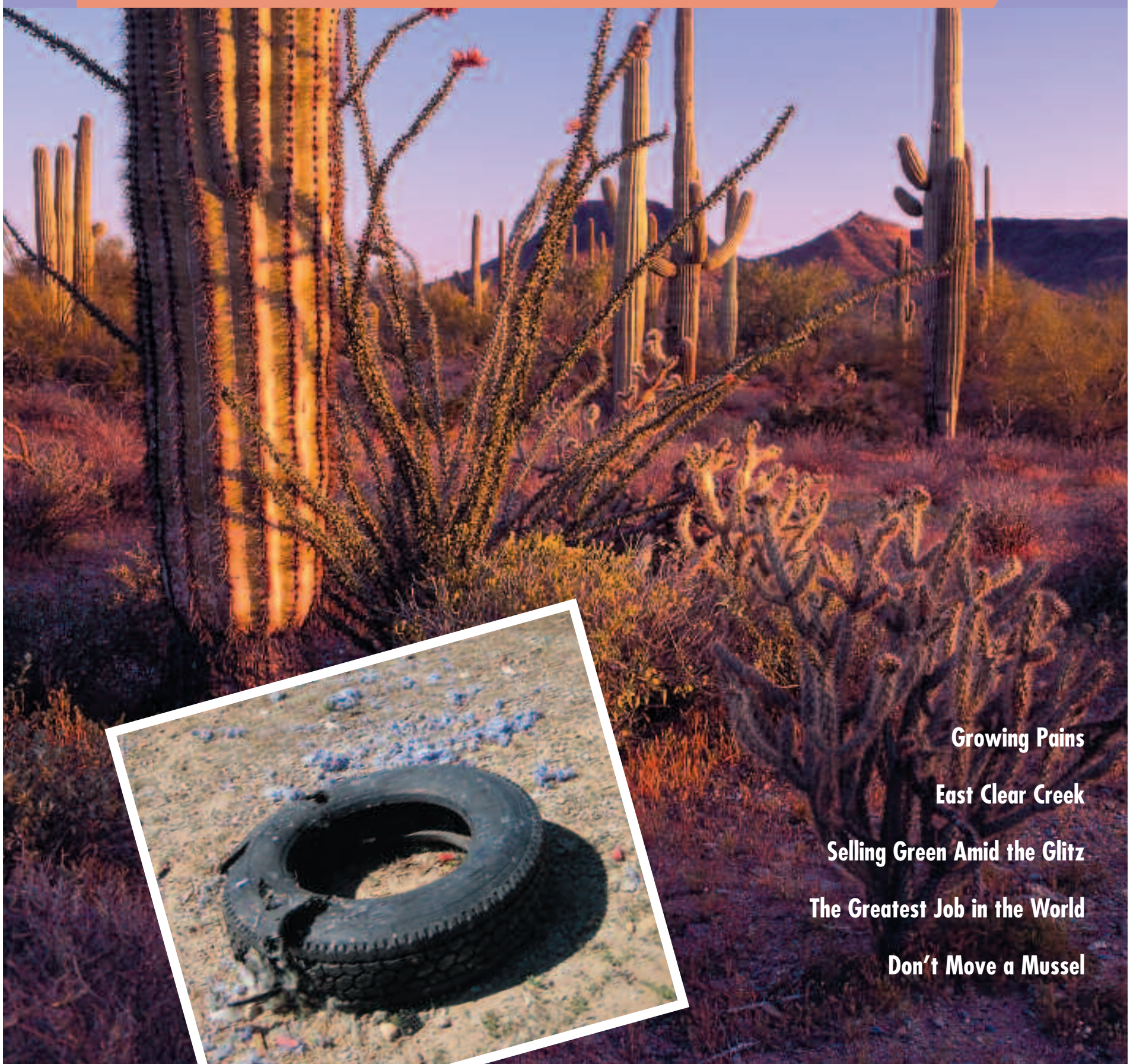
NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

ARIZONA WILD



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Mission Statement

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition's mission is to permanently protect and restore Wilderness and other wild lands and waters in Arizona for the enjoyment of all citizens and to ensure that Arizona's native plants and animals have a lasting home in wild nature. We do this by coordinating and conducting inventories, educating citizens about these lands, enlisting community support, and advocating for their lasting protection.

Cover Photo: "Days End on the Sonoran Desert National Monument" © Mark Miller.

Inset Photo: Abandoned tire and other trash is common at the monument. Photo: Danica Norris.

Design by Mary Williams/marywilliamsdesign.com

THOUGHTS FROM THE KGB

Growing Stronger and Smarter

by Kevin Gaither-Banchoff

Arizona's last wild public lands remain at risk. They continue to be threatened by myriad pressures – some that are unique to our southwestern desert home and some that are common to wild places across the west. Almost all are threats that we--as individuals, businesses, and conservation organizations--can work to eliminate or minimize through education, constant engagement with allied stakeholders and our elected officials, and cultivating a sense of land and water stewardship amongst the public. Our feature article in this issue of Arizona Wild, "Growing Pains," (p.3) touches on ways we are working to save the amazing Sonoran desert lands between Phoenix and the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, northward to the Verde Valley, and between Phoenix and Tucson.

An increasing demand for minerals has put an extra burden on our public lands for extraction, as the price for copper and uranium skyrockets. For example, in the last eight years, federal lands immediately south of the Grand Canyon have faced almost 1,600 uranium claims, five uranium exploration projects, and the possible opening of one mine – exposing this remote region and its wildlife to incredible noise, heavy equipment traffic, drilling, and much more. Another serious threat is the growth in off-road-vehicle use and sales, which is too often matched with owners who are either uneducated about how to ride in balance with a natural landscape, or who don't care and revel in carving new, illegal routes that fragment the landscape and drive away wildlife.

We all know that Arizona has become one of the fastest growing states in the nation and that infrastructure needs to be improved to meet expanding needs. The Arizona Wilderness Coalition brings tough questions to the table about the actual need for potential new routes/roads and how to minimize impacts on Arizona's untrammeled natural areas. The ecologically sensitive San Pedro River Valley was recently removed from consideration as a route for a new I-10 bypass, thanks to the efforts of hundreds of concerned citizens, businesses, and organizations across southern Arizona. Climate change, greenhouse gas pollution, and rising oil prices also require us to push elected officials for better solutions, including fresh ideas for building local light rail and expanded rail lines between Phoenix and Tucson.

We are the only statewide organization focused primarily on protecting and restoring Arizona's wilderness, wild lands, and waters. Not only is it our job to ensure that our shared voice is heard when we defend and advocate for existing and potential new wilderness areas: we must also take a landscape-level view that allows us to address critical wildlife linkages. It will do us little good to protect Arizona's most pristine wilderness and roadless areas (such as East Clear Creek, in our Wilderness to Watch on p. 7) if in the end, the ecosystems of which they are a part collapse because they are fragmented, isolated, and/or mismanaged as a result of political and social pressures.

Alone, many of us think we don't have the power to affect change or make our voices heard. When many diverse individuals, business, and organizations speak up with a similar preservation/protection message, we have the power to make positive changes and combat the threats facing Arizona's wild places. As we move through 2008, we hope to permanently protect the Tumacacori Highlands as Arizona's first wilderness in 17 years, see Fossil Creek become Arizona's second permanently protected Wild & Scenic River, and set the stage for protecting other priority wild lands and waters across the state. These are tasks we can only accomplish with you standing with us.

I thank you again for being a part of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition as we work to educate and engage a broad Arizona constituency about our valuable wild lands. If you are not yet a member, I invite you to join us and be part of our work (on page 15).

WE ARE PROUD TO CONTINUE
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BETWEEN

ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION
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Arizona Wilderness Coalition

PLEASE MAKE A GIFT BEFORE
DECEMBER 31, 2008

Growing Pains: Our most treasured wild places face dramatic pressures that threaten to alter them forever

by Kevin Gaither-Banchoff and Danica Norris

Most people across Arizona know little about the beautiful, wild Sonoran Desert lands west of metro-Phoenix, a landscape that includes a mix of private, state, and Bureau of Land Management lands. These lands are home to many magnificent animal and plant species, scattered protected places, and hundreds of thousands of acres of unprotected and potential new wilderness. A decade ago this region was known to few—adventurous hikers, biologists and amateur archeologists, backcountry hunters, ranchers and big horn sheep advocates, folks who preferred living in smaller, more remote towns, and other hardy individuals happy to be far from Phoenix.

But not for long: new people and developments are racing outward from metro-Phoenix and continue to move westward every day. The Sonoran Desert, the backdrop for Phoenix's growth, is one of the most biologically diverse deserts on the planet. Many of these prized Sonoran Desert lands are coming under increasing pressure and danger. Along with more people come heightened demands for expanded roads and larger highways, new energy corridors and transmission lines, more water needs, and more homes and retail areas. To some, these open expanses of undeveloped public wild land are also seen as a playground for off-road vehicles, an open target range on saguaros, desert trees and rare archeological sites, and a dumping ground for unwanted household trash and hazardous waste.

According to future growth projections, metropolitan Phoenix and surrounding suburbs are part of the future "Sun Corridor," an area stretching from Tucson all the way to Prescott and Flagstaff that will house most of the population of the state. Arizona's population is projected to more than triple from the 5 million people we have now to 16 million in 2050. The state that we know and love is already starting to look very different in many places. The White Tank Mountains, at the western edge of the current metro region, is already seeing development marching up to its base and according to Maricopa County's growth plans the range will eventually be in the middle of the future megalopolis known as Phoenix.

The Kofa National Wildlife Refuge and its designated wilderness lies at the far western edge of the public lands "crescent" AWC is working to protect from future growth pressures. Photo: Danica Norris

As Arizona goes through inevitable growing pains and challenges associated with an exploding population, we must be vigilant in our role as stewards for Arizona's wild places. Stewardship requires each of us to look out for the natural places we hold dear and ensure that their integrity remains intact as wildlife habitat, open space, and protection for our clean air and water. These values are critical to human quality of life, regardless of whether we're hikers, hunters, off-road vehicle riders, birders, or arm chair travelers.

We often take the familiar Sonoran Desert and other wild places around us for granted: forests of century old saguaros, the year-round green of the palo verde trees, beautiful flowering barrel cacti, fair-weather ocotillos sprouting leaves when there's enough water, mesquite trees dropping their pea pods as food for all, and the origin of that "desert rain" smell—the creosote bush. Our wildlife is world-renowned: raptors like the golden eagle and the great horned owl and other well-known birds like Gambel's quail and the cactus wren, coyote and bighorn sheep, kit fox and Sonoran sidewinders, tarantula and the Gila monster. People come from all over the world to marvel at the Grand Canyon and other geologic wonders: spires and monoliths, natural arches and jagged ridges, canyons and dry river beds. Archaeological gems such as pictographs, petroglyphs, and the home sites of ancient native peoples—all preserved in the crisp, dry air of the Sonoran Desert—lure scholars and tourists alike.

Thanks to the efforts of conservationists, hunters, and other wild land advocates that have come before us, there is still some of this "frontier" Sonoran Desert left. Far to the west of Phoenix's current line of development lie public lands – our lands – being managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM manages this land for "multiple use," which can include anything from motorized recreation to wilderness hiking to ranching and mining and can, in some cases, be sold or traded for other lands or revenue.

Copyright Steve Greenberg

These public lands form a crescent around the valley starting with the Sonoran Desert National Monument, Gila River Riparian Area and the Sierra Estrella Mountains in the south, moving west through Saddle Mountain and the Signal Mountain and Woolsey Peak Wilderness Areas, all the way out to the Little Horn Mountains and the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge. The land then curls northward through Big Horn Mountains and Hummingbird Springs Wilderness Areas up to the Harquahala and Harcuvar Mountains and then back east jumping over Wickenburg to the Hassayampa River Canyon Wilderness, the Bradshaw Mountains, and the Agua Fria National Monument.

Scattered across the landscape of these public lands are wilderness areas that have already been designated, protected forever by an act of Congress. These protected lands are almost all at higher elevations: in other words, mostly the peaks of the mountain ranges out there, like the Eagletail Mountains and Woolsey Peak, Signal Mountain and Harquahala Peak, are safeguarded from development and abuse. So when looking from above, you can almost imagine these wilderness areas as little islands in a stream, the stream being the swath of public lands primarily managed by the BLM.

Now, with unparalleled growth projected to reach this "frontier" in the coming decades, these wild public lands are facing increasing pressures from expanded transportation infrastructure, inappropriate off-road vehicle use, and illegal activities like target practice and trash disposal. As our population continues to grow, places that were once remote and far away will no longer be so. So, it becomes even more important that we better understand the threats, as well as the value of wild places, so we can make the best choices to preserve and improve our quality of life.

Roads – more and more roads

Arizona's incredible growth rate demands a larger and more pervasive infrastructure. In fact, the past year has seen proposals to build bypasses to both I-10 and I-17. One of the proposed I-10 bypass routes in southern Arizona starts at both Benson and Wilcox, connects together just north of there, and then loops northward and between the Rincon Mountain Wilderness and the Galiuro Wilderness before looping west, north of the Santa Catalina Mountains, to cross I-10. The proposed bypass then cuts west of Eloy and Casa Grande and up along the eastern edge of the Sonoran Desert National Monument, cutting between the North and South Maricopa Mountain Wilderness areas and the Sierra Estrella Wilderness Area, effec-

A road from the construction and maintenance of an old gas pipeline still scars the landscape at Kofa NWR. Photo: Danica Norris

tively separating them—and the wildlife that moves between them--forever.

Recent proposed alternates for potentially expanding I-17 between Phoenix and Flagstaff had similar negative consequences, as most alternatives expanded I-17 beyond its existing corridor. If these proposals eventually go forward, they will have devastating impacts on wildlife habitats for pronghorn, mule deer, elk, goshawk, Mexican spotted owl, and other species on Anderson Mesa. They will also severely impact Rattlesnake Canyon, an existing wildlife "quiet area," and degrade important wildlife habitat adjacent to the Wet Beaver Wilderness.

These proposed bypass/expansions, like many other proposed road developments, would cut through wilderness quality wild lands, undeveloped state trust lands, and critical wildlife corridors identified in the Arizona Department of Transportation's own Wildlife Linkages Assessment. In a state that is rapidly urbanizing, this bypass and other new proposed roads would open up whole areas to new commercial and residential development often far from existing urban areas, further fragmenting wildlife habitat, polluting air and water, and encouraging more unwanted car and truck travel.

Off-Road Vehicles and Trash

One of the biggest current threats to Arizona's wild places is the dramatic increase in off-road vehicle (ORV) recreation that has accompanied our rapid population growth. More than 25,000 off-road vehicles and 8,000 dirt bikes are sold each year in Arizona; 30% of those sales are to new buyers. Between 1992 and 2002, national sales of off-road vehicles increased 501%, and their popularity continues to climb. With this spike in motorized recreational vehicle ownership, our public lands become a targeted playground and agencies are starting to notice the degradation to the landscape. Beginning in mid-June 2008, the Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM) is closing 55,000 acres to off-road vehicle traffic because of the extensive environmental damage caused by off-road vehicles.

The problem is not unique to BLM lands. National Forest System lands in Arizona alone are scarred with more than 28,720 miles of roads: this represents 6.53% of all U.S. Forest Service road mileage in the country and more than enough mileage to reach around the circumference of the Earth. In 2001, the Forest Service estimated that National Forests across the United States were crisscrossed with 60,000 miles of user-created "ghost roads," many of which were blazed by off-road vehicles.

The way off-road vehicles are enjoyed also plays a key part in the kind of damage they can cause: in a study from Utah State University, researchers found that nearly half of riders prefer to ride "off established trails." Of the ORV riders surveyed, 49.4% prefer to ride off established trails, while 39% did so on their most recent excursion. Of the dirt bike riders surveyed, 38.1% prefer to ride off established trails, while 50% did soon their most recent excursion.

"The explosion of off-highway vehicles has led to an increase of people out there who think this is just a game," Don Hood, vice president of the Arizona Off Highway Vehicle Coalition, told the Arizona Republic. "They don't know the rules, they don't know where to go, they don't know right from wrong, because no one has ever taught them."

The closure by the SDNM is expected to last 2-3 years, during which time all routes will be open only to hikers and equestrians and illegal routes will be restored and revegetated.

In another example, this past March AWC Central Arizona Director Sam Frank and students from Prescott College partnered with the Sonoran Desert National Monument to help restore an illegal ORV trail crossing into the North Maricopa Wilderness. Over the course of a day, they were able to revegetate and block this illegal route, but also picked up numerous bags of trash – clothing, food boxes, beer cans and water bottles – left by irresponsible users. But this is not uncommon.

Off-road vehicles roaring across the landscape also have a devastating impact to native plant and animal communities, hunting and fishing opportunities, and ability of individuals to find quiet or solitude. In fact, the Coconino National Forest imposed a motor vehicle closure for part of the Mogollon Rim Ranger District in late 2006 until the Travel Management Rule is implemented. Why? Here is what they said:

- Riparian and upland vegetation are being damaged by tire tracks and repeated use.
- Soil gets compacted by multiple ORVs driving over the same area. This makes the soil less healthy so that grass and other vegetation can't grow. Runoff from rain is increased and results in soil being washed into streams.
- When loose soil travels into streams, it can negatively affect habitat for fish (especially Threatened & Endangered fishes).
- Wildlife Disturbance: calving, fawning, and nesting by wildlife is impacted by off-road vehicle use. This can also result in wildlife moving out of affected areas, depleting energy sources, and affecting wildlife condition and health.

While everyone has a right to enjoy public lands, no one has a right to abuse them and ruin the enjoyment of those lands by visitors seeking solitude, natural quiet, or a glimpse of wildlife.

This old saguaro is a victim of target practice on BLM-administered land, just south of the Harquahala Mountain Wilderness. Photo: Craig Weaver.

Water

Adequate water supplies, water quality, and aggressive water pumping are issues across all of Arizona. Our growing population demands more water, which results in increased groundwater pumping, which then imperils rivers, wetlands, and other riparian habitats. In Arizona, rivers that have traditionally provided exceptional wildlife habitat and refreshing places for people to enjoy are now drying up. The Salt River in Phoenix, the Santa Cruz in Tucson, and the San Pedro River in southeastern Arizona are all failing to thrive and, worse, are bone dry in places unless storm runoff is present.

Even iconic waterways like the Verde River in central Arizona—the state's only designated Wild & Scenic River—remain imperiled because of private well groundwater pumping, despite protected status. Wild & Scenic River designation protects the actual surface waters, riparian habitat, and outstanding values along the river, but groundwater pumping elsewhere can limit, even stop, water from flowing into the river itself. In 2006, an American Rivers report named the Verde River as one of the nation's ten most endangered rivers. Current proposals by Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Chino Valley would result in the usage of thousands of acre-feet of water per year – that's millions of gallons per day – being pulled from the Big Chino aquifer. The Big Chino aquifer is the primary source for the springs that feed the Verde River.

Arizona communities, businesses and individuals—whether in the Grand Canyon region, across the Verde River watershed, Sonoran Desert, or Sky Islands of south east Arizona—need to look at ways to minimize and reduced water consumption, investigate and embrace new technologies that help conserve water, and take a comprehensive city, state, and regional look at the consequences of all new water use and pumping to adjacent land and species. The results can affect critical wild habitat, animal populations, clean water for downstream communities, and existing and potential wilderness areas.

Economics

Extractive industries (often opponents of protecting wild places) can easily determine the value of wild places based on current market prices for minerals, estimated yields, etc. But how do we put a price tag on the non-commodity values of wilderness – things like recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, and conservation benefits? While all do not include a direct and easily quantifiable monetary value, they are no less valuable and critical to maintaining a high quality of life in Arizona. Arizona's wild places, including 4.5 million acres of protected wilderness and millions of acres of additional roadless areas, harbor critical drinking water, help filter clean air, provide locations for solitude and scenic views, help attract new residents and businesses, raise the property value of nearby homes, and pass a wild land legacy on to future generations.

Wild places provide a huge economic benefit to our state that we can quantify. According to a fall 2007 report by Environment Arizona based on a United States Fish & Wildlife Service national survey, 1.2 million Arizonans (residents and visitors) participated in hunting, camping, fishing, and wildlife watching in 2006; those activities contributed $2.2 billion to our state economy, as participants spent money on equipment, hotels, food, cars, and souvenirs. Separately in 2007, an Outdoor Industry Association report reported that Arizona citizens seeking access to public lands for outdoor recreation produce almost $5 billion annually in retail sales and services in the state.

Once we consider the full range of economic, social, conservation, recreation and other benefits we gain from protecting wilderness and wild landscapes, we must ensure that our elected leaders, businesses, and ally organizations step up to the task of safeguarding these unique resources.

AWC has developed a proposal for the Upper Verde that will protect the river and its adjacent riparian areas as a Wild and Scenic River. Photo: Cacia Maclain

Take Action!

Pressures on our public lands will continue to mount as we further urbanize our landscape and more people seek nature for solace, relief, and recreation. Damaging uses and harmful management practices will slowly chip away at the integrity and ability of our public lands to sustain wildlife and offer sanctuary for all species, including human beings. We owe it to future generations to pass on a strong legacy of sound public land use, management, and respect for wild places. As Aldo Leopold wrote in *A Sand County Almanac*, "We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

As the Arizona Wilderness Coalition, it is our job to protect Arizona's wild places. One way we do this is by building a growing awareness and appreciation for healthy, intact public lands and the vital ecological and economic services these lands provide. If we fail, the very assets that we love about Arizona - clean air and water, incredible scenic views, hiking, hunting and camping opportunities – will be lost. We need your help and call on you to take action, no matter where you live in Arizona. We need you to:

1) Leave No Trace. The first thing for all of us to remember is to "leave no trace" when we visit wild places. This means each of us needs to plan ahead and prepare; travel and camp on durable surfaces; dispose of waste properly; leave what you find; minimize campfire impacts; respect wildlife; and be considerate of other visitors.

2) Educate and vote for leaders who make conservation and protecting the environment a priority in their platform. Participate in the political process.

3) Be willing to write letters, call representatives and help at AWC outreach events. Sign up on page 15 or at www.azwild.org

4) Get your hands dirty. Sign up and help us partner with sportsman's groups, agency personnel and others. Look for our AWC-sponsored hikes and backpacking trips via our action alerts. Sign up at www.azwild.org!

AWC volunteers complete wilderness inventory at Arnold Mesa, a roadless gem in rapidly growing Yavapai County. Photo: AWC

5) Go hiking and camping with us.

6) Volunteer your expertise. Can you lead a hike? Donate photography? Teach a wilderness related class?

7) Give a generous gift that will fund our work.

These are just a few of the ways in which you can help us achieve our shared mission of protecting the Sonoran Desert and other spectacular wild lands across Arizona.

Kevin Gaither-Banchoff is executive director and Danica Norris is AWC's community organizer working on outreach in the West Valley.

The Sonoran Desert is a place of incredible beauty, but few people respect this often stark and inhospitable environment.

Photos, clockwise: an illegal motorized route in SDNM; teddy bear cholla cactus, Kofa NWR; ironwood trees dot the landscape at Kofa NWR; wildflower blooms at Kofa NWR. All photos by Danica Norris.

WILDERNESS TO WATCH

East Clear Creek: A Wonderland for Wildlife

by Kim Crumbo

The Mogollon Rim, a spectacular 2,000-foot escarpment some 50 miles south of Flagstaff, dramatically defines the southern boundary of the vast Colorado Plateau. On a scale reminiscent of the Grand Canyon, the Rim's southern vistas include the rugged Matzatzal Wilderness, the upper eastern Verde River watershed, and Bradshaw Mountains to the west. A motorist driving south from Flagstaff along the massive San Francisco Peaks Volcanic Field understandably overlooks the Plateau's subtle incline buried beneath hundreds of feet of ancient lava. As is the case of Grand

Photo: Kate Mackay

Canyon's South Rim, the watershed behind the Mogollon Rim flows away from the vista. The result of this seemingly extraneous fact is a maze of rugged canyons and streams beginning in the Rim's mixed conifer forests and maple draws, and flowing northeastward to the Little Colorado River desert east of Flagstaff, eventually reaching the Grand Canyon.

This enchanting region, the East Clear Creek watershed, consists of remnant old growth ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests and is home to threatened Mexican spotted owls, northern and Chiricahua leopard frogs, and a small imperiled fish called the Little Colorado River spinedace. The forested, rugged canyons provide refuge for a diverse array of other wildlife including goshawk, mountain lions, mule deer, elk, turkey, black bear, tassel-eared squirrels, a host of migratory and resident birds and other native species.

The East Clear Creek watershed, especially the canyons, contains noteworthy remnant old growth mixed conifer and ponderosa forest. These values are significant, given that more than 200 years are required to develop old growth structure in southwestern ponderosa pine forests. Ecologists have determined that old growth ponderosa pine forests constitute one of America's most endangered ecosystems. They report that old-growth ponderosa pine has suffered an estimated 85-98% area loss due to destruction, conversion to other uses, and significant degradation in structure, function, and composition. Logging is one of the principal causes of this decline.

In addition, since pre-settlement times, Arizona and New Mexico have experienced a 90% loss of riparian ecosystems. Like the old growth ponderosa pine forests, Arizona's riparian forests are also considered one of America's most endangered ecosystems. All the East Clear Creek canyons and streams still provide relatively intact, biologically significant core and wildlife movement corridors. However, these a woven through a landscape generally fragmented by roads and logging impacts.

Photo: Zach Crumbo

Over a hundred years ago, Theodore Roosevelt, referring to the Grand Canyon, beseeched Americans to "Leave it as it is. You can not improve on it," and led the initial charge to create one of the nation's greatest national parks. Since that time, additional national parks, national monuments and wilderness areas dot the Arizona landscape. These preserve the natural heritage for the state's citizens, including its wildlife, and all are better for it. Yet, East Clear Creek, a grand treasure in its own right, has slowly withered under the onslaught of timber harvest and the associated road proliferation and consequent off-road vehicle onslaught, and now lies perilously balanced between redemption and loss.

We now have the chance to make recommendations for "special areas" and protect forest values we care deeply about. The Forest Service is currently immersed in two planning efforts that afford a once in twenty-year opportunity to protect and restore this biological treasure. It is important to seize this opportunity, because the Travel Management Plan allows for public recommendations to define a permanent road system, as well as an opportunity to reduce the extent of unnecessary, destructive roads.

To protect and restore East Clear Creek's canyons and streams, and to assure permanent wildlife refugia and physically and ecologically connected habitats, the Grand Canyon Wildlands Council proposes a 40,000-acre East Clear Creek "Wildlife Habitat Area" (WHA). This area consists of seven linked units, a designation intended to provide quiet refuge and long-termed protection of wildlife and their habitat. We also propose four smaller wildlife habitat areas and three wildernesses, affording permanent protection of critical core wildlife areas. By working with the Forest Service staff and supporting conservation alliances, we believe that the essential steps protecting and restoring one of Arizona's greatest wildlands is underway and will succeed.

For more information, contact the Grand Canyon Wildlands Council, www.grandcanyonwildlands.org

Photo: Zach Crumbo

WILDERNESS Q & A

What is Wilderness?

"The wilderness and the idea of wilderness is one of the permanent homes of the human spirit."
- Joseph Wood Krutch, 1958

Wilderness is federal land that has received the highest level of protection possible. It takes an act of Congress to confer wilderness protection, and to qualify for consideration federal land must, in the words of the Wilderness Act of 1964, have retained "its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation." Wilderness must be protected and managed so that it appears "affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable." Roads and permanent structures are not allowed in wilderness, and activities like logging and mining are prohibited.

Q. I like going to wild places, so I'm worried about being "locked out" of wilderness areas. What human activities are allowed?

A. In wilderness areas, human beings are legally welcome to hike, backpack, animal or bird-watch, hunt, fish, cross-country ski, snowshoe, ride horses, study nature, create art, or relax. Humans are not permitted to construct roads, build structures, or drive motorized vehicles in wilderness. These activities are not permitted because they can fragment wilderness habitat, disrupt natural processes (such as animal migration), and destroy the un-mechanized quiet and solitude so relished by human visitors.

Q. I'm a single mom with a busy job, so I don't have time for long backpacking trips or big outdoor adventures. How can my family and I experience wilderness?

A. You can drive up to (and car camp near) the edge of many wilderness areas in Arizona. Many trails into wilderness areas originate at convenient parking or picnic areas—just a short walk away from your car. Wilderness is the wild place beyond the end of the road, the land where the sidewalk ends. . . it can be the perfect place to bring the kids for a weekend of unstructured play! Also, without the distractions of human noise, traffic, and congestion, you can relax and unwind, enjoying the vastness of wild nature—and your own mind.

Q. I used to do a lot of outdoor sports when I was younger, but now I'm more of an armchair explorer. How does wilderness benefit me personally?

A. Large and intact natural areas improve air quality and protect watersheds relied on by cities downstream; they can also act as a carbon sink. If you enjoy such urban amenities as clean air, fresh water and a stable climate, then it is a good idea to support the preservation of wilderness areas! Also, wilderness has always inspired the American imagination, from great poets and essayists to photographers. Our cultural legends, stories, and folklore were shaped by experiences in wild places; wilderness formed us as a people and country. Even if you do not visit these places personally, wilderness lands give your imagination a place to roam.

If you would like to contribute a question for our next Wilderness Q&A, please send it to Alison Iaso Isenberg at alison@azwild.org.

In southeastern Arizona, the Tumacacori Highlands offer day visitors several easy hikes into the heart of the proposed wilderness via access from Ruby Road. Rep. Raul Grijalva's (D-Dist. 7) bill to protect the Highlands was introduced to the House of Representatives last August. Photo: Jen Schmidt

Selling Green Amid the Glitz

by Katurah Mackay

Photo: © Patagonia™

Stroll around Biltmore Fashion Park and you might feel a slight panic that you're not wearing the trendiest shoes or the latest designer sunglasses. Stores like Escada, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Stuart Weitzman line the shady promenade at the corner of 24th Street and Camelback Road, a powerful retail anchor in Phoenix that hides the vintage, 5-star Biltmore Resort situated lushly behind it. This isn't a place to worry about the contents of your bank account.

But what you might not expect at the Biltmore is a store that sells moderately priced organic cotton clothing, footwear made from recycled rubber and fibers, and the virtues of protecting Arizona's wild lands and waters.

Meet Lynn and Rob Richards, Minnesota and Ohio transplants that opened and run Ducksback, a retailer selling Patagonia™ brand gear, clothing, footwear, and luggage. Lynn is a self-proclaimed Patagonia addict and got tired of driving to Flagstaff every time she needed something new, so the couple decided to open their own store in central Phoenix. It was the first core Patagonia dealer to serve Phoenix in more than a decade.

"Ever since we opened the store, it's not uncommon to have customers with thrilled yet stunned looks on their faces that finally there's a place in Central Arizona for Patagonia products," says Lynn Richards. "Hard core Patagonia addicts were suffering from deprivation and Ducksback's the cure."

Ducksback supports the work of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition by offering our newsletters and brochures to its patrons and helping to promote local events that raise awareness about protecting our treasured wild places. Patagonia is a member of the Conservation Alliance, a national, non-profit organization of outdoor businesses whose collective annual membership dues support grassroots citizen-action groups and their efforts to protect wild and natural areas. One hundred percent of its member companies' dues go directly to diverse, local advocacy groups across the nation. Business members of the Alliance must sponsor an organization's proposal for consideration for a grant.

Patagonia most recently sponsored the Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival, which was hosted here in both Tempe and Sedona by the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. The film festival's main goal was to educate Arizona citizens about water issues around the globe and in our backyards. AWC volunteers talked to filmgoers about groundwater pumping of the Big Chino aquifer, which feeds the Verde River, and designation of Fossil Creek as a Wild and Scenic River.

"Both independently and through the Conservation Alliance, Patagonia has been an innovative and eager supporter of our wilderness and wild and scenic work in Arizona," says Kevin Gaither-Banchoff, AWC's executive director. "They are a dedicated and valuable wilderness ally in the business community."

The Conservation Alliance is a unique funding source for grassroots environmental groups. It is the only environmental grant maker whose funds come from a potent yet largely untapped constituency for protection of ecosystems - the non-motorized outdoor recreation industry and its customers. This industry has great incentive to protect the places in which people use the clothing, hiking boots, tents and backpacks it sells. The industry is also uniquely positioned to educate outdoor enthusiasts about threats to wild places, and engage them to take action.

Patagonia's mission is: "Build the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis."

"I think one of the most rewarding aspects of doing business with Patagonia is knowing that they actually care about the products they make," says Rob Richards. "If we can help educate our customers about protecting the wild places in Arizona they enjoy, we go home at the end of the day having done good business, regardless of our revenue when we closed up shop."

Katurah Mackay is communications director for the Arizona Wilderness Coalition

The Greatest Job in the World

by Will Jaynes

The 1964 Wilderness Act describes the definition of wilderness in part as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

For me, the word Wilderness conjures up images of John Muir, tromping around the Sierras; Edward Abbey, backpacking in and around the Southwest; Henry David Thoreau, climbing Mount Katahdin in Maine. Most of all, however, I think of my two summers as a wilderness ranger in Sequoia National Park.

"The idea of wilderness needs no defense. It only needs more defenders." – Edward Abbey

After being introduced to Abbey's classic, The Monkey Wrench Gang, in college, I knew I wanted to be a defender of wilderness. Knowing that I would never do any monkey wrenching of my own, I started spending weekend after weekend with a backpack as my companion, seeking and finding remote, out-of-the-way places. These journeys took me from the forests of Oregon and California to a thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail, and finally landed me with Abbey's former employer, the National Park Service.

In my first few years with the Park Service, I led cave tours at Oregon Caves National Monument and house tours at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site. I paid my dues working in campgrounds and entrance stations, all the while dreaming of having a true wilderness experience, such as the ones described in writings by Abbey, Muir, and Thoreau.

When I landed a job in Sequoia and Kings National Parks, I felt I was getting closer. These two national parks have more than 85 percent of their total area designated as wilderness. Sequoia and Kings Canyon, I was delighted to discover, employed wilderness rangers, a dozen or so lucky individuals whose job it was to patrol and protect the parks' backcountry for three to four months every summer.

I was sold. I knew that this was my calling. But as I would soon find out, getting one of these positions wasn't that simple. There were very few spots available. Once someone took one of these positions, it was rare that they gave it up. Many of the rangers had been doing this for more than 25 years. Hundreds of people applied each year only to find that there were no jobs available.

I was dismayed but not deterred. I did what I could to make myself a more attractive candidate. I got an EMT certification, helped on search and rescues, volunteered to do odd jobs no one else wanted, and finally, one April I got the call – I was offered a job as the Little Five Lakes Ranger. To me it was the equivalent to a young ballplayer getting a call to play shortstop for the New York Yankees. I don't think I stopped smiling for the next six months.

Will, his wife, Molly, and their daughter, Olive at their home in Flagstaff. Photo: Will Jaynes

The next two summers were everything I expected and more. They were two of the greatest of my entire life. I had approximately 90 square miles of wilderness that made up my patrol area. I lived and breathed the outdoors 7 days a week, all summer long. The days were spent hiking, maintaining trails, cleaning up campsites, and educating visitors. It was in talking to the visitors that I was able to provide a voice for the wilderness—teaching Leave No Trace ethics, as well as helping to promote good camping and hiking practices. It is these practices that will sustain and keep places like Sequoia National Park beautiful and enjoyable for generations to come.

My days off in the backcountry – though few and far between – were some of the most spectacular. It was on these days that I was able to get far away from regularly traveled trails and campsites. There are the locations with no trails, no footprints, no rock cairns. These are the amazing places that make you feel as if you are the only person to have ever been there. That, to me, is the essence of wilderness. It's these spots that I think of often and make me want to share my love of wilderness with others.

I took the education part of my job very seriously. I saw myself as a teacher and steward of wilderness values. I needed visitors to understand why I feel wilderness is important and why we need it in our lives. I wanted to let my passion and enthusiasm influence every contact I made. I was fortunate to be able to pass my message along to hundreds of hikers each summer.

Some of my most enjoyable contacts came with visitors who were unclear about proper backcountry techniques. Maybe they didn't know how to use the bathroom, or where to dispose of dirty water. It wasn't malice or negligence that led to these bad habits; it was often the lack of proper education somewhere along the way. And after a quick tip or two, and explanation of why digging a deep enough hole, and carrying out your toilet paper, or getting rid of dirty water away from sources of water, they became defenders of wilderness as well.

This was usually when someone would look at me and remark, "You have the greatest job in the world." I would smile, and nod my head, and give some non-committal comment all the while thinking to myself, "Yes, I do."

I can't imagine not having a place to watch a sunset that isn't obscured by a cell phone tower, or taking a walk without hearing the noise of traffic. Or not having places to lie on the ground and gaze at the night sky without light pollution from a city. Just knowing these kinds of places not only exist, but are so easily accessible to us makes me feel good. One of my favorite things about spending time in the wilderness is that those special places become a part of who you are. When days get long, or stress levels rise, it's so easy to transport myself to a remote lake or mountaintop in the Sierras.

I recently became a father for the first time. My days of tromping around the backcountry for months on end have been temporarily suspended. Spending most of working hours at a desk hasn't lessened my passion for all things wild. In fact, knowing that I want to share some of my favorite places with my daughter has made preserving wilderness that much more important. I want to someday see all my special places through her eyes. I want to teach her the same lessons I was able to share with others.

I've been extremely fortunate to have what I consider the greatest job in the National Park Service, if not in the world. I was paid to spend my summers in a place where most people take a vacation to come visit. Now that I spend my work hours in an office I have to get my fill of the wilderness the way rest of the world does; an hour here, a weekend there. I need wilderness now more than when I got to spend everyday there, and I will continue to be a strong voice and defender for the wild areas I love. I need to know that those places are there, and will always be there.

The author at Little Fives Lakes in Sequoia National Park. Photo: Will Jaynes, NPS

Now I work in Northern Arizona, right in Abbey's backyard. I am less than a day's drive from some of the Southwest's most stunning wilderness areas. As a Park Service employee, whether I work in the woods or in an office, it's still my job to protect wilderness. The Flagstaff Area Monuments (Sunset Crater, Walnut Canyon, and Wupatki) don't have any designated wilderness, although Wupatki has some proposed wilderness acreage.

This has encouraged me to broaden my horizons. I have taken more of any interest in areas that aren't right in my backyard. I am helping to organize a wilderness event for our employees, and I am falling in love with all new places to explore in Arizona. And while the landscape may have changed, the value of protecting wilderness remains the same.

One of the issues in the Four Corners region that concerns me is the loss of roadless areas. Roadless areas are sources of clean drinking water, habitat for a myriad of plants and animals, and they provide endless low impact recreation opportunities. In the last 50 years, these area have been drastically reduced or eliminated. Where will we turn for these recreation opportunities when these areas are lost?

I love knowing that there are places I can go and explore and feel alone, inspired, and small. There is something so satisfying about hiking long miles with a heavy pack, finding a beautiful spot to set up camp, and enjoying a hot meal that you've cooked yourself. Just getting away from the stresses and pressures of everyday life is a big part of the experience for me. It's nice to not have to return calls, or make the bed, or live and die by the watch on your wrist. For me it's not about "getting back to nature." It's about getting back to being me.

Will Jaynes has been with the National Park Service for seven years and currently works for the Flagstaff Area Monuments. He enjoys talking about wilderness almost as much as he likes exploring it, and is a veteran of nearly 5,000 trail miles. He resides in Flagstaff with his wife, Molly, and daughter, Olive.

Don't Move a Mussel

by Larry Stevens and Emily Omana

Quagga mussels (Dreissena rostiformis bugensis), a native species to Eastern Europe, were discovered in Arizona on January 6, 2007, in Lake Mead. After this initial discovery they were also detected at Lake Mohave, Lake Havasu, Lake Pleasant, Lake Powell, and in a segment of the Central Arizona Project Canal. This invasive mussel was likely transported from the Great Lakes, where it has become as destructive, if not more so, than the infamous zebra mussel. This move of over 1,000 miles could only have been facilitated by human transport. According to Larry Riley, the fisheries chief for the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the spread of these invasive mussels into Arizona's waterways represents a multimillion-dollar threat.

Quagga mussels are prolific filter feeders, capable of filtering over one liter of water a day (Snyder et al. 1997). This phenomenal filtering capacity results in the removal of important nutrients and other food sources for other organisms, severely disrupting the food webs of the invaded waterways. Any material not utilized is attached to mucus and forms a substance, called pseudofeces, that builds up in the water and in the tissues of other organisms (USGS 2007). Pseudofeces has been found to contain high concentrations of pollutants due the accumulation of such substances in the mussels themselves (Snyder et al. 1997). Therefore, the quagga mussel invasion continues to result in huge changes to water quality due to shifts in clarity, pH, and chemical composition (Claxton et al. 1998).

Quagga mussels readily colonize any available hard or soft surface, including other organisms, beaches, boats and their motors, and equipment. This includes equipment associated with power generation and water treatment. Quaggas also inhabit a wide range of depths, making them potentially a larger threat than their zebra mussel relatives, as they are able to exploit a wider range of habitats. Furthermore, they can survive for days outside of the water (Ricciardi et al. 1995).

While researchers are seeking ways to chemically or biologically control the quagga mussel, the best way to limit this ecological and economic threat is to prevent its further spread. The following precautions for avoiding the spread of mussels are advocated by the Arizona Game and Fish Department, National Park Service, California Department of Fish and Game and the Nevada Division of Wildlife (fromhttp://www.azgfd.gov/h_f/zebra_mussels.shtml):

• Drain the water from your boat motor, live-well, and bilge on land – before leaving the immediate area of the lake.

• Flush the motor and bilges with hot, soapy water or a 5-percent solution of household vinegar.

• Inspect your vessel and trailer, removing any visible mussels, but also feel for any rough or gritty spots on the hull. These may be young mussels that can be hard to see.

• Wash the hull, equipment, bilge and any other exposed surface with hot, soapy water or use a 5-percent solution of household vinegar.

• Clean and wash your trailer, truck or any other equipment that comes in contact with lake water. Mussels can live in small pockets anywhere water collects.

• Air-dry the boat and other equipment for at least five days before launching in any other waterway.

• Remove any mud or vegetation from your boat or trailer – mussels can hide and hitchhike in this material.

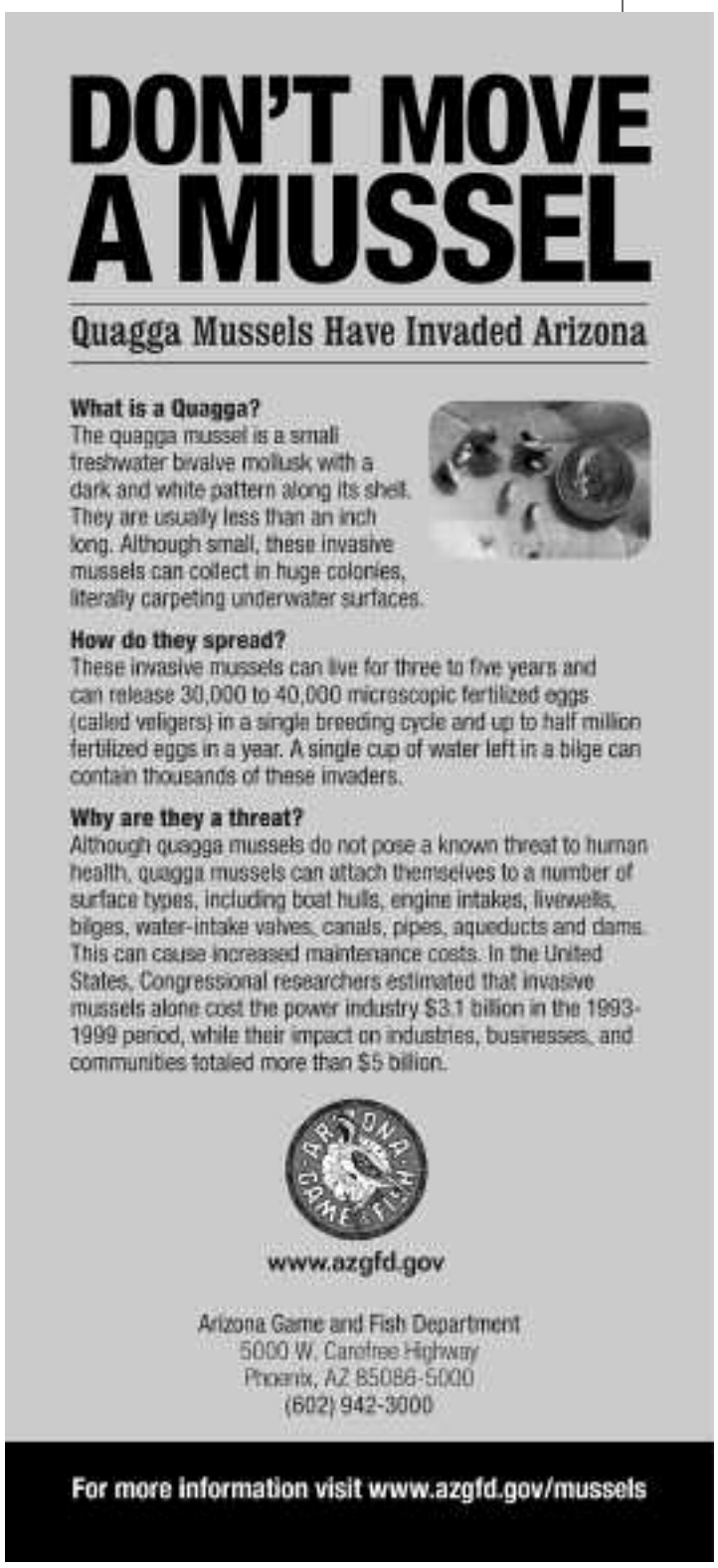
• Do not reuse bait once it has been in the water.

• Clean sensitive gear (diving and fishing gear) with hot water (140ºF) or a soak in warm saltwater (1/2 cup of iodized salt per gallon of water) and air-dry before use elsewhere.

These recommendations apply to all people who use the waterways, including those using boats of any kind (including personal watercrafts, canoes, kayaks, etc.), as well as divers and anglers.

The quagga mussel has the potential to reduce pumping capability at facilities in Arizona, California, and Nevada that lie downstream from the presently known infested areas. If this mussel becomes established in Grand Canyon, there could be monumental ramifications affecting the recreation vales as well as the ecological functioning of the river. Beaches could become covered with shells. The humpback chub and recreational fish species could be negatively impacted as the water quality and chemical composition changes and pseudofeces accumulate. The bio-fouling nature of the quagga mussel could impinge on the power and water industries.

In this season of boating, fishing, and otherwise enjoying our rare desert waterways, it is up to each of us to help prevent further spread of this potentially disastrous invasive species. We at the Arizona Wilderness Coalition urge everyone to follow the guidelines listed above and spread the word!



Dr. Larry Stevens is the Senior Ecologist for Grand Canyon Wildlands Council (GCWC). He is also an avid natural historian and river runner, and has spent the past 30 years engaged in ecological research on rivers in the American Southwest.

Emily Omana, M.S., is a Conservation Biologist with GCWC where she works on a wide variety of conservation projects. Her studies have focused mainly on evolution in aquatic invertebrates.

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Mussel photo at top: Oregon State Marine Board

Short Takes

Welcome Trica Oshant Hawkins to the AWC Board

As the newest board member for AWC, I'd like to say I am honored. Having attended a couple of board meetings, I'm now also humbled. It's humbling working with this amazing group of individuals who have accomplished so much for our magnificent state. They are informed, energetic, inspiring, and fair. I hope I am able to contribute even a fraction of what this group has already to further AWC's mission.

I bring to the board my background and experience in environmental education and field biology. I have a degree in wildlife ecology from the U of A and have applied that training as a field biologist and naturalist. I lived in Mexico for several years and guided natural history and diving expeditions and served as adjunct faculty for the U of A's field marine ecology courses in the Sea of Cortez. I left the Southwest for three years to serve as the education director for Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania. While this was a fantastic job, I missed the desert southwest and returned home to co-found the Environmental Education Exchange in 1991. As education director for the EE Exchange, I am responsible for program and materials development, educator workshops, master planning, and natural history field programs. I love my work but don't get "into the field" nearly as much as I'd like.

I have an amazing 12 year old daughter, Casey, who went on her first hike when she was 11 days old (carried by mom of course), camped at 3 months, canoed the Missouri River at 3 years, sea kayaked at 4, and has continued to hike, camp, raft, bike, and run into these 'tween years. I'm thinking she's got a good foundation, not to mention a clear head and kind heart.

I'm looking forward to serving on the board for the AWC. We stand on the shoulders of giants in the work of wilderness preservation. Leopold, Muir, Murie, and Marshall to name but a few. I recently read that, "Preserving wilderness may someday be seen through the eyes of historians as the most important contribution societies can make to the health of the global environment." I believe that day has already come. We can already look back at the profound contributions made by those pioneering founders of wilderness. But we also look forward, to the future and the work that lies ahead. Indeed, we stand on the shoulders of giants. From here, the view is spectacular… but the task is still awesome. I'm looking forward to the adventure.

Photo: Trica Oshant Hawkins

Welcome Danica Norris, AWC Community Organizer

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition welcomes Danica Norris as its newest staff member and Community Organizer! Danica is based in Phoenix and will work to engage stakeholders across the greater Phoenix region, building a proactive movement of people that can protect vital public lands west and southwest of Phoenix. Danica is sharing AWC's central Phoenix office with Kate Mackay, the coalition's communications director.

Photo: Danica Norris

Danica has enjoyed living in the Sonoran Desert since 2002, when she moved here from her home in Florida. As a seventh-generation native of north Florida's costal estuaries and pine uplands, Danica was new to the Sonoran desert ecosystem but quickly learned to appreciate and love its diversity and beauty. Danica has worked with several groups here in the valley doing environmental education and outreach including Cartridges for Kids, Salt River Project's PowerWise, and the Desert Botanical Garden.

Danica has a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from the University of Florida. During her time as a college student, Danica dedicated her extra time leading the student Environmental Action Group in local and national campaigns, volunteering for the Gainesville municipality's Recycling Department, negotiating with University staff and faculty on a plan to "green" the university, and researching the effects of mercury in the medical waste stream. In 1997, Danica received the President's Leadership Award and the Golden Trash Can Award for her environmental work at the University of Florida.

After graduating in 1997, Danica was invited to participate in Green Corps training and quickly began work on campaigns in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and Tampa doing grassroots fundraising, lobbying, public outreach, and media work for environmental groups including the PIRGs, the Sierra Club, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Danica is excited to use these skills and her boundless enthusiasm to ensure that Arizona's last wild places are protected for decades to come. Please join us in welcoming Danica!

Arizona Strip ROD is Raw Deal for Wild Lands

A Bureau of Land Management record of decision (ROD) was issued in May for a remote area north of the Grand Canyon and sacrifices wildlife habitat and archaeological sites for off-road vehicle use, livestock grazing, and oil and gas development. The 20-year plan spans 2.8 million acres of the Arizona Strip, including the Grand Canyon-Parashant and Vermillion Cliffs national monuments.

The 3,000 page plan ignores the very reason the national monuments were created and disregards the public's desire for them to be protected, said Wilderness Society senior counsel Nada Culver.

"Page after page, the BLM finds ways to promote continued off-road vehicle (ORV) use in places that were set aside for their ancient artifacts, rugged landscapes and habitat for desert species," she said.

Despite a presidential proclamation ordering the BLM to keep ORVs to real "roads," the plan allows ORVs on more than 1,700 miles of trails and primitive roads in the monuments and across broad swaths of the Arizona Strip. Only 27 percent of the lands that were proposed as wilderness by the Arizona Wilderness Coalition are protected under the BLM's plan. The plan also ignores the impacts of livestock grazing, fire regimes and invasive species.

"The people in Arizona love their wilderness lands," said Kevin Gaither-Banchoff, executive director for the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. "It's BLM's responsibility as a public agency to protect what Arizona citizens want and deserve."

Mountain lions and the deer and elk they feed on need large swaths of unbroken wildland to keep their populations healthy and viable, said Kim Crumbo of the Grand Canyon Wildlands Council. The plan also fails to protect threatened, endangered and sensitive species including desert tortoise, southwestern willow flycatcher, bald eagle, Yuma clapper rail, relict leopard frogs, woundfin minnow, and the Virgin River chub.

Recreational use of the Arizona Strip will increase dramatically over the 20-year life of the plan. The population of the surrounding five counties is expected to double with the addition of 1.4 million new residents by 2020. Given the population explosion in the West and the monuments' growing popularity, this 20-year management plan will determine the future of wildlife and other important values in the monuments.

AWC Gets a New Look

After several years of multiple "faces" to AWC, the coalition has undergone a broad redesign of its outreach materials, developing a standard new logo and incorporating it into a colorful new brochure, letterhead, notecards, and business cards—all of which are critical outreach tools in our efforts to communicate with our members, friends, and supporters.

"It's critical for a successful organization like AWC—that's growing and expanding its reach—to

ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION
WWW.AZWILD.ORG

have a solid identity package that helps the public recognize the important mission we have for wilderness," says Kate Mackay, AWC's communications director.

AWC chose Tempe-based Iguana, Inc., to redesign its materials; printing was done on recycled papers with soy ink by BC Graphics, also based in Tempe.

The coalition hopes to eventually redesign its website to encompass a broader scope of information and incorporate better navigation tools that help users find and support AWC more readily from the Web.

AWC Has a New Home

AWC happily announces our new "digs" in Phoenix, a historic home in the Roosevelt District that will serve as the central wilderness office for our work around the state. Community Organizer Danica Norris and Communications Director Kate Mackay will be working from this location.

The office boasts a conference room, reception area, a spacious trio of private offices, and a roomy kitchen. Kate and Danica are also happy with the wrap-around porch and fruit trees out back that provide some relaxing shade in the afternoons. The walls of the new office will be adorned with wilderness prints from talented Arizona photographers, including AWC website and brochure photographer Mark Miller and Arizona Highways regular Nick Berezenko. AWC hopes to host an open house for our friends, members, and supporters in the very near future: stay tuned!

Come see us in our new space! We are located at 825 N. 3rd Ave., Phoenix, or drop us a line and get directions: 602-252-5530.

Telling the Story Behind Wilderness

At the end of April, Communications Director Kate Mackay was the featured guest speaker at the Flagstaff Area National Monuments' all-staff meeting at National Park Service headquarters in Flagstaff, presenting American Beauty: The History Behind Our Love for Wilderness. The presentation illuminates the broad scope of history, events, and cultural shifts that led to Americans falling in love with—and acting to protect—their wilderness lands with the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

On Monday, August 11th, Kate will give the same presentation to staff of the National Park Service/U.S. Forest Service Interpretive Partnership Program at the USFS Peaks/Mormon Lake Ranger District. The talk is free and open to all NPS and U.S. Forest Service staff and to members of the public. 5075 N. Highway 89, Flagstaff; 9:15-10:15 a.m. Seating is limited. Please call John Westerlund at 928-526-1157, ext. 273 to reserve seats.

Game and Fish Commission Supports Tumacacori Wilderness

The Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness Act of 2008 continues to work its way through the legislative process, with Congressman Grijalva and his staff leading efforts to create the best bill possible. On the ground locally, AWC and our partners continue to highlight the threats to the Tumacacori Highlands while simultaneously engaging stakeholders and building public support.

At the Arizona Game & Fish Commission meeting in April, the Commissioners voted unanimously to support the Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness Act of 2008. Thank you Commissioners! This vote was the result of many hours of work by volunteers, concerned citizens, and Congressman Grijalva's staff, all of whom worked hard to find agreement on how and why the incredible Tumacacori Highlands should be protected as Wilderness. Please go to the Arizona Game & Fish website, http://www.azgfd.gov/inside_azgfd/commission.shtml, and thank the Commissioners for supporting the Tumacacori Highlands.

AWC Staff Bids Adieu to Jason Williams at Dinner Celebration in Prescott

Former AWC Regional Director Jason Williams (left) accepts the first ever—and possibly the only ever—Wilderness Warrior Trophy from Central Arizona Director Sam Frank. Photo: Kelli Gaither-Banchoff

Left to right, AWC board member Doug Hulmes, Communications Director Kate Mackay, Executive Director Kevin Gaither-Banchoff, former Executive Director and current AWC board member Don Hoffman, Abigail Gaither-Banchoff, Jason Williams, and Central Arizona Regional Director Sam Frank. Photo: Kelli Gaither-Banchoff

The Tumacacori Highlands were also recently featured in Wild…for How Long? Ten Treasures in Trouble, published by Campaign for America's Wilderness. This national report looks at some of the country's yet unprotected wild land and finds that from coast to coast, many of America's special wild places remain vulnerable to mining, drilling, road building, logging, development and off-road vehicle abuse. A copy of the report is available at www.leaveitwild.org.

Get Out There

Join AWC for an exciting line-up of summer and early fall events! As always, our electronic action alerts are the most up-to-the-minute way to get more details on each of these events and whether or not we need volunteers to help us out with tabling, outreach, phone banking, letter writing, and other important activities.

Visit our website at www.azwild.org to sign up for our action alerts, if you haven't already!

For more information on the below events, contact Sam Frank in our Central Arizona office, 928-717-6076, or sfrank @azwild.org

Juniper Mesa Wilderness, Prescott National Forest
June 28 & 29

A great way to spend a cool night in the heat of the summer at over 6,000 feet in elevation! This will be an overnight event with work on the new trail and trailheads for trails 3 & 100 taking place on Saturday and Sunday. AWC and Back Country Horsemen along with the Forest Service have already done a good deal of work constructing the new trail but the trailhead needs to be finished and the old trails erased. Great stars at night above this remote wilderness area.

Woodchute Wilderness, Prescott National Forest
August 9

A single day event consisting of trail maintenance on trails 102 and 104. Volunteers will also fix fencing around a wildlife water tank to prevent any injuries to wildlife. This wilderness is over 6,000 feet and will have cooler temperatures.

Cedar Bench Wilderness, Prescott National Forest
September 6 & 7

Another overnight event where volunteers can camp in a little visited wilderness area. This event will consist of trail maintenance on trails 541 and 542 and will visit some remarkable backcountry riparian areas. Roads leading to the trailhead can be rough, so high clearance vehicles are beneficial but shuttles will be available for others without high clearance vehicles.

Castle Creek Wilderness, Prescott National Forest
October 4 & 5

This will be an overnight event with camping available at a group campground. Projects will consist of fixing erosion damage, cutting back brush on the trails, and carrying out any trash found on trails 30 and 225.

We Need Your Support!

Over the past year, AWC has focused on growing a bigger presence across Arizona to help meet the challenges facing Arizona's most wild places, whether they are in the Grand Canyon region, across the Verde River Watershed, eastern Arizona's White Mountains, the low western deserts, or the beautiful Sky Island region. We now have five staff, a Policy Director Job opening, offices in Tucson, Phoenix and Prescott, and are attending or hosting a public event 3 out of every 5 weekends, including two Wild & Scenic Film Festivals this past winter and spring.

As a friend or financial supporter of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition, you are vital part of our ability to accomplish work and goals. Some of the current work you support includes:

- Convincing Senator McCain to keep pressure on his colleagues to pass legislation that includes Fossil Creek Wild & Scenic River protections.
- Building support to pass the Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness Act of 2008.
- Growing our base of wilderness supporters across the metro Phoenix region that leads to a progressive movement focused on safeguarding more endangered wild places facing increased growth and recreational pressures.
- Using momentum from our Fossil Creek work to investigate and plan next steps for protecting more critical places across the Verde River Watershed.
- Engaging in national forest planning and the Travel Management Rule for all of Arizona's national forests, minimizing road densities, protecting roadless areas, and ensuring conservation-oriented management for the next 15-20 years.

We are now asking you to financially support our work. By giving a donation this summer, you will help AWC expand our capacity to more effectively engage in wild land and wilderness protections across the entire state. This year we have again received a challenge from the Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation to raise $125,000 in new support by year's end. Please help us meet this challenge.

- If you are not a member, please join by giving at least a $25 donation.
- If you normally give $25, please consider giving $50.
- If you normally give $50, please consider giving $100.
- If you can give more, please consider supporting our work at a higher level.
- If you can, please become a monthly donor. It is one of the easiest ways to increase your support without having to write a check each month.

Your donation is tax-deductible. With your support, we can continue the work to permanently protect Arizona's wilderness, wild lands, and waters.

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 40340, Tucson, AZ 85717. Questions? 520-326-4300

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

$10_____ $20_____ $30_____ OTHER_____

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):

- ☐ General Volunteer
- ☐ Special Events
- ☐ Letter Writing
- ☐ Writing/Publishing/Newsletter Help
- ☐ Public Speaking
- ☐ Wild Land Inventory
- ☐ Photography/Art/Design

Region of interest (please check all that apply):

- ☐ Central Mountains–Sonoran
- ☐ Grand Canyon
- ☐ Western Deserts Region
- ☐ Sky Islands–Southeastern

Mailing Preferences (please check all that apply):

- ☐ Newsletter Only
- ☐ Newsletter and Alerts
- ☐ All Mailings
- ☐ Action Alerts Only
- ☐ No Mailings: I prefer to visit your website for news.

On behalf of Arizona's Wilderness,

thank you.

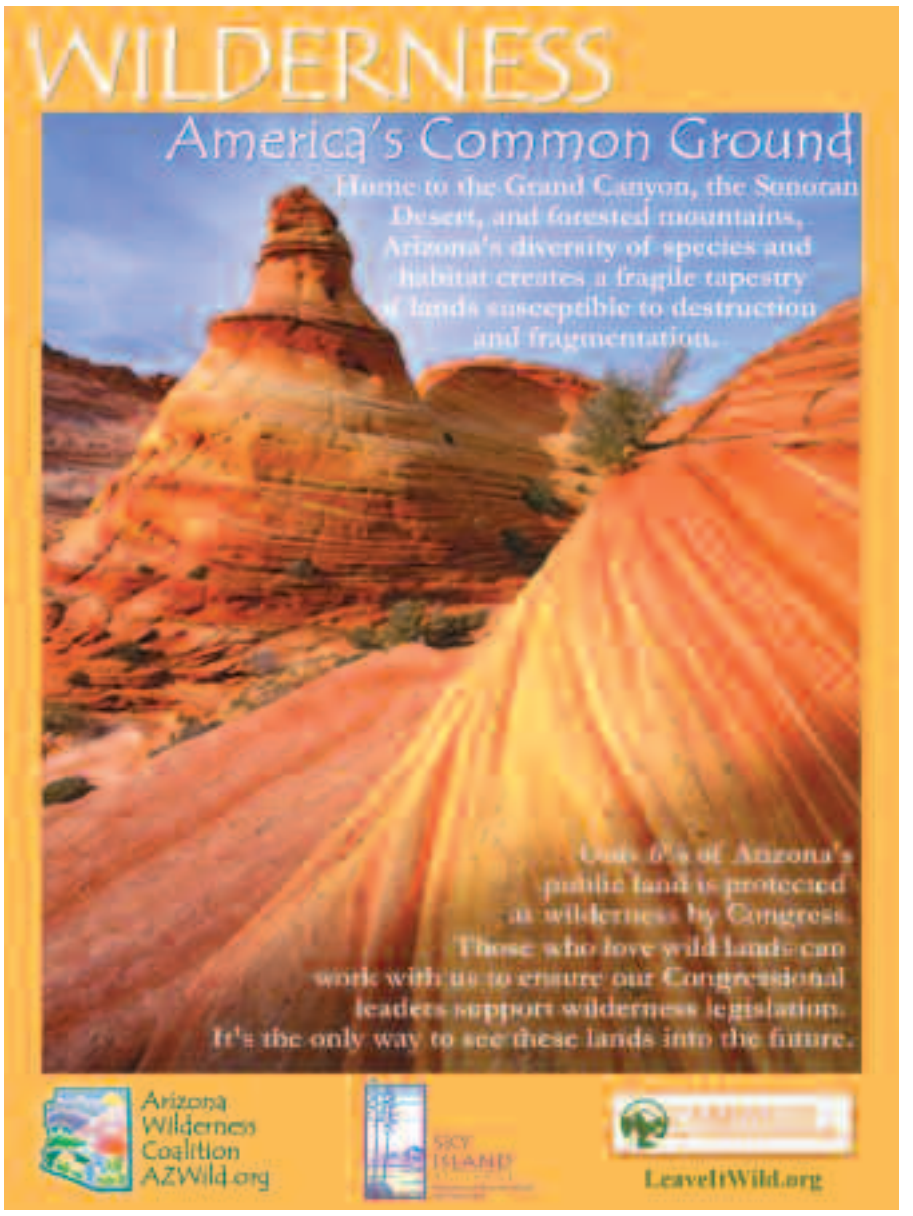
What is Wilderness?

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.

ARIZONA WILD

In this issue

SUMMER 2008



NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

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