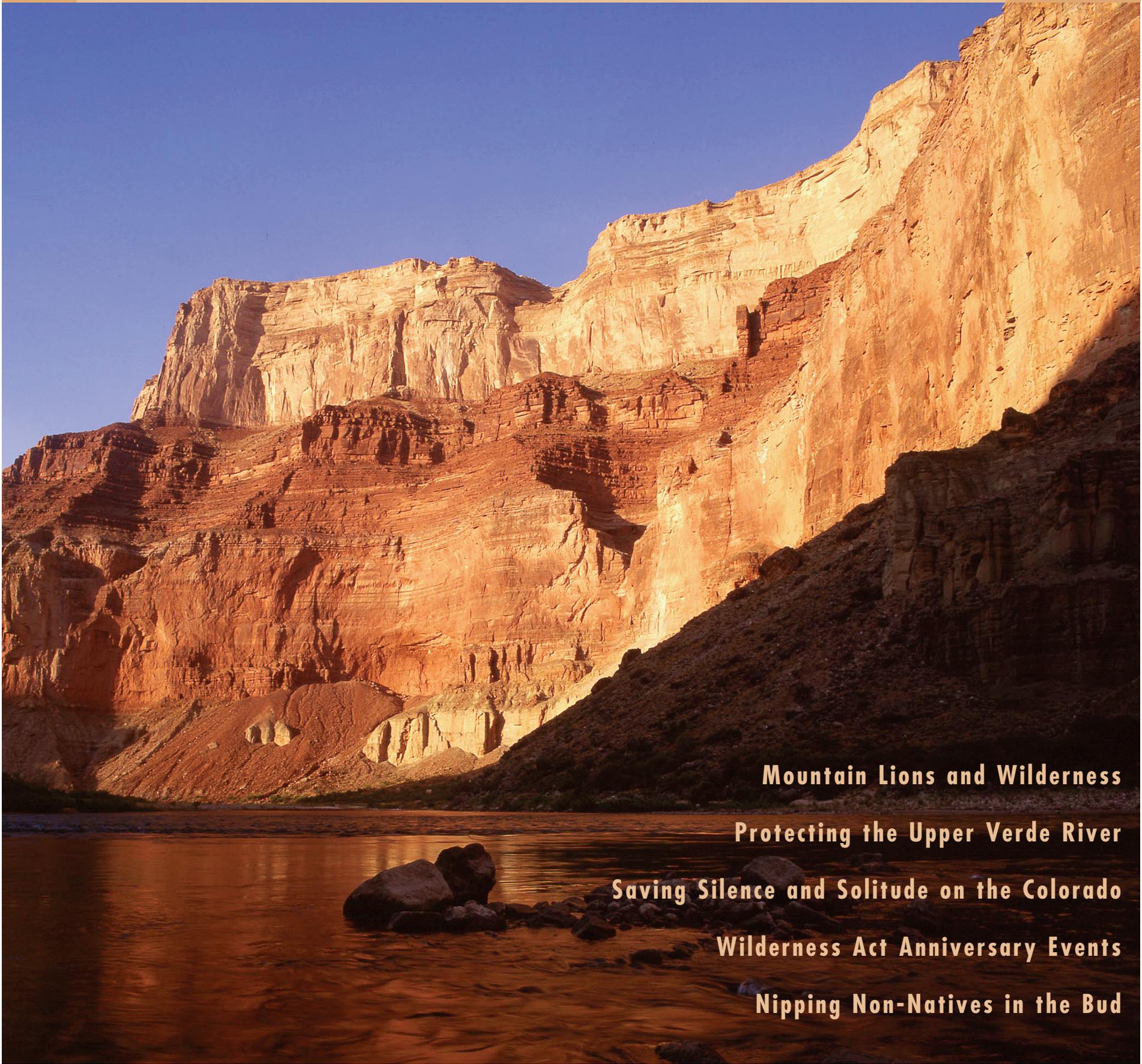


NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

ARIZONA
WILD



Mountain Lions and Wilderness

Protecting the Upper Verde River

Saving Silence and Solitude on the Colorado

Wilderness Act Anniversary Events

Nipping Non-Natives in the Bud

SPRING / SUMMER 2004

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Mission Statement

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition (AWC) is an organization of groups and individuals whose mission is to protect and restore the wilderness lands and waters of Arizona.

We coordinate and conduct inventories and educate citizens about the unique features of Arizona's wild lands, while advocating and building support for their lasting protection. The Coalition has completed inventories and prepared preliminary wilderness recommendations for federal land agencies covering nearly one half of the state. We are actively organizing volunteers to complete this effort for all of Arizona.

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

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 man's 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 State is protected as wilderness. In Arizona, wilderness designation protects approximately 6.2 percent of our land and wildlife.

OUT OF THE BLUE

Where the Wilderness Path Takes Us

I was recently asked how working for a wilderness advocacy organization was different from my previous career as a Wilderness Manager for the U.S. Forest Service. My instinctive response was to admit that I've come to recognize my need to dress professionally and I now find myself window shopping for men's clothing when walking along city sidewalks. That's a profound change from my days packing with mules in the Blue Range!

I have also come to realize that my primary role as Executive Director for the Coalition is to tell people who we are, what we do, and why our work is important. The message remains constant whether I am talking with potential members or supporters, politicians, federal land managers, dedicated staff, knowledgeable Board members, philanthropic foundations, or our current and potential individual donors. Our work becomes more exciting and complex each week as we face diverse and previously unheard-of challenges related to wilderness protection. The current administration certainly keeps us on our toes: we must constantly sort out the real threats from the distractions. It is important for our small and efficient organization to remain focused on our mission and objectives in order to achieve the prize of protecting wilderness, old and new, in Arizona. The key words are focus, focus and focus.



The Arizona Wilderness Coalition has gone through a remarkable metamorphosis within the last couple of years. Our flexible staff and Board of Directors have helped to make our transition mostly painless, but not effortless. In 2000, 50 activists met at the Phoenix Zoo to reorganize the Coalition. The Pew Charitable Trust offered generous multi-year funding to reactivate a wilderness movement in Arizona. With secure funding intact, groups and individuals with a passion for preserving Arizona wilderness created a steering committee to direct this effort. My first official day on the job was 9/11/2001 in Washington D.C., of all places, and of course things changed very quickly. The economy stumbled and foundation support understandably took a nosedive. It became more and more evident that we had taken on a worthy but long term mission, and that we needed to develop a long term and diversified approach to sustain a successful effort.

The AWC decided to incorporate as a stand-alone non-profit organization in the eyes of the IRS. Our application is pending. We have sent staff and Board members to four fundraising training sessions provided at no cost by the experts at TREC (Training Resources for the Environmental Community). We have diversified our foundation support to include grants from—listed alphabetically: Campaign for America's Wilderness (funded by Pew Charitable Trusts), Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation, Patagonia, The Wilderness Society, Wilburforce and Wyss Foundations, and we continue to broaden that support.

We recently were awarded a very prestigious \$32,000 grant from the Outdoor Industry Conservation Alliance. Apparently when philanthropic

organizations learn "who we are, what we do, and why we do it," they want to join in our work. Our success at developing support has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life, but it is a continuous process. The cogs and wheels must stay oiled and spinning.

Another measure of our success includes garnering recognition as a credible, honest, and professional organization with a clear mission. Increasingly, other organizations, politicians, news reporters and individuals seek our expertise in knowing where Arizona's most intact wild lands are and why their protection is important. We are constantly being engaged by media, agencies, and citizens to speak on behalf of wilderness in Arizona. Our membership has grown from the 50 activists in 2000 to over one thousand in 2004! All of this bodes well for our future success protecting our special wild places.

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition has adapted to circumstance by diversifying our foundation and member support. We recognize the importance of reaching out to more volunteers and members – our ultimate goal being to find and motivate everyone who cares about wilderness in Arizona. The cost of maintaining our burgeoning member database is quite significant. For instance, the web-based service that maintains our database now costs about \$2000 per year. Our website, e-newsletter, and postage costs are also quite expensive.

This first paper version of our newsletter is designed to reach out to many new members, but not without cost. We have asked and will continue to ask our members to provide financial and volunteer support. Please consider how you can contribute toward the protection of our wild places in Arizona.

I promise you will not be disappointed.

For the Wild,

Donald Hoffman
Executive Director

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SPRING / SUMMER 2004

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Cover photo © Mark Miller
Design by Mary Williams

The Mountain Lion That Saved a Wilderness

by Doug Hulmes

Rarely do people ever see a mountain lion. To catch a glimpse of one, say, dashing across a road is for many a lifelong dream. Even to chance upon large, fresh lion tracks while hiking along a remote canyon stream is enough to send prickles of excitement and anticipation through us. But to gaze into the emerald green eyes of one of these incredible animals, crouching on the limb of a Ponderosa twenty feet above me, was a truly profound experience and one I will always cherish.

Three years after my encounter with the lion, I was testifying for the Arizona Wilderness Bill in Washington, D.C., before the House Subcommittee on Parks and Public Lands. I briefly mentioned my encounter with the mountain lion while speaking on behalf of the Woodchute Wilderness, a small area of about 5,600 acres that encompasses the northern end of Mingus Mountain and overlooks the Verde Valley, Sedona, and the distant Sand Francisco Peaks, one of the classic vistas of Arizona.

The area had received little attention and had not made the final cut of recommendations by the U.S. Forest Service for protection under wilderness status, despite a lack of any major conflicts between

stakeholders and the Woodchute area. It was simply not one of those “spectacular” areas that draw interest: Woodchute lacks rugged topography, deep canyons, or picturesque waterfalls. But for me, the area held a truly symbolic reason for deserving the protective mantle of wilderness. It was near Woodchute that I had my first, and perhaps only, encounter with a mountain lion.

Speaking before the Subcommittee, trying to elucidate people to the beauty and significance of a landscape they have never seen—and having only five minutes to do so—was a humbling exercise. Surrounded by the power and ego of Washington, and realizing that I was one of many who would testify before this Subcommittee only added to my feelings of verbal inadequacy. So as a means of trying to inject some lasting impression, I passed around several photographs of the areas for which I was testifying. The only photo I had to represent Woodchute was of the mountain lion, staring down at me from his perch in the Ponderosa. In passing, I mentioned that the experience was as great a “wilderness experience” as any I could ever hope for, and went on to talk about another area.

Congressman John Seiberling from Ohio was chairing the meeting, and happened to be holding the photograph of the lion when I mentioned the encounter. He interrupted my testimony and asked for a more detailed account of what happened. I fumbled to fill in the story, which began for me when I heard Will Evans, a close friend and co-worker, yelling something about a lion. Two other friends, Joanne Maas and Melissa Halverstadt, joined us as we raced a mile through the forest to where Will's dog had treed the large cat. Amazingly, the lion remained crouching in the tree, his huge eyes staring down at us and his pink tongue panting.

We watched the magnificent animal for at least 15 minutes. Will suggested that he and I climb a tree nearby and try to get some better photographs. The cat pensively watched as we ascended a large Ponderosa, clinging to branches that were only yards from the

lion. We stared into each other's eyes for several minutes as feelings of awe, and respect for the size and power of the animal began to replace my initial feeling of excitement.

Just as we began to question our proximity to the lion, he leaped from the branch, making contact with the trunk once before launching through the air, and landing without a sound 15 feet from the base of the tree. Fortunately, he had sized up his escape route and catapulted himself in the opposite direction from where Joanne and Melissa were standing.

Will and I climbed down from our perch and joined the women who were collecting their composure. We walked back and I felt a strange sense of wonder as I gazed up at the sun breaking through the forest canopy. Never again would I have to imagine what it would be like to see a mountain lion in the wild.

In Washington, the photograph of the lion must have triggered an inner yearning from Congressman Seiberling, for at the end of my testimony, he said, “I want to see Woodchute designated as wilderness.” And hopefully, years from now another group of hikers will gaze up into the branches of a thousand year old alligator juniper and catch a glimpse of a mountain lion silhouetted against the sky.

Hearing of the recent planned killing of mountain lions in Sabino Canyon near Tucson left me saddened and disheartened that our civilization is now encroaching on the last refuges for these great creatures. Yes, mountain lions deserve our respect, and have been known to occasionally attack people, but so have domestic dogs. While Sabino Canyon is not a protected wilderness legally, lions have chosen it as their habitat, and therefore, have a right to exist there. Like many other predators in the West, they play an important role in maintaining a balance of nature.

Perhaps people who go to these areas to recreate should consider the possible dangers, and not go alone. Or perhaps people should recognize that some places must be left wild, not simply for humans to be able to experience wild nature, but because some species of animals need wild and remote areas to survive. Aldo Leopold recognized this 80 years ago, when the grizzly bear and Mexican wolf were eradicated from Arizona. I wonder how many of our wildlife managers have read *A Sand County Almanac*, or if they have, perhaps it is time to read it again.



Special Update: Sabino Canyon

On the civic action front, wildlife and conservation groups have issued a statement that opposes the removal of any mountain lions from Sabino Canyon near Tucson. According to the groups, the Arizona Game & Fish Department and Coronado National Forest have not shown that any of the lions pose a danger to the public, nor have they explained the process through which the decision was made.

Moreover, documents obtained through the Arizona Public Records Act demonstrate that Arizona Game & Fish Department personnel did not believe the lions were a threat during the last month. At press time, the Commission and Department had called off the hunt indefinitely until further research can be done on the animals and any potential interaction with humans.

“The Sabino Canyon issue is indicative of two larger problems,” says Stephanie Nichols-Young, an attorney and mountain lion activist for the Animal Defense League of Arizona (www.adlaz.org). “First, Arizona has no real plan to manage mountain lions and second, the Arizona Game & Fish Commission is not fulfilling its duties to Arizonans by shutting the public out of decisions that affect public lands and the wildlife that lives there.”

The groups are asking the Arizona game and Fish Commission and its Department to immediately develop a public process that will create a plan that includes:

- More research to better understand Arizona lion populations and lion behavior, including studies of human/mountain lion interfaces.
- The protocols for all studies should be peer reviewed by outside mountain lion experts, prior to initiation.

- Reform of hunt guidelines, and the hunt guideline process, including incorporation into a broader management plan and development of a method to better estimate lion populations.

- Protection of lion habitat and wildlife corridors.

- Consideration of mountain lions' status as a keystone species and the important ecosystem role they play in all management decisions.

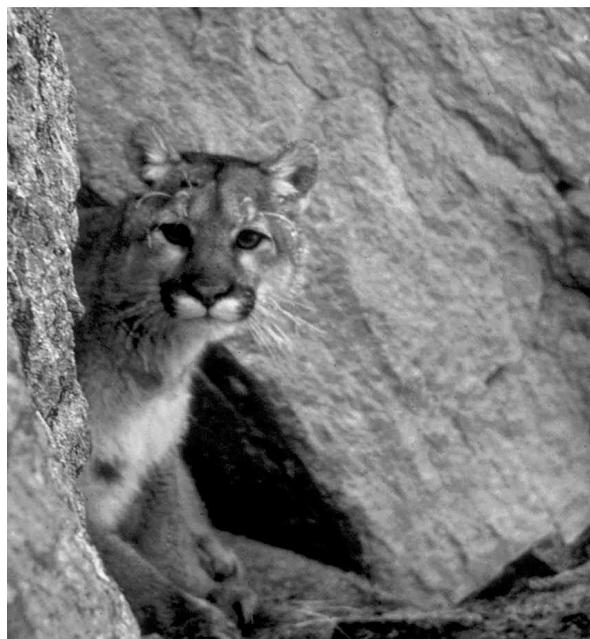


Photo courtesy of US Fish and Wildlife Service

“To be well informed on the subject of wildlife and requirements for its conservation, we’re also calling for broad reform of the Commission and Department to manage Arizona’s wildlife consistent with current conservation biology, not a species-by-species system they are currently using,” says Nichols-Young.

At press time, Game and Fish officials caught a female lion they believed to be the animal causing human alarm in the Sabino Canyon area. She was transported to a Scottsdale wildlife facility where she will reside in a 6,000-square-foot, chain-link enclosure. The Southwest Wildlife Rehabilitation and Educational Foundation says it may eventually move the cat to a much bigger facility it hopes to build 50 miles northeast of Tucson. Wildlife activists believe that the lioness may have left cubs in the wild that may starve as a result of their mother’s capture. Contact the Animal Defense League of Arizona www.adlaz.org for more information on how you can help protect lions in the wild.

Katurah Mackay

“Wilderness is an idea as much as a place, with modern man learning to pass like the shadow of a cloud across what he did not make and cannot improve.”

Gilbert M. Grosvenor

For the Upper Verde, Wild and Scenic Means Stronger Protection

By Cacia McClain and Katurah Mackay

Spring is the season to get outside and enjoy Arizona’s tranquil rivers and wetland areas. Few other places in Arizona embody riparian health than the Verde River. Cacia McClain, a student from Prescott College, is completing her Senior Project and serving as a work-study student with the Arizona Wilderness Coalition’s Prescott office, after which she will graduate in May with a B.A. in Environmental Conservation. Cacia’s Senior Project will complete a Wild and Scenic River Study of the upper Verde River – one of Arizona’s last perennial streams in the Central Highlands Region of Arizona. The culmination of this project will be a written proposal to be submitted to the U.S. Forest Service. Included in her study is a course in natural history and ecology, in which she has been able to capitalize on the help of many local volunteers for her river inventory.

within the upper 19-mile segment of the Verde River that discouraged designation. Today the Prescott National Forest owns one of the inholdings and is working collaboratively with The Nature Conservancy to acquire the other private parcel. This transaction will hopefully allow for a better chance for the upper Verde River to be designated as Wild and Scenic.

Cacia has been working closely with Jason Williams, AWC’s Central Mountains-Sonoran Regional Coordinator, on updating past wilderness field inventories to ready them for publication. “With Jason, I have learned a lot how much time it takes to write a single proposal and how much work goes into it,” she says.

It is stated in the *Congressional Declaration of Policy of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act* that, “certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate



Photo by Laura Schuessler

“I love being outdoors,” says Cacia, “and my goal in the environmental field is to share my passion and respect for the natural world with others. Hopefully I will enable them to create their own individual relationship with the wild lands that are still out there.”

The upper Verde River flows through Prescott National Forest and lies west of Paulden, AZ, south of the Mogollon Rim, northwest of the town of Jerome. In 1982, the Forest Service completed a Wild and Scenic River Study of the entire Verde River. Congress designated lower reaches of the river as Wild and Scenic but did not give any designation to the upper Verde River. When the Forest Service submitted the Wild and Scenic proposal, there were two private inholdings

environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.”

Not only is the Verde River an important ecosystem to preserve as it is one of the few last perennial streams in the Arizona, it is also an important habitat corridor for birds, mountain lions, and other mammals. Many endangered or threatened species use the river corridor as migration routes or nesting sites. Bald eagles have been known to nest in the Verde River in the past and are currently abundant within the corridor.



Photo by Cacia McClain



A drawing of the threatened spikedace.

Sections of the upper Verde River are designated as critical habitat for two native threatened fishes called the spikedace and loach minnow.

However, because more than thirty species of exotic fishes have been introduced to the Verde River for recreational fishing, the populations of these and other native species have dwindled. Population recovery of native fish in the Verde has been difficult, due to increased competition for habitat and food and diseases introduced from the exotic fish varieties.

“If the upper Verde River can be protected from further development, if the grazing allotments can be limited, and if the river’s flow can be protected from diversion, the corridor can become an important component of a network of regionally protected areas,” says Cacia. “This river segment ties into a network of protected wildlands such as the Sycamore Canyon Wilderness to the east and the Woodchute Wilderness to the south.”

The goal of land and water conservation is to connect protected habitat areas and to provide birds and animals with corridors in which genetic exchange and migration can occur. The resources of the Verde’s riparian ecosystem are of such outstanding quality that they can and must be protected.

“It’s our hope that once the Forest Service reads our proposal, they will agree that it is time to take action and protect this beautiful river,” says Cacia.

Cacia donated her artistic skills to paint an Arizona Wilderness Coalition sign for the Prescott office. She also enjoys birding, climbing, and writing, and after graduation, she hopes to pursue work with the US Forest Service as a wilderness, wildlife, or recreation ranger or work as an environmental educator on Cape Cod.

We will miss her and wish her the best of luck!



Photo by Laura Schuessler

Saving Silence and Solitude

By Kim Crumbo

Imposing escarpments and walls of fiery stone, the pounding course of the river, and the diverse wildlife that thrives in its depths make the Grand Canyon one of the premiere wilderness areas in the world. And many believe these awe-inspiring assets are protected under the mantle of national park status. But as seen in such treasures as Yellowstone and Yosemite, we can quite literally love our parks to death.

Considerable time, money, effort and public trust have gone into Grand Canyon National Park's proposal to protect the wilderness heart of the canyon, the Colorado River. The process has included six management workshops, nine public meetings, at least six versions of a draft wilderness recommendation, and the completion of two separate environmental impact statements—in all, more than a decade



Photo © Mark Miller

Draft alternatives for managing the river will be available this summer. If we don't support a wilderness management alternative loudly enough this time around, the theme park atmosphere that pervades the river will persist, and we can kiss one of our nation's—and the world's—prime wilderness experiences goodbye. See below for how to comment to the National Park Service.

of public involvement. And for 20+ years, the National Park Service has labored under the obligation to protect the river's wilderness attributes from harm—including subtle resources like natural quiet and the opportunity for solitude. Yet finding those special attributes on the longest wild whitewater in the lower 48 states is difficult.

The Colorado supports a \$29 million dollar-a-year tour industry that gives 70 percent control of recreational river access to motorized, large-sized trips. As a result, the Park Service has been forced to squeeze thousands of self-guided, do-it-yourself river runners who don't require commercial help to run the river—and who may seek a more remote, wild encounter with the canyon—onto a 20+ year waiting list to access the river.

Moreover, the river's popularity results in heavy, concentrated use at camps and favorite hiking locations, harming the canyon's fragile desert and riparian environments. Rumbling out-board 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.

While conservationists worry about

the ecological impacts of crowds and the loss of a true wilderness experience, the river running industry's primary concern lies with the prospect of phasing out powerboats. Motors are not necessary for safe river trips, but most river concessionaires prefer faster, crowded powerboats to maximize profits. Under federal law, motors are prohibited in wilderness.

River running concessionaires claim that powerboats are essential for public access. In fact, professionally guided commercial trips—either oar-powered or motorized—provide safe travel, but only for those who can afford the pricey service. Non-motorized, non-commercial boats, controlled by skilled guides at the oars, provide a quiet, safe, and intimate

experience on the river that embraces all the wonders and natural sounds the Grand Canyon offers.

The Grand Canyon Wilderness Alliance, including the Arizona Wilderness Coalition, advocates protecting the canyon's unique opportunity to experience one of America's last truly wild rivers. The Alliance has put forth a proposed resolution to the conflict over access and resource protection that would retain an opportunity for the current level of visitors to enjoy the river. Commercial outfitters could retain their existing boat share on the river. By extending the river-running season earlier in the spring and later in the fall and reducing the size of commercial trips, the opportunity for the self-guided river runners to enjoy the Colorado River would double and the overall visitor's experience would greatly improve. (See chart at left).

Soaring through the Grand Canyon on its own wild terms and at its own pace is an exhilaration found few other places in the world. Why tamper with that when instead, we can protect it for future Americans to enjoy?

Kim Crumbo worked professionally as a river guide, river ranger, and wilderness manager at Grand Canyon for over 30 years. He also served as a Navy SEAL in Vietnam. Kim is currently the Grand Canyon Regional Director for the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. He can be reached at kcrumbo@azwild.org.

TAKE ACTION!

Help us protect the wilderness experience at the Colorado River. Stay tuned for updates on how to comment and send letters supporting a wilderness river alternative at: www.azwild.org or the National Park Service site, www.nps.gov/grca/crmp.

Thank you!

| A Wilderness Resolution for Colorado River Use in Grand Canyon National Park | | |
|---|---|--|
| Based on a 50% split (commercial vs. self-guided user days) during an extended primary season | | |
| Summary of Comparison with Status Quo (current river allocation) | | |
| Comparable Attributes | Status Quo Alternative (Current River Use) | Wilderness Resolution |
| Primary Season | May 1 – September 30 | April 1 – October 31st |
| Launches per day | Commercial = 4–7 launches/day, based on 150 passengers/day. Self-guided = only 1 launch/day. | 4 total launches/day (2 commercial, 2 private) |
| Commercial allocation | Current use 106,156 user days | Slightly more 107,352 user days/year |
| Self-guided boater opportunities | Current primary season = 8 launches/week. 20-year wait list. | Extended primary season = double the number of self-guided launches. Significantly reduces wait for river access. |
| Maximum group size | Commercial = 36 + paid staff Self-guided trips = 16 | 18 recreational passengers |
| Encounters with other groups | Primary season = very high. All motor trips leaving 7 days after non-motor trips will pass non- motor trips. | Fewer launches = fewer encounters. All trips traveling at similar speeds provide opportunity to coordinate with other groups to minimize encounters. |
| Safety | No change | No change. Actually slightly fewer injuries, per available data. |
| Wilderness Experience | Fair to Poor No change. Motor noise, large group size, many encounters— based on social research. | Good to Excellent Complies with wilderness policy, quiet trips, appropriate group size, less congestion, fewer encounters. |

2010
903

Wilderness By the Numbers

9,078,675 Number of acres of the largest U.S. wilderness – Wrangell-St. Elias, AK

5 Number of acres of the nation's smallest wilderness – Pelican Island, FL

8 Number of years it took to pass the Wilderness Act

662 Current number of wilderness areas in the USA

44 Number of states with wilderness areas

20 Number of states with current wilderness bills or proposals

43 Number of laws signed by President Reagan to protect wilderness

14 Number of laws signed by President Carter to protect wilderness

4 Number of laws signed by President George W. Bush to protect wilderness

66,300,000 Acres of wilderness protected by laws signed by President Carter

500,000 Acres of wilderness protected by laws signed by George W. Bush

106,000,000 Acres of protected wilderness in America

4.7 Percentage of America's landmass permanently protected as wilderness

85,700,000 Acres of wilderness protected by Democratic presidents

19,800,000 Acres of wilderness protected by Republican presidents

2,505,011 Acres in the California Wild Heritage Act now pending in Congress

106,000 Acres in the Wild Sky Wilderness Bill (WA) now pending in Congress

11,000 Acres in the Ojito Wilderness Act (NM) now pending in Congress

6 Percent of land in Arizona that is protected as wilderness

90 Number of wilderness areas in Arizona

40 YEARS OF WILDERNESS FEVER

Mark Your Calendars for Wilderness Anniversary Activities

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is in the midst of planning for a Wilderness Anniversary Celebratory Conference this fall! Stay tuned as we hammer out the details, and check you email box for regular updates! Visit www.azwild.org to join our activist alert list.



May 21–23

ConservAmerica will host its second Land Conservation for Conservatives Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Lead sponsors include REP America, The Wilderness Society, and the Healing Winds Foundation. Contact Ruth Fish (ruth@repamerica.org) for information about the conference or to learn more about ConservAmerica.

August 13–16

40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act Celebration, Jackson Hole, WY, at the Murie Center. Join us for an historic gathering of the wilderness community this summer in Jackson Hole at the Murie Center Featuring: Alaskan Tribal Elder and Wind River Reservation Young Warriors Society honor Wilderness. Wilderness mentor's "conversations" with young activists. Community presentation of the Wyoming Wilderness History Project & cookie exchange. Symposiums and panels of national wilderness heroes. Early morning Walks for the Wild. Banquet at Jackson Lake Lodge with dancing to the Fire Ants. Delicious catered meals. Group camp site available at the Gros Ventre Campground. FOR MORE INFO OR TO REGISTER: call: 307 739-2246 email: info@muriecenter.org

August 27–29

40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, Allegheny River canoe trip. This trip will highlight the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, and it will also highlight the role of Tionesta, Pennsylvania's own Howard Zahniser in the establishment of the National Wilderness Preservation System. It will also highlight the current efforts of Friends of Allegheny Wilderness to get additional wilderness designated in the

Allegheny National Forest. The trip will be three days and two nights and we will be camping on some of the Allegheny Islands Wilderness islands during the trip. For further information, contact Friends of Allegheny Wilderness at (814) 723-0620 or e-mail kjohnson@pawild.org.

September 9–12

High Desert Conference, Malheur Field Station, Oregon. The Sierra Club and other environmental organizations are resurrecting the Desert Conference which has been absent for the last couple of years. The conference will be held at the Malheur Field Station a half hour south of Burns. The theme of the conference will be recognition and celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act and today's efforts to gain permanent protection for desert wildlands. There will be educational field trips, lectures and workshops, and opportunities to network with other desert activists. Contact: Tara with Oregon Natural Desert Association at trgunter@onda.org or 503-525-0193.

September 18–22

Wilderness Act 40th Anniversary Wilderness Week: Celebrating 40 Years of People Protecting Wilderness for People, Washington, DC.

This September, gather up your maps, pack your bags, and rally your volunteers, staff, and coalition partners for Wilderness Week, an exciting convergence upon the nation's capital to celebrate 40 years of the Wilderness Act.

Join us in Washington for activities, events, and to hear powerful speakers reflect on the last 40 years of wilderness protection — and where we go from here! We'll share lessons from today's efforts to protect wild places and strategize about effective ways to preserve our nation's heritage of wilderness in the decades ahead. The week will include networking and socializing opportunities, educational brown bag lunch sessions, and a Wilderness Act commemoration and awards dinner on September 19th, to honor wilderness champions of the past four decades.

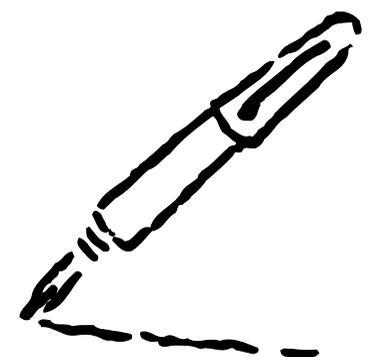
Activities organized by the Wilderness Week planning committee will take place primarily on Saturday the 18th, and in the evenings. Groups are encouraged to organize a delegation of people to come to Washington and hold their own campaign-specific strategy sessions, meetings with Members of Congress, and other events during the week.

Go to:

http://www.wildernessforever.org/calendar/wilderness_week.html for more information and to register for this action-packed week in Washington, D.C.!



President Lyndon Johnson signed the Wilderness Act in 1964 in the Rose Garden. Photo courtesy of the National Park Service.



Inspiring Protection and Respect

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition sincerely thanks Phoenix-based photographer Mark Miller for his artwork on the cover and throughout our newsletter. His work captures the stunning ecosystems of Arizona that the Coalition is working hard to protect as wilderness for future generations.

Mark became interested in photography around the time he became a full-time resident of Arizona 20 years ago. His attempts at using a large 4x5 format



camera in 1994 led him to take his photography more seriously by seeking out more challenging subject matter and compositions.

Mark's photographic passion stems from creating dramatic images of the natural world that move the viewer to respect and protect our fragile environment. His work has appeared in *Arizona Highways* magazine, *Phoenix Magazine*, *National Parks* magazine, and various calendars.

He currently uses 35 mm, 6x7 medium format, and 4x5 large format equipment to capture his images. Mark's large stock file contains western landscapes, natural history subjects, and travel-related scenes.

For stock photos, assignments, or photographic prints, Mark can be reached at 480-545-0027, or by e-mail at: imagerat@aol.com.



Photo © Mark Miller

SPECIAL FEATURE

John Muir, Coming to a Neighborhood Near You

By Jason Williams

Recognized generally as the Father of Wilderness, John Muir has also been referred to as a naturalist, explorer, inventor, and philosopher. A Scottish immigrant, Muir spent much of his adult life exploring and studying the Sierra Nevada Mountains and Alaska. He authored more than two-dozen books and gained respect as the nation's foremost spokesperson for wilderness and the ideas of preservation and reverence for life. He promoted the designation of Yosemite, Grand Canyon, and Petrified Forest national parks, and was one of the founders and first president of the Sierra Club, formed in 1892.

Today John Muir comes to life for 21st century Americans through the medium of Chautauqua. Chautauquans are scholars who portray historical characters, in costume, voice, and interaction with others. Doug Hulmes has been performing John Muir under a contract with the Arizona Humanities Council in a scholar speakers' bureau while also serving as a professor of Environmental Studies at Prescott College, where he teaches courses in ecology, environmental education, and environmental history and philosophy. Hulmes also sits on the board of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition.

Hulmes was the co-recipient of the 1990 National Wilderness Education Award, sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service and the Izaak Walton League. In 1994, Hulmes received the Educator of the Year and President's Appreciation Awards from the Arizona Environmental Education Association. Hulmes was also a Guest Professor at Telemark College in Norway, where he taught with Norway's first interdisciplinary Environmental Studies Program in 1997. In May of 1998, Hulmes received an award for outstanding presenter at the National Wilderness Rangers Conference in Durango, Colorado, for his performance of John Muir.

In his presentation as Muir, Hulmes gives an envi-



Doug Hulmes as John Muir

ronmental perspective on the West through the eyes of one of American history's greatest conservation minds. He brings to life Muir's ideology that took root the past century in response to the destruction of public lands by early pioneers—and that blossomed into the modern-day land conservation ethic.

As part of its celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, the Arizona Wilderness Coalition will bring John Muir to its members in a special presentation this fall. Stay tuned for more details later this summer.

Suggested reading: *The Wilderness World of John Muir*, by Edwin Teale, *The Life and Adventures of John Muir*, by James Mitchell Clarke, *Son of the Wilderness*, by Linnie Marxh Wolfe, *John Muir and His Legacy*, by Stephen Fox, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, by Roderick Nash.



Muir at Mirror Lake

Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress

Understanding Your Bureau of Land Management

By Jason Williams

Wondering which wilderness area needs special attention this season? All of it! A big chunk of the potential wilderness on Arizona's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands should be on everyone's wilderness to watch list. The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is currently engaged in 10 BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP) revisions (see Table 1). An RMP is the guiding document for how each of these large blocks of BLM land will be managed for the next 10-15 years. During the revision process, the BLM makes important decisions, among other things, about which areas to "Manage for Wilderness Characteristics," where power lines will go, which lands could be exchanged, what kinds and how many archeological sites will be protected or enhanced for interpretation, which sensitive or threatened and endangered species need special management for their survival, and which roads will be closed or open. These planning processes are extremely important for citizens concerned about the quality of the environment to be involved in and if you are reading this article, that means you are already concerned. Read on and learn more about how you can help us keep better "watch" over our wilderness lands.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 coupled with the Federal Land Policy and Management (FLPMA) Act of 1976 are the two major laws that mandate public involvement in the decision making process during these RMP revisions. These laws not only mandate public involvement, but also require that the BLM consider all reasonable alternatives presented to them by the public. This means that unlike many of the decisions that are made in that far away place called Washington D.C., you CAN make a difference!

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition believes we can effectively influence these agency processes. Our attention and effort in these planning processes will enable the protection of more than 2 million acres of wilderness quality lands. Over the last three years, the Coalition has been organizing volunteers to complete wilderness inventories, attend public meetings, and most importantly, write letters in support of new wilderness protections



Photo © Mark Miller

on our BLM lands. These efforts will continue for the next 2-3 years as the Tucson and Yuma BLM offices begin their RMP revisions. There is no better time than now to become involved by writing a letter or visiting one of these spectacular areas.

There are more than 50 proposed wilderness areas on BLM land that you could easily visit tomorrow; many of them are close to metropolitan Phoenix. The Sand Tank Mountains in the Sonoran Desert National Monument are just one of the crown jewels that should be

added to the list of over 90 established wilderness areas in Arizona. The Sand Tanks are a prime example of more than 100,000 acres of "untrammelled" Sonoran Desert habitat. Within large expanses of saguaros, palo verdes, and ironwood forests, one can find evidence of past inhabitants, and maybe even a current longtime residents, like the desert tortoise. You may decide to ramble along one of the many desert washes and practice your tracking skills, or climb the 4,000-foot Maricopa Peak and take in the panorama looking south to Mexico. These mountains are isolated and hard to access and you must acquire a permit from BLM to visit this area because of its proximity and former management by the Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range.

For the flat land and creosote lovers out there, there are places for you too! South of the old mining town of Ajo and north of Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument lies Cuerda de lena Wash. This gently sloping 11,578-acre



Photo © Mark Miller

plain has spectacular solitude for the visitor, as the terrain stretches far enough to make you feel lost after walking only 100 yards from the road. Its main feature is the braided Cuerda de lena Wash running north to south through this unit. The wash offers lush stands

of mesquite, ironwood, and palo verde trees. In some places in the wash, crawling on hands and knees is required and in others it is flat and wide enough to have a volley ball game. The wash is home to great horned owls, mule deer, and desert tortoise.

On the flats outside of the wash, endangered Sonoran pronghorn forage on the white bursage that grows between the creosote. This area is closed from March 30th thru July 15th for Sonoran pronghorn lambing. Illegal drug smuggling and border crossers have heavily impacted the surrounding lands, but somehow this little area has thus far escaped the tangle of illegal routes that is common in other places near the border. Check with BLM about pronghorn closures and stop by the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge office in Ajo to learn more about the area's cultural and natural history.

TAKE ACTION!

After, or even before, you visit these areas, we urge you to get involved with protecting them. First you can sign up and become a member of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition and stay abreast of letter writing efforts in support of wilderness, organized trips to backcountry wild lands, and ways you can volunteer your time to Watch Over the Wilderness. Contact one of our regional offices today! Check out the BLM's new action website at www.BLMactioncenter.org for information or visit <http://www.az.blm.gov/> to get contact information for a BLM office near you.

"In wilderness I sense the miracle of life, and behind it our scientific accomplishments fade to trivia."

Charles Lindbergh

SHORT TAKES

Sol-fully Yours

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition was recently invited to participate in **SolFest Southwest**, a week-end-long celebration of renewable energy, green building, organic farming, social change, and inspired living for the entire family—a celebration of Hearth and Sol. This fun-filled educational weekend featured more than 150 exhibitors, 60 workshops, keynote speakers, entertainment and a special “KidsZone” filled with games, art projects and more, all located in six separate tented areas. Presented by Kyocera and in cooperation with the City of Scottsdale.



The Arizona Wilderness Coalition offered a special workshop for attendees to learn more about wilderness protection in Arizona and how interested citizens can get involved with our critical field work and volunteer activities. Given that Arizona's population has tripled since 1970, wilderness areas are playing a more significant role in improving our quality of life and protecting our native wildlife habitat.

Keynote speakers included actors and community activists Ed Begley Jr. and Peter Coyote; authors Dan Chiras, David Orr, and American Hydrogen Association founder Roy McAlister; founding president of the New Dimensions Foundation, Michael Toms; and David Holladay, renowned wilderness educator and consultant for the 2000 movie “Castaway,” starring Tom Hanks. Hunter Lovins, co-founder of the famous Colorado Rocky Mountain Institute also joined the festival.

Music provided by Turning Point, William Eaton Ensemble, Sistah Blue, Annie Moscow, Scott Beck, Emily Richards, and Gabriel Francisco. Traditional dancing performances by Nebellen Dance Troupe and Native American Hoop Dancer Tony Redhouse, who performed a special blessing ceremony.

Earth Day at the Verde Valley Nature and Birding Festival

What better way to honor Mother Earth than attending a four-day festival in one of Arizona's most verdant, biologically spectacular regions? The Cottonwood Chamber of Commerce, the Northern Arizona Audubon Society, and Arizona State Parks teamed up in April to bring you the **Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival**, a unique recreational experience for those interested in the natural world of Arizona. The festival helped to cultivate awareness of habitat protection in our sensitive natural ecosystems. Cottonwood and Dead Horse Ranch State Park lie within a stone's throw to several spectacular wilderness areas, including Woodchute Wilderness, Munds Mountain Wilderness, and Red Rock-Secret Mountain Wilderness.

The AWC took part in the festival by manning an informational booth, where staff was on hand to discuss our latest wilderness campaigns, volunteer opportunities, and upcoming events. AWC also collected names of those who would like to receive our newsletter and periodic action alerts. Sign up today at www.azwild.org!

The festival included field trips, guided walks, seminars, workshops, exhibits, and special events. Visit www.birdyverde.org for more information.

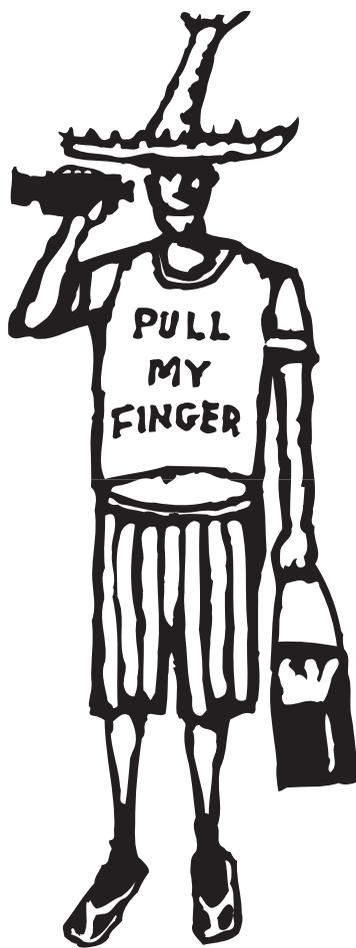


Let's Make It Last Another 40 Years

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act and the U.S. Wilderness Preservation System—legislation that passed with bi-partisan support in 1964. Since that time, approximately 106 million acres of wilderness has been set aside for the benefit of wildlife and human visitors. Sounds like a lot, but this figure actually represents only 4.7% of the entire United States landmass. All the more reason to take care of what we have!

You can help to make sure we treat these spectacular wilderness gems with respect by following “Leave No Trace” principles. The next time you plan a trip to your favorite wilderness, make sure you study the list below, or visit www.lnt.org.

- Plan Ahead and Prepare
- Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimize Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors



Did you know...?

Arizona's population growth rate is currently #2 in the United States, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. By 2025, it is projected to be the 17th most populous state in the nation, with 6.4 million people.

“As long as people are active and interested in the world around them, I feel hopeful. If people choose to simply watch from the sidelines and remain silent, then we are doomed as a democracy.”

Mary Page Stegner

A Weekend in the Blue Range Primitive Area—August 19–22, 2004

Hike through the wilderness of the Blue Range Primitive Area, Black River, and Escudilla Mountain with Don Hoffman, Executive Director of Arizona Wilderness Coalition. Learn about fire ecology in the wilderness, the progress of the reintroduced Mexican gray wolf, and “thinking like a mountain” in Aldo Leopold's stomping grounds. Sleep inside a guest cabin or vintage trailers (space limited), or camp at Don's home south of Alpine on the Blue River. All meals are provided and free transportation is available from Tucson.

Cost is \$379, including a \$100 tax deductible donation to Arizona Wilderness Coalition. For more information and to register, contact Rochelle Gerratt of Nature Treks and Passages at 520-696-2002 or info@naturetreks.net.

Stronger Rules for Off-Road Vehicles?

The U. S. Forest Service says they will take national action to control problems caused by dirt bikes, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and other off-road vehicles. Last year, Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth identified unmanaged motorized recreation as one of the four great threats to National Forest health. In recent meetings with the Natural Trails and Waters Coalition (NTWC), the Forest Service said they will propose new rules that prohibit cross-country motorized travel and restrict dirt bikes and ATVs to designated roads and off-road vehicle routes.

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is joining NTWC and other members of the conservation, hunting, and quiet recreation communities to push for strong reform that will protect public lands and water, while restoring the rights of others to enjoy our national forests. AWC Director Don Hoffman met with a Regional Forester recently to discuss what rules should be adopted and enforced for off-road vehicles on the National Forests in Arizona.

Please contact us at azwild@azwild.org if you want better enforcement of off-road vehicles or if you have a story to share about the issue. Also, please be prepared to submit your public comments to the Forest Service when the proposed new rules are released. Thank you.

Nipping Non-Natives in the Bud

By Jason Williams

Invasive, non-native weeds are colonizing our public lands and Wilderness areas throughout Arizona—and at an alarming, destructive rate. Invasive weeds are non-native plants that are so aggressive that they kill native plants and can take over entire landscapes. These pervasive weeds limit native biodiversity, destroy wildlife habitat by limiting food and cover, and often create wildfire danger in areas that previously had little or no chance of fire.

Non-native weeds made their way to the United States in agricultural related imports that were shipped from other continents. Introduction as ornamental plants and decorative home plantings is also very common. “Invasive” is a general term used to describe aggressive plants that could also be native. “Noxious” is a legal term used to describe non-native plants that are federally or state listed as a danger to human health and natural or economic resources. In Arizona, land managers oversee more than 49 state listed noxious weeds on our public lands.

In the Sonoran Desert—has crept into remote areas on our public lands. This invasive was brought to the United States in 1948 from Africa and the Middle East as a forage grass for livestock and is still cultivated in Mexico and Texas for forage. Buffelgrass is a fire-adapted grass that burns readily, even when green, and is able to resprout quicker than native desert vegetation. It has established itself in the Ironwood Forest and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monuments and Saguaro National Park, where it has led to unnatural wildfires that kill saguaro cacti and palo verde trees that have not evolved in a fire adapted ecosystem. Control of this species is very difficult and requires



tamarisk

various expensive and time-consuming methods for removal. The best control is early detection and quick removal, before it has a chance to proliferate.

Dalmatian toadflax—a perennial species—has become an increasing problem in the ponderosa pine forests of the Central Mountain Highlands and Colorado Plateau of Arizona. In the 17th century, this flowering species was brought to America from the Mediterranean as an ornamental plant. It has a yellow snapdragon-like flower and grows to three feet tall. One plant can produce up to half a million seeds; dropping 90% of them at the base of the plant. A single plant's root system can increase by 400% a year and

send out lateral roots up to 10 feet. These reproduction tactics enable this plant to effectively crowd out nearby native vegetation. Dalmatian toadflax defeats native vegetation for water and takes over significant ground, limiting other native plant growth and, in turn, disturbing the natural forage for wildlife and pollinators. Toadflax has become established on about 200,000 acres along roadsides, campgrounds, and trailheads around Flagstaff in the Kaibab National Forest and in many other localities throughout Mogollon Rim country. This species can be best subdued by pulling it out in late spring before it begins to flower, as it is not toxic to humans or harmful to the touch. However, the entire root system is tough to eradicate and must be monitored each year to remove remaining plants.

Tamarisk—or salt cedar—is probably the most well-known invasive plant species in the Southwest. Tamarisk is a deciduous shrub or tree that can grow up to 30 feet tall with small, scaly leaves like juniper. Tamarisk is a native to Eastern Asia and was first brought to the United States in the 19th century for ornamental value, windbreaks, and stream bank stabilization. In the last 100 years, tamarisk has firmly established itself in most of Arizona's vital riparian areas with ease: a single tree can produce up to 600,000 seeds per year. Tamarisk has been most successful at invading river or stream corridors that have been heavily impacted by human activities such as dam construction and irrigation. In areas that are not subject to seasonal flooding because of flood control, tamarisk is able to overcome native willow and cottonwood species.

Tamarisk grows in thick stands that have lower biological diversity than native plants. These thick stands concentrate salts in the soil, which results from the leaf litter that drops annually. This yearly fuel load creates a tamarisk “monoculture” by increasing wildfire risk killing off native willow and cottonwood species. Tamarisk also degrades local ecosystems by lowering the local water table because they require more water than native plants. Their thick stands impede water flow during high water and consequently increase flood damage. Once this species takes control of an area, restoration becomes very expensive and intrusive with the use of bulldozers and herbicides.

Very little research has been completed related to wilderness areas to determine the extent of colonization by invasive weeds. Seventy percent of the land managers who responded to a survey conducted by the Aldo Leopold Wilderness research Institute have no plan in place to monitor or manage invasive weeds in wilderness areas. In 1999, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13112 establishing the National Invasive Species Council and to “prevent the introduction of invasive species and provide for their control and to minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species cause.” The order

requires detection and accurate monitoring of invasive species and the restoration of ecosystems that have been invaded. The Council offers direction to public land management agencies, which are beginning treatment plans for invasives in the Prescott, Kaibab, and Coconino national forests here in Arizona.

Because of the relatively untouched “biological laboratory” of wilderness areas, land managers can rely on good ecological examples from wilderness to observe how invasives disrupt native plant communities. Guided by the Wilderness Act of 1964, they must take proactive steps to ensure the biological integrity of a wilderness area is preserved in “its natural conditions.” This mandate allows for a certain level of plant control that is consistent with the “Minimum Tool” concept, which directs managers to use the least impacting method to accomplish a management objective. The use of herbicides, biological controls, and hand pulling campaigns has already begun in some wilderness areas around the country and will likely include Arizona wild lands before too long.

When asked about the best method to control noxious weeds, Jeff Schalau, with the Yavapai County University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, didn't talk about bulldozers and herbicides.

“Prevention is the best line of defense against noxious weeds. However, education is also very important when it comes to recognizing the individual species and understanding the environmental threats posed by noxious weeds.”

The fact that there are no roads in wilderness has been a tremendous factor in limiting the spread of weeds into wilderness. The use of roads is one of the number one ways for weeds to be transported to new areas. Efforts to require weed free hay to be used by equestrian users will be and has been a practice that can keep our wilderness areas weed free. Also, hikers can make sure they are not transporting weeds from their home or anywhere else they may have been with their hiking gear and vehicles. Efforts to remove weeds must be coupled with monitoring and education to be effective. Citizens can lend a tremendous hand in helping our land managers by watching for invasive weeds on hikes, planting only native species and shrubs around homes, removing invasive plants from their property, and volunteering to help agencies remove non-native plants from public lands. Let's nip these non-natives in the bud!

Want to Learn More?

University of Arizona Cooperative Extension

Web page: <http://ag.arizona.edu/extension/>

Phone: (520) 621-7205

They have offices in each county and have published a simple weed handbook for Arizona.

Southwest Exotic Plant Information Clearinghouse

Web site: <http://www.usgs.nau.edu/swepic/>

Absolutely the best information source on the web for weed information in the Southwest



dalmatian toadflax

Like What You See?

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.

____ Please sign me up as an AWC member by accepting my \$25 in membership dues and/or my pledge to take three actions in support of wilderness this year.

____ I'd like to give an extra one-time gift of: \$50 \$100 \$250 \$_____.

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

____ Enclosed is a personal check or money order made payable to the Arizona Wilderness Coalition, Box 529, Alpine, AZ 85920.

— OR —

____ Please bill my (circle one): MC Visa Discover AmEx

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Signature _____

Tell us about yourself!

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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

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