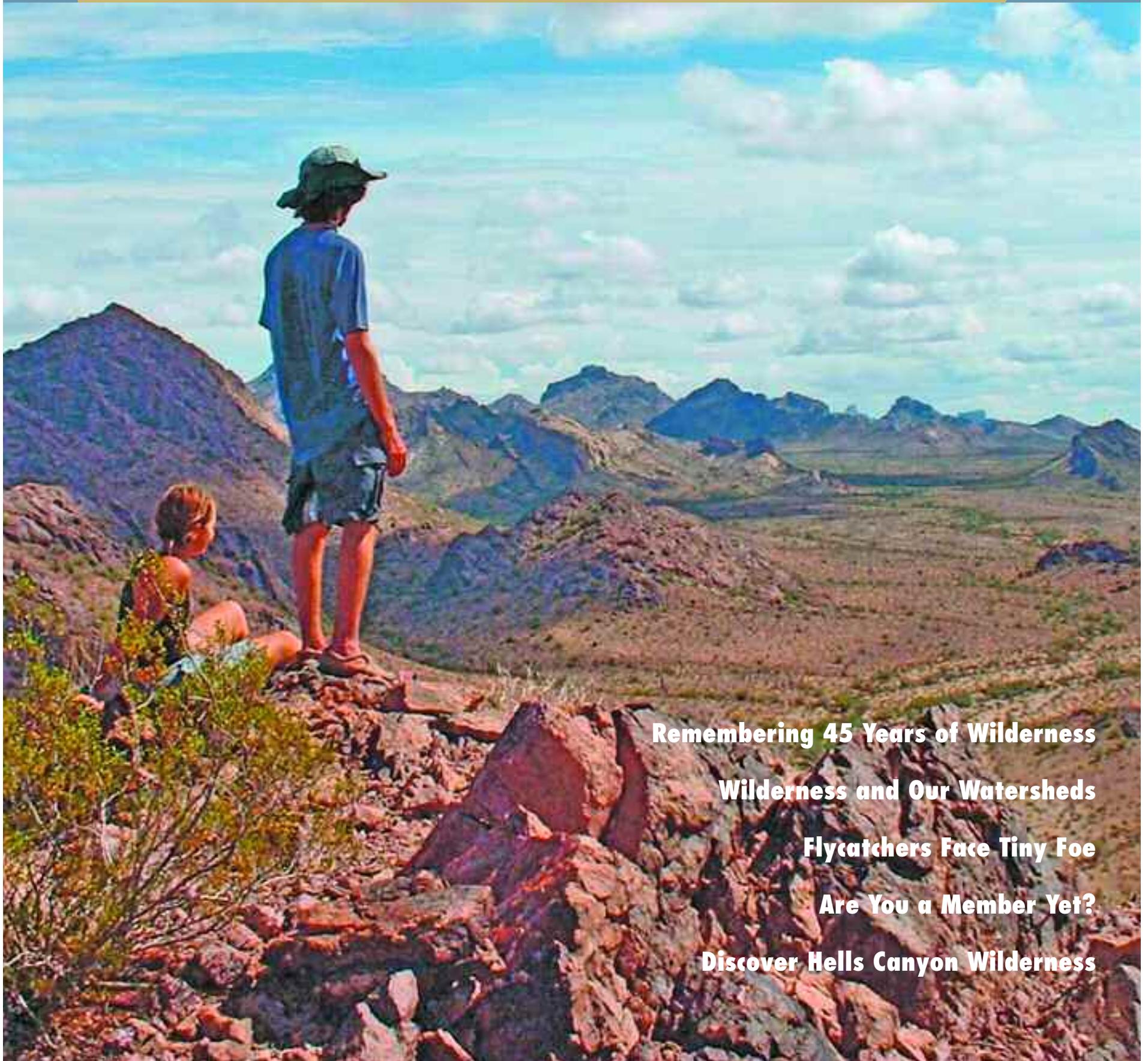


NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

ARIZONA  
**WILD**



**Remembering 45 Years of Wilderness**

**Wilderness and Our Watersheds**

**Flycatchers Face Tiny Foe**

**Are You a Member Yet?**

**Discover Hells Canyon Wilderness**

FALL-WINTER 2009/2010

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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: Hikers enjoy a classic Sonoran Desert vista in the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness, designated in 1990 and managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Photo: AWC

Design by Mary Williams/marywilliamsdesign.com

# THOUGHTS FROM THE KGB

## Let's Build a Wilderness Vision

by Kevin Gaither-Banchoff

The end of 2009 marked the anniversary of two landmark pieces of legislation important to wild places in Arizona—the Wilderness Act, signed into law on September 3, 1964, and the Arizona Wilderness Act (AWA), signed into law on August 28, 1984. These acts protected forever national landmarks like the Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, California's John Muir Wilderness and New Mexico's Gila Wilderness areas, and closer to home, the Superstition and Four Peaks Wilderness east of Phoenix, the Rincon Wilderness on Tucson's Coronado National Forest, and the iconic Escudilla Wilderness where Aldo Leopold kindled groundbreaking ecological ideas 100 years ago. These are places many of you have probably visited, and if not, get out there!

The AWC was honored to be a key stakeholder and partner with Congressman Mo Udall, Arizona's first wilderness champion, who led efforts to pass both the AWA (see page 5) and later, the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act (ADWA) of 1990. Together, these two wilderness bills designated approximately 3,500,000 acres of Arizona's federal lands as Wilderness! It's Mo's legacy and these anniversaries that reminds us every day that there is more work to be done, especially with Arizona's rapid growth and correlating infrastructure (power lines, new roads, etc.), energy (solar and geothermal prospecting) and recreational development pressures. You can read more about Mo's work and dedication in our essay from Mark Trautwein (p. 5), who served Mo in the House of Representatives from 1979 to 1992, and was the lead staffer for both the 1984 and 1990 bills.

Over the past months, much of the public discourse has rightly been dominated by the economic crisis and health care reform – two critical issues that must be resolved. But even in these tough times, someone has to remain focused on nature, the plants and animals that live there, and the health of our wildest ecosystems. In Arizona, that someone is the Arizona Wilderness Coalition. To keep these ecosystems intact, AWC is directing the state's essential growth and development to our least wild places—abandoned farms, industrial sites, and existing transportation and energy corridors. We're also leading the charge to designate new wilderness and wild and scenic rivers. As such, we recognize and advocate for the wider landscape and cultural context in which Wilderness exists: unless we take a more holistic approach to preserve naturally connected ecosystems, our wilderness areas will be of insufficient size and too fragmented to effectively survive and sustain wildlife in the decades to come. Our current top priorities are the Tumacacori Highlands, delicate desert lands west of Phoenix that

stretch to the lower Colorado River, and critical wild forests and waterways across the Verde River watershed, connecting the core wild corridors in the high elevation rim country with the lower desert of southwestern Arizona.

We can't and won't sit on our heels; we must celebrate past achievements and use them as motivation to move forward with protecting and designating new wild lands. This fall, AWC is launching several efforts to build on the past and ensure we have as much success as possible in the coming years:

We are launching a membership campaign to add 1,000 new members in each of the next 3–5 years. Depending on where you live in the state or around the country, you'll soon hear about us more in the news, be able to see and attend presentations, or maybe even meet one of our new door-to-door canvassers as they walk through your neighborhood. See page 12 and 15 for more information on membership.

We are strategically expanding our capacity. In addition to our existing staff of five, this fall we are adding a full time Phoenix-based AmeriCorps staff member, bringing on new interns through the

University of Arizona, creating a regular volunteer position in Tucson, and of course, adding numerous wilderness advocates through our canvass.

All this wilderness advocacy takes financial support; we're launching a fall fundraising campaign to raise \$40,000 in new support. We have a challenge from the Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation where gifts will be matched. This funding will be critical for us to maintain and enhance our capacity to ensure wilderness, and our vision for the future, gets the attention it also deserves in these challenging times. Watch for updates and new ways to give!

Wilderness, as you know, is a critical component of a healthy earth, a healthy world, and a healthy society. It is the duty of those of us that believe in the need for natural places to take up and embrace the legacy of past Arizonans like Congressman Mo Udall (D) and Senator Barry Goldwater (R). Today Arizona and the country are fortunate to have a Congressional wilderness champion in Rep. Raul Grijalva—thank you Raul! We also call on Senator John McCain, friend of former Congressman Udall and supporter of the AWA of 1984 and ADWA of 1990, to once again embrace wilderness and help create a new conservation legacy that protects many of Arizona's remaining unprotected wild places. I've taken up this challenge. Thousands of others have as well, and I hope you will too.



Kevin on a recent hiking trip in the Tumacacori Highlands, pictured at left, with AWC Board member Bart Koehler and Sky Island Alliance Wilderness Campaign Coordinator Mike Quigley. Photo: Mike Quigley

# Wilderness: A Legacy and Promise for Arizonans

by Doug Scott

Few may realize it, but one of the most powerful influences Americans share in our increasingly diverse nation is wilderness. When Anglo-Europeans encountered the frontier, we at once acknowledged its dominance and embraced its resources—whether it offered timber, artistic inspiration, or a special place to hunt. Even as we tamed so much of that wild landscape, life on the wilderness frontier imbued settlers with values that are richly embedded in what it means to be American—pioneer traits of sturdy self-reliance and fierce independence, of rugged individualism, and of community. To this day, Americans from all walks of life recognize wilderness as a unique and central element of our national character, its influence important to our families, our culture, and our quality of life. Wilderness is uniquely American and powerfully egalitarian.

Little wonder, then, that as so much of the American wilderness was subdued by our successful

pioneers, there were visionaries who recognized that we should take steps to preserve some areas of wilderness as a bequest to future generations, so they may know the original America—and what so inspired our forefathers to create a great nation.

“If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them more than the miracles of technology,” President Lyndon B. Johnson said at the Wilderness Act signing ceremony on September 3, 1964. “We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it.”

## Aldo Leopold's Emerging Ideas of Land Health

Though others were speaking for the preservation of nature in the early years of the 20th century, it was U.S. Forest Service ranger Aldo Leopold who carried the case from philosophy to a practical program for preserving some sam-

ples of our wilderness heritage. Freshly graduated from the forestry school at Yale, Leopold arrived 100 years ago this summer in Springerville, Arizona, taking up duties as a ranger on the just-established Apache National Forest.

Over his fifteen years in the Southwest, Leopold played a role in the development of the Apache and other national forests, planning new roads, opening areas for timber harvest, and shooting wolves and mountain lions he encountered, in the then-common belief that fewer predators would guarantee larger herds of big game. But as a gifted observer of the natural world, he saw the ecological toll taken by abuses of the land, most obviously the massive erosion from over-grazing by domestic sheep and cattle. Increasingly, too, Leopold recognized the error of predator extermination efforts in which he had participated, for the resulting overpopulation of deer and other game species had severe ecological consequences not unlike overgrazing of livestock.

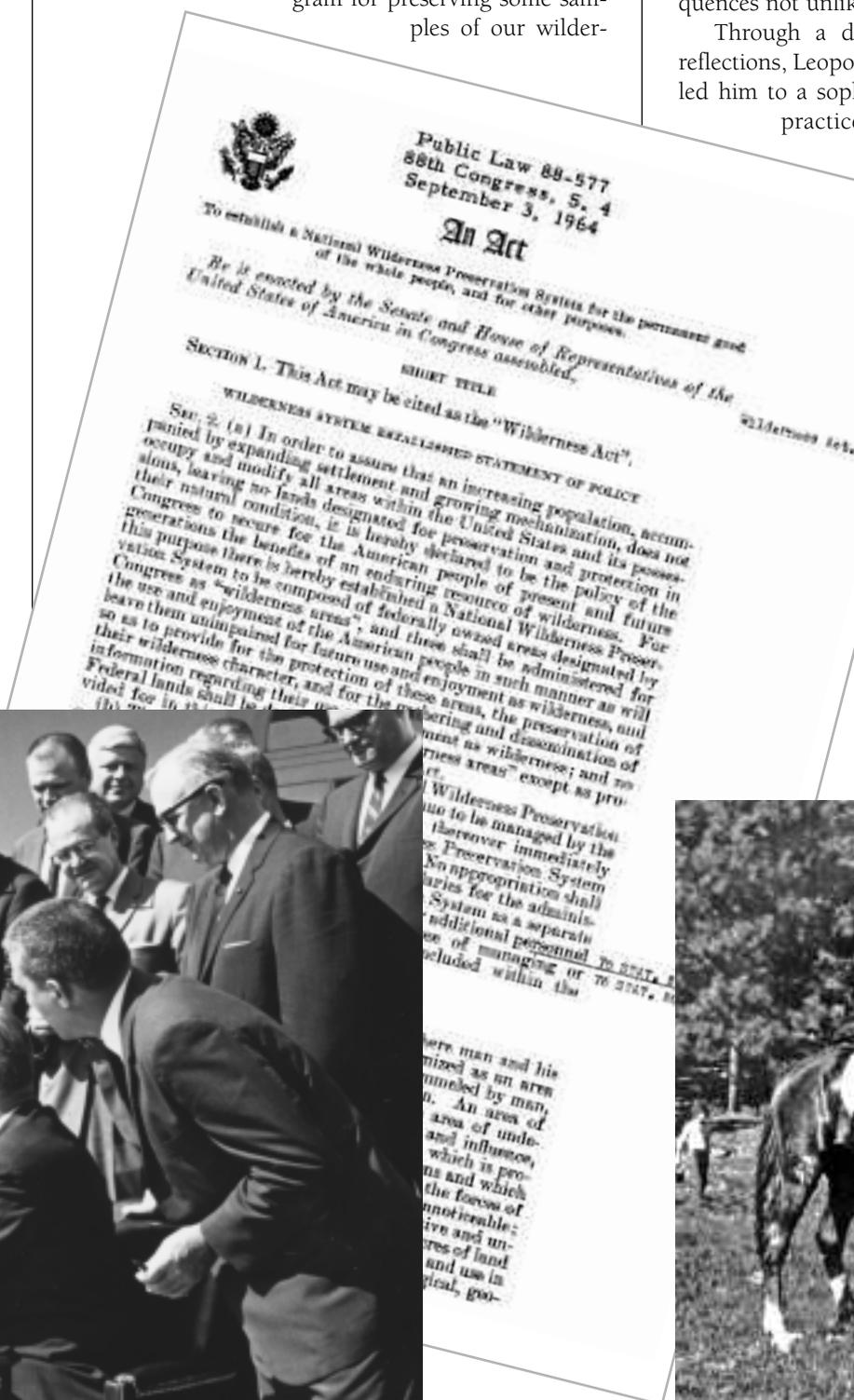
Through a decade of careful observations and reflections, Leopold's field experience in the Southwest led him to a sophisticated view of new conservation practices needed to maintain resilient ecosystems and healthy wildlife

populations. Through his eloquent writings, he spread his ideas for a new “land ethic” within the Forest Service and the forestry profession, and to the general public, most notably in *A Sand County Almanac*, an American classic. And he led the way in envisioning the importance of preserving some lands as wilderness—free of roads and human development—not only for recreational enjoyment, but to serve

### What is wilderness?

The word “wilderness” conjures many images and meanings. But as used here it refers to a legal classification Congress gives to some of our federally-owned lands. The Wilderness Act of 1964 defines these, in an ideal sense, as areas “where the earth and its community of life are untrammled by man.” A trammel is a net or restraint, so the concept is that in wilderness the forces of nature unfold freely, unrestrained by man.

Adding more practical detail, the 1964 Act further characterizes land Congress chooses to protect as wilderness as “undeveloped Federal land ... without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions,” which “generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable,” and which offers “outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.”



The first page of Public Law 88-577, the 1964 Wilderness Act. Courtesy Doug Scott.



Alice Zahniser accepts a signing pen from President Lyndon Johnson during the signing ceremony for the Wilderness Act in 1964. Behind her is Mardy Murie, who, along with her husband Olaus, was a lifelong advocate for wilderness. Photo: Courtesy of the National Park Digital Archives, Harper's Ferry Center.



Leopold early in his career with the U.S. Forest Service in Arizona Territory, circa 1909. Courtesy the Aldo Leopold Foundation.

The Wilderness Act required a wilderness study for 34 “primitive areas” established by the Forest Service in the 1930s. Arizona’s Blue Range Primitive Area is the last such area on which Congress has yet to act. The 174,000 acres in this area, in Aldo Leopold’s old stomping grounds on the Apache-Sitgraves National Forest, are protected by an interim requirement of the Wilderness Act until Congress acts, as are its extensive surrounding roadless lands, according to precedents set in Federal Court.

as natural benchmarks for assessing the health of land and wildlife populations impacted by human development.

#### A Practical Program for Wilderness Preservation

In 1921, the *Journal of Forestry* published Leopold’s landmark proposal for preserving wilderness areas. Even as the Forest Service was opening and developing so much of the federal forests under the concept of “highest use,” he raised the question of “whether the principle of highest use does not itself demand that representative portions of some forests be preserved as wilderness.” His articles in popular periodicals like *Sunset* spread his ideas to a broader public.

As a result of Leopold’s advocacy, in 1924 the Forest Service established the Gila Wilderness Area in New Mexico. It was the world’s first application of this new conservation concept, and was soon followed by others around the West, each established by Forest Service administrative order. By 1940, there were about 14 million acres in these administratively-designated areas.

In his writings, Leopold laid out detailed elements he felt would be needed for a national policy to protect national forest wilderness areas and similar undeveloped portions of our national parks, national wildlife refuges, and other public lands. But he also called for a nationwide citizens movement to advocate for such a policy, recognizing that without strong public backing, administrative protection could all too easily be modified or abandoned. In 1935, he joined Bob Marshall and six other conservation leaders in founding The Wilderness Society.



Howard Zahniser wrote the first draft of the Wilderness Act in 1956. Tragically, he passed away from heart failure just a few months before the bill was signed into law in 1964. Photo: National Park Service Digital archives, Harper’s Ferry Center.

#### Toward a Wilderness Protection Law

Pressures to develop Federal lands accelerated sharply in the economic boom following World War II. It became increasingly clear to leaders of the then-small national wilderness movement that relying on administrative protection was just not good enough. By means of another administrative order, administrators could lift the protected status from portions of once-protected lands for new roads, logging, and tourism development—and they did, including to make way for a new road severing the Gila Wilderness. Leopold and other conservation leaders concluded that only protection of a federal law—an act of Congress—could assure that wilderness areas, once established, could reasonably be expected to endure.

A Wilderness Law! A great idea, but what should it say? And how could a really effective law ever be approved by Congress?

The answers to these challenges came through the visionary work of Howard Zahniser, who became executive director of The Wilderness Society in 1945. Zahniser, who discussed his concepts with Leopold and was a careful reader of Leopold’s writings, worked closely with leaders of other organizations, including the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club (where his close collaborator David Brower became executive director, also in 1945). He did not immediately begin to draft legislation, for he knew that detailed consultations, including with leaders of the U.S. Forest Service,

Preservation System—but once so designated, the protection and the boundaries may then be altered only by another act of Congress.

The 1964 law gave this statutory protection to just 9 million acres—some of those wilderness areas the Forest Service had established in the 1920s and 1930s. In Arizona there were five: the Mazatzal, Superstition, and Sierra Ancha Wilderness Areas on the Tonto National Forest, and the Chiricahua and Galiuro Wilderness Areas on the Coronado National Forest. Together, these five amounted to 422,990 acres.

#### New Wilderness Areas for Arizona

The Wilderness Act also required that certain other federal lands be studied, leading to recommendations for new wilderness areas—a few additional national forest lands and the wild portions of national parks and national wildlife refuges. These procedures led to early progress for new wilderness in Arizona—the Mt. Baldy Wilderness and wilderness areas within Petrified Forest National Park were approved by Congress in 1970, the Pine Mountain and Sycamore Canyon Wilderness Areas in 1972; wilderness areas within Chiricahua National Monument and Saguaro National Park in 1976, the Pusch Ridge Wilderness and wilderness areas within Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in 1978.

Through the grassroots efforts they mobilized to support each of these new wilderness additions, vol-



The Governing Council of The Wilderness Society at their meeting in September, 1959, held near the Blue Range Primitive Area in eastern Arizona. Front row, left to right -- Sigurd Olson, Richard Leonard, Harvey Broome, and Stewart Brandborg. Back row, left to right -- James Marshall, Olaus Murie, George Marshall [both Marshalls were the brothers of Bob Marshall], Ernest Griffith, Howard Zahniser, and Robert Cooney. Photo: J.F. Carithers, courtesy of Doug Scott, via Howard Zahniser.

would be essential to perfect his ideas and build broad public support behind such a proposal.

In the summer of 1956, a bill based on Zahniser’s perfected draft was introduced in Congress, championed by a liberal Democrat, Senator Hubert Humphrey (MN), and a conservative Republican, Congressman John Saylor (PA)—thus beginning the unending bipartisan character of the wilderness preservation effort. Facing entrenched objections from some special interests, the bill took eight years to become law, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 3, 1964.

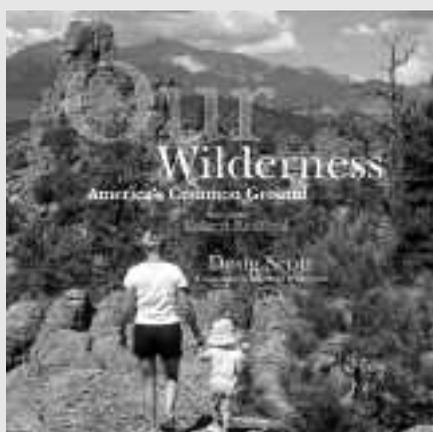
The essential feature of the Wilderness Act, besides its strong provisions for protection of each wilderness area from roads, logging, or other development, is that it reserves to Congress all decisions about which federal lands will be established as wilderness areas and where the boundaries will be located. It takes an act of Congress to add lands to our National Wilderness

unteers and staffers from the Arizona Wilderness Coalition, the Grand Canyon Chapter of the Sierra Club, Sky Island Alliance, and other Arizona groups earned themselves solid credibility with the most important figure in the state’s wilderness history, Tucson-area Congressman Morris K. Udall (D). Udall, who stood behind President Johnson as the Wilderness Act was signed in 1964, became an acknowledged expert on the Act and rose to become chairman of the committee that handles all wilderness area legislation in the House of Representatives. With his expertise and his reputation for bipartisanship, Udall was the moving force in enlisting Senators Barry Goldwater and John McCain, both Republicans, to support two laws, in 1984 and 1990, which extended the protection of the Wilderness Act to scores of new areas in Arizona’s national forests, national wildlife refuges, and federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management—some 3.5 million acres.

As we celebrate the 45th anniversary of the Wilderness Act this year, it is now beyond doubt that this landmark law offers the “gold standard” in protection for the wildest treasures of our federal lands. Across the country, as in Arizona, well-seasoned conservation groups like the Arizona Wilderness Coalition are leading new efforts to secure this proven statutory protection for additional beloved wild lands.

“In our work to protect wilderness across Arizona, we are building on the lessons of this history,” said Kevin Gaither-Banchoff, AWC’s executive director. “Our work today focuses on protecting the magnificent beauty and dense biodiversity of the Tumacacori Highlands in southern Arizona; ensuring connectivity for wildlife that migrate across the Mogollon Rim; safeguarding the precious watershed of the Verde River; and preserving the fragile ecosystem of the Sonoran Desert—targeted by the push for development and road infrastructure in western Maricopa County. Wilderness work is never done: the Arizona Wilderness Coalition will continue to build on the hard work of great visionaries like Aldo Leopold, Howard Zahniser, and Mo Udall to make their visions reality.”

*Doug Scott is the policy director for the Campaign for America’s Wilderness and author of The Enduring Wilderness. His latest book, Our Wilderness: America’s Common Ground, with a foreword from Robert Redford, is available from Fulcrum Publishing [see <http://ourwilderness.org/>]*



**Our Wilderness:  
America’s Common Ground**  
*by Campaign for America’s Wilderness  
Policy Director Doug Scott  
with a foreword by Robert Redford*

This photographic tribute to wilderness is a powerful visual reminder of the country’s natural beauty and our place in it.

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—Senator Barbara Boxer (CA)

The 64-page book is \$19.95, and can be ordered from Fulcrum Publishing at [www.fulcrum-books.com](http://www.fulcrum-books.com).

# Mo’s Love of the Land

by Mark Trautwein

**A**rizona Wilderness Act (AWA), the first of Mo Udall’s two landmark statewide wilderness bills that define much of Arizona’s dynamic landscape. Mo was justifiably proud of these achievements, and it’s a good time not only to look back but also, as Mo always did, to look forward.

Together those two laws went a long way toward fulfilling for Arizona the promise of the Wilderness Act itself: to preserve “an enduring resource” of land “retaining its primeval character and influence,” where “man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”

Yet Mo would never have regarded the Arizona Wilderness Act’s success as complete. We’ve failed to get ahead of motorized recreation that has altered wildlands and wildlife corridors.

Many parts of the Sonoran Desert west of Phoenix are perfect examples. Some of these lands and other gems, like the Tumacacori Highlands in southern Arizona, richly deserve wilderness protection. More broadly, everything we now know about ecology teaches us that land, water, and wildlife are unique systems that must be managed wisely on a landscape scale. Wilderness designation will always be an effective conservation tool, but we are in dire need of a new land-management vision as well that can incorporate whole, ecological landscapes and embrace not just what Mo did, but what he believed.

The AWA was a seminal moment in popular awareness about the value of wildlands and the citizen organizations that work to protect them. And because Mo ran such an inclusive and civil legislative process that respected the rights and opinions of everyone, he showed that the democratic experiment can work.



*Mo secured passage of the 1984 Arizona Wilderness Act, with collaboration from Republican Senator Barry Goldwater; it was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. Photo: Special Collections, University of Arizona Library, Papers of Morris K. Udall; MS 325, Box 738*

Mo’s vision was informed by what he often referred to as his “love of the land.” It was both his starting point and his destination - the ethic he hoped would inform others to carry on great conservation work.

When he looked back, Mo saw what had happened to Tucson in his own lifetime. The parks and natural areas that now ring it were then distant points on the horizon. By 1984, Tucson had already begun to expand beyond those open spaces, now islands in an urban sea. Mo’s love of the land taught him that isolation alone never protects open spaces forever. So in his two Arizona wilderness laws, as elsewhere, he was seeking to get ahead of that curve.

Today, it’s fair to pronounce the AWA - and the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act six years later - successes, but incomplete ones.



*A classic shot of Mo during a visit from lobbyists Doug Scott and John McComb to discuss strategy on the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Photo courtesy John McComb.*



*During Mo’s tenure in Congress, the National Park System doubled and the National Wilderness Preservation System tripled in size. Photo: Special Collections, University of Arizona Library, Papers of Morris K. Udall; MS 325, Box 738*

Today, some express their regard for Mo’s vision by opposing new land protections as violations of the agreements he forged a generation ago. But this is a false fealty. Mo’s mission was never to preclude others from acting in new ways on the basis of new evidence to meet new challenges he himself could never anticipate. Instead, Mo Udall sought to inspire us with a love of the land and a passion for the great task of protecting it. When we celebrate the Arizona Wilderness Act, it is that love we should remember and use as our guide.

Mark Trautwein served Rep. Morris K. Udall on the staff of the U.S. House Interior/Natural Resources Committee from 1979 to 1992. He was lead staffer for the 1984 Arizona Wilderness Act and the 1990 Arizona Desert Wilderness Act.

# WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

## To Save a Flycatcher

by Lili DeBarbieri

**S**outhwestern riparian habitats—vegetation running along our streams and rivers—contain the highest density and diversity of bird species outside tropical rainforests. As this habitat continues to disappear, so too do the birds in this part of the United States. One bird in immediate danger is the Southwestern willow flycatcher.

On July 12, 2006, the City of St. George, with guidance by the USDA Animal and Plant Inspection Service (APHIS), introduced a tamarisk leaf-eating beetle into flycatcher nesting habitat along the Virgin River in Southern Utah. The tamarisk leaf-eating beetle is an Asian and Middle-Eastern beetle approved for introduction into the United States to control tamarisk. APHIS is responsible for the issuance of permits that authorize the release of any exotic plant or animal into the United States.

The original research and the proposal to use the beetles for tamarisk control were done by the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS). The beetles eat the leaves of the tamarisk trees and trees die as a result of the defoliation. Consequently, nest numbers began to drop in 2008, with more expected to fail this coming year.

Since then, the beetle has moved along the Virgin River into Arizona. It currently threatens to spread extensively along the lower Colorado River and into central Arizona. This single event has dramatically increased the risk of extinction of the flycatcher from the Southwest.

For over a decade, the southwestern willow flycatcher has been listed as 'endangered' by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Arizona recognizes it as a species "of special concern." State and federal laws, including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Endangered Species Act, prevent any hunting, trapping, wounding, harassing or otherwise harming of the listed species.

An olive-gray bird with a white throat, the flycatcher is now found exclusively in remnant, dense riparian habitats of six southwestern states including Southern California, extreme southern Nevada, southern Utah, southwestern Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico. Most are found in Arizona and New Mexico. Flycatchers rarely move between their sites of origin along the lower Colorado River. Approximately 1,300 known pairs are spread out over roughly 300 sites.

Along the lower Colorado River, 61% of flycatcher nests are found in tamarisk. In central Arizona, (Salt River, Tonto Creek, Gila River, and San Pedro River) 76% of nests are found in tamarisk. Range-wide, tamarisk dominates flycatcher habitat in 27% of territories.

Flycatcher scientists have been concerned that the flycatcher will be harmed by the beetles' destruction of tamarisk before replacement nesting



An adult southwestern willow flycatcher. Photo: USGS

habitat can be made available or be protected. Because of these concerns, in order to issue any permit authorizing release of the beetles, APHIS needed to first secure approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Fish and Wildlife Service did indeed approve APHIS' issuance of permits authorizing the beetle's release based on APHIS' contractual assurances protecting the flycatcher. For example, APHIS' promised that the beetle would not be released within 200 miles of flycatcher habitat or within 300 miles of documented flycatcher breeding areas. APHIS' promise is codified in the permits for the specific release sites. According to the Center for Biological Diversity, the City of St. George and APHIS have violated these contractual provisions and applicable laws. The introduction of the tamarisk leaf-eating beetle into the flycatcher's habitat was undertaken in spite of permit restriction, contractual assurances, laws, and expressive objections against the beetles' original introduction.

Initially, APHIS failed to assume any responsibility for these violations. In response, the Center for Biological Diversity and the Maricopa Audubon Society filed a lawsuit against APHIS to force reevaluation of the tamarisk leaf-eating beetle program. APHIS has agreed to submit to a new programmatic review of the tamarisk leaf-eating program by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The tamarisk leaf-eating beetle is not the only threat facing the Southwestern willow flycatcher. Loss

and modification of riparian habitat, livestock grazing, and nest parasitism by the brown-headed cowbird are key factors in the decline of flycatcher populations. River and stream impoundments, ground water pumping, and overuse of riparian areas have also altered up to 90 percent of the flycatcher's historical habitat. Additionally, flood control projects have inadvertently depleted the cottonwood and willow trees that flycatchers use for nesting. These trees are vital to the health of riparian ecosystems and need periodic flooding to reproduce.

Ironically, the survival of riparian ecosystems may actually depend on the flycatcher.

"Studies have shown that predation on insects by birds actually results in the improved health of trees and forests," says Bill Howe, non game coordinator for the Fish and Wildlife Service's Southwest region. "The southwestern willow flycatcher and other insectivorous birds in riparian woodlands consume huge numbers of insects per day, including mass quantities of mosquitoes."

By controlling insect populations, flycatchers keep humans comfortable and contribute to the health of southwest riparian systems in general. The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is working to protect numerous riparian habitats with a variety of protective measures around Arizona, one being Wild and Scenic River designations.

"Wild and Scenic River (W&S) designation is based on the river or stream's Outstandingly Remarkable Values, particularly the riparian vegetation and the wildlife species dependent upon that vegetation," says Kim Crumbo, director of



A typical flycatcher's nest in willow branches. Photo: USGS

conservation with the Flagstaff-based Grand Canyon Wildlands Council.

“W&S status provides a significant additional legal requirement to protect and restore those values, in this case the SW willow flycatcher and its food source.”

Crumbo also points out: “Wilderness explicitly and implicitly requires the managing agency to protect, and when necessary, restore natural processes (flooding and fire) as well as native species. Both designations provide critical protection of wild nature.”

If the flycatcher is to be saved, tamarisk leaf-eating beetles will need to be contained immediately. One option proposed by APHIS is the widespread use of insecticides. In any event, habitat restoration will need to proceed at a rate far in excess of that currently planned by the Lower Colorado River Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Program (MSHCP), according to the Center for Biological Diversity.

There is concern among biologists that if the beetle reaches central Arizona, the Horseshoe and Bartlett Reservation Habitat Conservation Plan and the Roosevelt Lake Habitat Conservation Plans for the flycatcher will not be effective. In Saint George alone, violations are estimated to cost tens of millions of dollars to remedy.

These and more recovery actions are needed to save this remarkable songbird.

*Lili DeBarbieri is a freelance writer specializing in travel, environmental issues and wildlife. Her work has been featured in dozens of publications in the U.S and abroad including Earth Island Journal, Nature Alberta, and E: The Environmental Magazine. Based in Arizona, she is a frequent contributor to the Tucson Green Times.*



An Arizona flycatcher nestling. Photo: USGS



“Fitz-beww” is the classic flycatcher song, usually heard in combination with other trills when a territorial flycatcher is agitated by an intruding flycatcher, a predator, or a cowbird. Photo: Suzanne Langridge, USGS

## BACKCOUNTRY EXPLORATION AND PHOTOGRAPHY ADVENTURE ON THE VERDE RIVER



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## WILDERNESS: DID YOU KNOW?

# Wilderness Water Tastes Best

by Sam Frank

If you regularly drink water from a tap in Phoenix, then there's a good chance I've stood – muddy hiking boots and all – directly in your drinking water. I went hiking up in Juniper Mesa Wilderness on the northwest corner of the Prescott National Forest a few months ago. While I was enjoying my time away from email and out of cell service, and taking in the smell of rain, a medium-sized cloud passed over head and dropped a good little shower on me. It felt great. I watched the rain begin to run off the ground's surface, pass around my muddy boots, and collect in the low spots. Eventually, that water would find its way into Walnut Creek and then seep into the Big Chino aquifer and after a long time it might be lucky enough to become part of a fleeting moment of the Verde River. You know the rest; the Verde becomes the Salt – the Salt becomes your glass of water. I think you're safe on the muddy hiking boot water because it would take a lot longer than a few months for it to get down to the Valley. But what this reflection shows is that a remote piece of land can be very intimately connected with a far off place and thousands – if not millions – of people.

Sometimes it's easy to forget about the source of your drinking water . . . unless, of course, you're out on the trail and contemplating filtering water from a skuzzy puddle with cow tracks around it. Even a person who gets his or her water from a private well might only think of the waters' source in terms immediate surroundings. Do you think many people in the Washington, D.C. metro area, which gets 90% of its drinking water from the Potomac River, realize that their tap water potentially comes from one of many wilderness areas in Virginia and West Virginia ([www.potomac.org](http://www.potomac.org))? In fact, a number of major US cities such as Seattle, Portland, Denver and Los Angeles rely significantly on water sources that originate in wilderness areas (Brown et al., 2005).

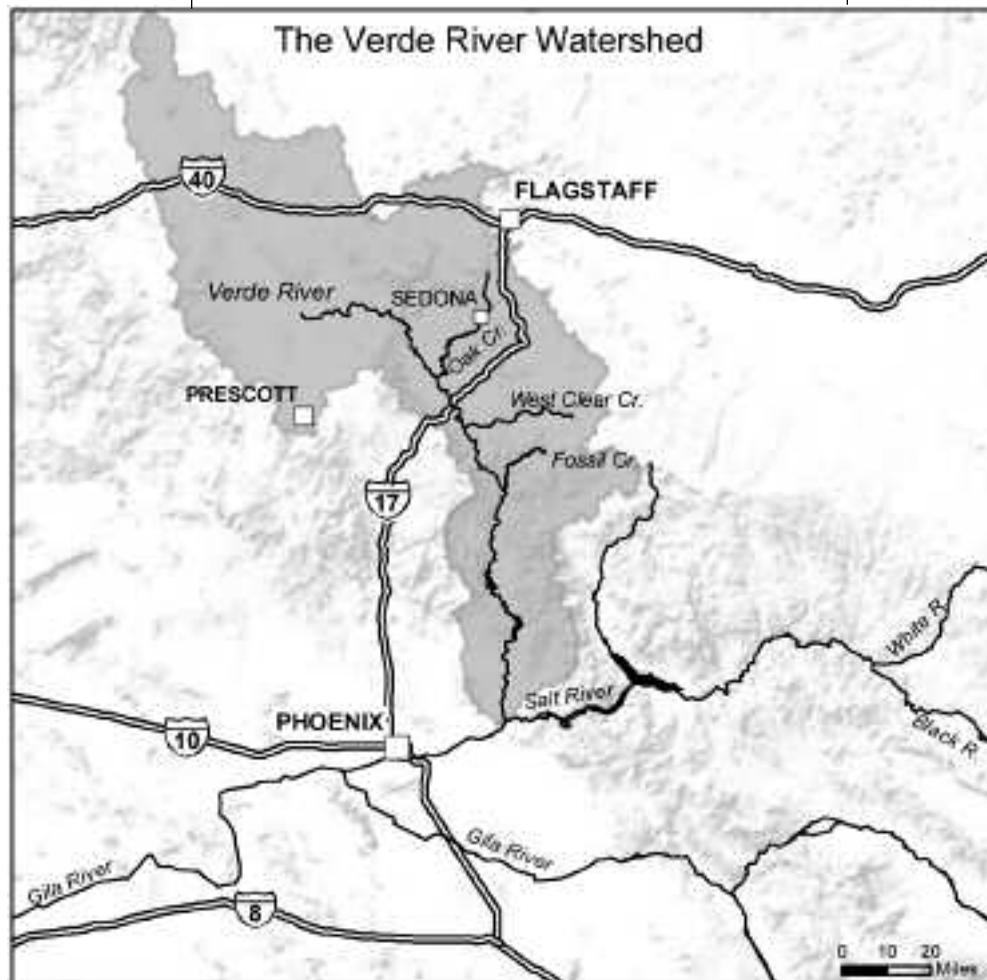
Now, let's bring it closer to home and investigate water sources here in Arizona. We'll start with someplace that seems very far away from wild lands: Phoenix. According to the city website, "In Phoenix, more than 90% of our water comes from the Salt, Verde, and Colorado Rivers"

([www.phoenix.gov/WATER/drink.html](http://www.phoenix.gov/WATER/drink.html)). Let's look then at the Colorado, which originates near Lulu City, Colo., just west of continental divide in Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP). Earlier this year, Congress designated 249,399 acres in RMNP as

wilderness, which included the official headwaters of the Colorado River. The Salt River is formed by the confluence of the Black and White Rivers between the Fort Apache and San Carlos Indian Reservations. Both the Black and White Rivers watersheds get runoff water from Mount Baldy Wilderness. And last but not least, we come to the Verde River. Some people say the Verde River begins below Sullivan Dam, but that water coming out of the ground above and below Sullivan Dam originates at the Big Chino aquifer, which among – other sources – gets water from Juniper Mesa Wilderness. So the point is that while water sources might be degraded along their course, those waterways at least have a chance at a clean start with wilderness designations at their headwaters.

Sources of clean drinking water are a few of many reasons the Arizona Wilderness Coalition (AWC) advocates for wilderness and wild & scenic river designations. These two federal designations offer some of the highest protections available for preserving wild, undeveloped land; clean, free-flowing waterways; carbon sinks and clean air production through natural plant processes; refuge for native wildlife and plants; and even 'primitive and unconfined types of recreation,' which are quickly slipping away in our technological world. AWC has identified the Verde River watershed as ecologically and socially critical to Arizona and we have begun to focus our outreach and education efforts there. The Verde River watershed encompasses 6,646 square miles in central to northern Arizona. The Verde flows for 125 miles before encountering its first dam at Horseshoe Reservoir and then flows for an additional 45 miles before it drains an average of 1,120 cubic feet per second into the Salt River. A portion of the Verde River, 41 miles from Beasley Flats to Sheep Bridge, is already designated a Wild & Scenic River.

Additionally, within the Verde watershed, there are just shy of 500,000 acres of wilderness, another 14 miles of wild & scenic river (Fossil Creek), 37 miles of the state designated Verde River Greenway State Natural Area in the Verde Valley, the 800-acre Upper Verde River Wildlife Area managed by the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and an Important Bird Area designation recognized by the National Audubon Society. As for what potential the Verde watershed holds: almost 300,000 more acres of wilderness, 51



Courtesy of the Center for Biological Diversity



Central Arizona Director Sam Frank assesses Fritsche Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA), which lies on the northeast side of the Big Chino Valley and is part of the Verde River watershed. A wilderness designation here would help safeguard the Verde's clean water source. Photo: Ann Fletcher



*The Verde is one of the last perennial waterways in the central highlands region of Arizona. Photo: Sam Frank*



*Former Prescott College and AWC work study student Cacia McClain used her senior project to complete a wild and scenic river study for the Upper Verde River. Photo: Laura Schuessler*



*The Upper Verde River fulfills many of the qualifications and "outstandingly remarkable values" for it to meet Wild and Scenic River designation. Photo: AWC*

more miles of wild & scenic river, additions to the Verde River Greenway, and a 160,000 acre National Scenic Area on the Coconino National Forest surrounding Sedona. When you add all this up, existing and potential land and water protections in the Verde watershed, the dependence of a major portion of Arizona's population on the Verde as a water source, the ecological importance of the watershed, the economic and social significance of the health of the Verde River – well, you can't help but recognize that the future well-being of the Verde River watershed is inseparable from the well-being of Arizona.

We have to consider this with some sort of per-

spective. Personally, I've learned a lot about how people in the Southwest view water in recent years. My friend Darin lives on the Hopi reservation and he told me a fundamental Hopi adage: "Water is life." This is a simple but eloquent observation, especially here in Arizona, where it is estimated that less than 1% of land is riparian (University of Arizona). Anyone can help conserve water and it only takes little changes to collectively make a large difference. The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is playing its part by advocating for new wilderness on suitable lands and new wild & scenic rivers on eligible waterways. These designations are only part of the mosaic needed to preserve the

Verde watershed for future generations. The Verde will also need something more than laws and regulations; it will need the love and respect of all Arizonans to make choices that recognize the intrinsic value of this life-giving river.

*Sam Frank is AWC's central Arizona director based in Prescott.*

Check out our backcountry natural history and photography workshop on the Verde River, November 7–8! Details at [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org).

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

# A Conversation With Jeanie and John Watkins

by Katurah Mackay

Actions speak louder than words, as the saying goes. Nobody exemplifies this more than Jeanie and John Watkins, whom AWC staff can regularly count on to sign up, show up, and keep up the great volunteer work they love so much. The Watkins have participated in everything from backpacking restoration trips to hauling signs and shaking hands at our Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic Film Festival in Phoenix.

“John and Jeanie are not only great volunteers, they’re great people,” says Sam Frank, AWC’s central Arizona director, who has worked with the Watkins on numerous adventures. “Every time they donate their time with AWC, they are smiling, enthused, and willing to give 100% effort. Now that I’ve gotten to know them and when I hear they are coming to an AWC event, I look forward to seeing not just volunteers, but my friends.”

We asked the Watkins to describe their interest in wilderness and why they enjoy volunteering with the Arizona Wilderness Coalition.

### Where did you grow up, and how have you come to love the outdoors and wilderness so much?

John: I was born in Phoenix but moved to Indiana at an early age and spent my formative years there. I have long had a love of the outdoors having grown up fishing and hunting in Indiana and spent much time in nature. During high school, I first became very interested in conservation and the preservation of our natural heritage. Earth Day 1970 really gave me a push in the direction of ecology, and during college at Ball State University, I majored in biology with a minor in natural resources. I continued my studies at Ball State that included a class specific to wilderness and received a Master’s degree in biology in 1982. I spent much time during that period involved in water quality studies and other outdoor activities including hiking and backpacking. I also gained lots of outdoors experience during the 80’s and 90’s living in the Atlanta area and volunteered for 4 years with the Georgia Dolphin Project and was a Appalachian Trail section steward for a number of years.

Jeanie: I grew up in Montana, the middle child of three. Our Mom and Dad were always taking us camping and family vacations were to national parks around Montana. We hunted each fall and grew up with a healthy respect and acknowledged stewardship for the land. I have yet to do it, but one of my goals for the next couple of years is to make a trip into the Bob Marshall Wilderness by horseback and spend a couple of weeks.

### What are your current lines of work?

John: I currently do environmental related work for the City of Glendale managing a division within our utilities department overseeing industrial pollution control and prevention. I previously worked several years in the Atlanta, Georgia area in a similar capacity and have a total of 20 years of water quality related experience.

Jeanie: My office is in our home. I work as a business coach, helping others find ways to get and stay healthy with Shaklee products, while showing them how to make a good income doing the same thing. Our business is recession proof and it’s booming right now.



Pictured far right, John Watkins takes part in an AWC service project in Cedar Bench Wilderness. Photo: AWC

### How did you discover the Arizona Wilderness Coalition and what keeps you coming back to our events and participating with us on a regular basis?

John: I believe I first became aware of the AWC about six years ago, while participating in a Volunteer

Outdoor Arizona (VOAZ) event and someone there mentioned this organization. I checked things out on the internet and signed up for the next available outing and have participated in many since. I’m really drawn to the concept of wilderness preservation and have found the staff within AWC to be very dedicated and passionate about their involvement in helping to preserve our natural heritage. They are all hard workers and a real pleasure to work with.

Jeanie: We found AWC at slide presentation at REI one evening a few years ago. When we became familiar with the AWC mission, we both said “of course we’re interested,” because it fits right in with our core values. I think it’s everyone responsibility to give back, and it’s so much fun to be around like-minded people. We volunteer as much as we can and hope to make more room in our schedule as time goes on. We feel, as AWC does, that this is serious work, and educating and keeping the mission in front of the public is a big key to its success.

### What do you perceive are some of the biggest threats to wilderness in Arizona? Why do you feel wilderness is/should be relevant to people’s lives?

John: The biggest threats I see to Arizona wilderness are human population pressures resulting in expanding urban development. I believe it is imperative that we control ‘sprawl’ in order to protect some of the wilderness that is left and retain the ‘wildness’ that Arizona is known for. I think our yearning for a wilderness experience is rather innate and is reflected in the popularity of our national and state park systems. People really have a need to be a part of and to connect with nature. Through that connection, we sense the interconnection of all life and our dependence on our natural systems for our very survival. I believe it really gives us comfort and solace to have a



Jeanie and John enjoy some winter outdoor time. Photo: The Watkins

# Short Takes

## Meet Paula, Our Membership Guru

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition proudly introduces our new Membership Coordinator Paula Toffolo, who asks you to join her as a new member of AWC!

I grew up on the upper peninsula of Michigan and in upstate New York, where tall trees, deep snows, and big lakes were playgrounds for me and my friends. However, when I came to Tucson in 1993, the Sonoran Desert worked its beguiling magic on me and I grew to love the soft greens and dry air of southern Arizona. I'm continually amazed by the variety of beautiful landscapes the state has to offer. As the newest member of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition staff, I am very excited to be working to grow the membership and strength of this organization that works to protect such amazing natural treasures.



This fall we're launching a major membership campaign, reaching out to citizens across the state in a variety of ways to find those folks who love Arizona's wild lands and will join us as we work to ensure that they are protected and intact for future generations. We may even knock on your door!

## Welcome Liana, Our New AmeriCorps Staff Member

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition welcomes Liana MacNeill to our Phoenix office this fall. She comes to us through the Public Allies program, funded through AmeriCorps and ASU's Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation. She will be with our office for approximately 10 months



of service, doing outreach and organizing on Sonoran Desert issues.

I am both honored and excited to be the new Sonoran Desert Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator at AWC! My undergraduate activities have centered around foreign language, the arts, and the Arizona Hispanic community. However, environmental issues have grown increasingly more important to me and the need to get involved more apparent in the last few years.

Through self-education and awareness of global environmental issues I became very concerned with the state of the land I've lived on my entire life—Arizona. Living in Arizona for more than 22 years, I have experienced first-hand the effects of Phoenix's population explosion—urban sprawl, pollution, abuse of water privileges and over-use of natural areas, to name a few—on my native landscape. It is upsetting, but also the inspiration for dedicating my time and energy to this position. I feel that working for the Arizona Wilderness Coalition is an amazing opportu-



John, at left, tackles a fallen log with a fellow volunteer on an AWC service project in Castle Creek Wilderness. Photo: Sam Frank

wilderness experience. We must understand that if we destroy nature and wilderness, we are destroying a very real part of ourselves.

Jeanie: I feel that the biggest threats to wilderness anywhere are over-population and poor management. Wilderness areas are necessary to teach our children and their children about nature. They are retreats to maintain our sanity and learn reverence.

### What has been your favorite event/volunteer outing with us so far?

John: I would be hard pressed to pick a favorite as each event and area is rather unique. Certainly one of our recent and more memorable events was our backpack into Sycamore Canyon. We were caught in one of those "10% chance of rain" thunderstorms with lots of lightning striking all around while we were carrying various metal work tools over a very rocky river bed. Although it lasted only a short while we ended up totally soaked before getting to the camp site.

Jeanie: My favorite event was with Sam [Frank] and Jason [Williams] when we took horses and went to Sycamore Canyon. Even though conditions weren't the best because of stormy weather, we got some important work done next to some fantastic people. We came home even more excited about the trip and why we're involved with AWC.

### What do you feel volunteering with us adds to your lives?

John: Basically, volunteering with AWC gives me great personal satisfaction in knowing that what we are doing IS making a real difference. Whether we're cutting new hiking trails, maintaining old trails, or erecting signage, what we do is helping to make it a more enjoyable wilderness experience not only for today but for future generations. It's all about being part of the community and giving back to make it better for all. Also, just having the opportunity to see and visit many of Arizona's wilderness areas has been quite rewarding.

Jeanie: Volunteering with AWC has brought me back to my roots. It's given me a vehicle to share with others—a way for them to get involved and pass it on as well.

*Volunteering with the AWC gives me the opportunity to get outside, do some hard work, and have some fun with some like-minded, caring individuals. For me, being in the wilderness is like going to church: it's a sacred place, a place that truly soothes the soul.*

—John Watkins



Photo: The Watkins

nity for me to help restore Arizona's lands to their state of natural beauty, while educating and reconnecting Arizona's public with the environment they live in. I look forward to meeting you all soon!

**Backcountry Exploration and Photography Adventure on the Verde River**

This exciting and rugged overnight fall workshop (not for the wilderness beginner!) will focus on the natural history of the Verde River, with special instruction from local photography experts on techniques for capturing moving water and foliage along the river. The Verde River watershed is one of the most valuable and threatened watersheds in Arizona, and the Arizona Wilderness Coalition is working to raise awareness and support for protecting a variety of habitat areas along the Upper Verde.

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is offering a natural history talk about the Verde River watershed and the threats it faces around a campfire on Saturday evening, November 7th. The following morning—bright and early!—photography experts will share their skills with workshop participants along a flowing segment of the Verde River. Experts are Flagstaff-based Elias Butler ([www.eliasbutler.com](http://www.eliasbutler.com)); Phoenix-based Mark Miller, whose work is seen throughout AWC's website and glossy brochure; and Glendale-based Jim Witkowski ([www.jimwitkowski.com](http://www.jimwitkowski.com)). Participants are to bring their own equipment, self-portable, over sometimes rocky and wet terrain. Full trip details at [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org).

The educational fee for the workshop is \$100 for non-AWC members; the fee for active AWC members is \$75. AWC is grateful to our three photographers for donating their skills and time for this event to support our wilderness advocacy work; 100% of proceeds goes to AWC to help us fund outreach and protection in the Verde River watershed.

Capacity is limited for this trip to keep our impact on the riparian area of the river to a minimum. For more information, please contact Kate Mackay at 602-252-5530.

**Jason Williams Named Wilderness Ranger of the Year by USFS Region 3**

AWC's former Central Mountains-Sonoran Regional Director Jason Williams has been named Wilderness Ranger of the Year by the U.S. Forest Service Region III.

"Jason's efforts to involve volunteers and build relationships throughout the wilderness community were a key aspect of his selection," says Tom Dwyer, Wilderness, Trails, Wild & Scenic Rivers Program Manager for the USFS Southwestern region. "It's only through collaboration and coalitions that we will be successful in assuring wilderness gets the management attention, and protection, it needs and deserves."

Jason's selection was based upon his efforts this year in support of professional wilderness management on the Prescott National Forest. Jason will receive a free pair of shoes from KEEN Footwear, an outdoor gear company based in Portland, Oregon, that practices a corporate culture of social responsibility around three key areas: environment, community, and growth. KEEN honors their employees' commitment to volunteerism, supports local communities, and embraces corporate responsibility. Congratulations, Jason!



Photo: Erin Lotz

**Giving the Easy Way**

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition's monthly giving program is the convenient, hassle-free way to donate. Simply sign up below and we will automatically charge a monthly, quarterly, or annual gift to your credit or debit card.

Automatic giving saves paper, postage, and time spent signing and mailing checks. Plus, it puts more of your donation directly to work to protect Arizona's wild places. Automatic giving also allows you to divide larger contributions into manageable monthly payments. For example:

- \$5 per month = \$60 per year for wilderness
- \$30 quarterly = \$120 per year for wilderness
- \$25 per month = \$300 per year for wilderness!

Arizona's extraordinarily special wild places need protection now more than ever as our state experiences an explosion of growth and development. Your support as a monthly donor ensures that the Arizona Wilderness Coalition has the resources necessary to respond to threats to wilderness whenever and wherever they occur.

Thank you.

.....  
**Yes!** I want to donate to the Arizona Wilderness Coalition with easy monthly payments of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to be charged to my credit/debit card

Monthly     Quarterly     Annually

Card number:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on card:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Billing address for card:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Please clip and mail the completed form to AWC, P.O. Box 40340, Tucson, AZ 85717

You can easily cancel at any time with a simple phone call to the Arizona Wilderness Coalition.

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

**What Membership Means**

With the growing strength of our members behind us, the Arizona Wilderness Coalition is able to fight for wilderness when it really counts. When the Omnibus legislation was working its way through Congress at the beginning of 2009, Kevin Gaither-Banchoff was in Washington, D.C. advocating for Fossil Creek's Wild & Scenic designation. Without our active members, he would not have been able to make the case that Arizonans treasure our irreplaceable wild rivers like Fossil Creek. Together we will work to give more of our beautiful, quiet places the highest level of protection they can receive—for wildlife and for people. Over the coming years, our members will enable us to secure new Arizona wilderness and Wild & Scenic designations.

The more members we have, the stronger case for wilderness we can make to congressional representatives and land managers: we make it apparent that citizens in their districts care about and are willing to take action for wild places. With our members' generous contributions, the Arizona Wilderness Coalition will continue to expand our efforts to save the remaining wilderness in our state.

**Are YOU a member?**

You become a member of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition with your annual membership gift of \$25 or more. With this simple action, you join a dedicated community of people that is working to protect the special places in nature that you love, sometimes use, and always know exist for the plants and animals that make wilderness home. With membership comes a commitment on your side – a yearly membership contribution at least, but also your time and energy, if you are able to commit those things – and on our side as well: the many benefits, direct and indirect, that our members receive.

Our members are updated about Arizona's wild places with our biannual newsletter and email alerts. They receive perks including invitations to events like hikes and campouts, and special discounts, for example to our Wild & Scenic film festival event. We also inform our members about wilderness policy issues and give them the opportunity to have direct input into land management agencies' planning processes. But most of all members of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition have the satisfaction of knowing that they are making the difference in saving our state's wild beautiful lands and waters – one membership at a time.



## WILDERNESS VOICES

# American Life in Poetry: Column 203

by Ted Kooser, U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004–2006



Photo of Ted Kooser, [www.tedkooser.net](http://www.tedkooser.net)

To read in the news that a platoon of soldiers has been killed is a terrible thing, but to learn the name of just one of them makes the news even more vivid and sad. To hold the name of someone or something on our lips is a powerful thing. It is the badge of individuality and separateness. Charles Harper Webb, a California poet, takes advantage of the power of naming in this poem about the steady extinction of animal species.

### The Animals are Leaving

One by one, like guests at a late party  
They shake our hands and step into the dark:  
Arabian ostrich; Long-eared kit fox; Mysterious starling.  
One by one, like sheep counted to close our eyes,  
They leap the fence and disappear into the woods:  
Atlas bear; Passenger pigeon; North Island laughing owl;  
Great auk; Dodo; Eastern wapiti; Badlands bighorn sheep.  
One by one, like grade school friends,  
They move away and fade out of memory:  
Portuguese ibex; Blue buck; Auroch; Oregon bison;  
Spanish imperial eagle; Japanese wolf; Hawksbill  
Sea turtle; Cape lion; Heath hen; Raiatea thrush.  
One by one, like children at a fire drill, they march outside,  
And keep marching, though teachers cry, "Come back!"  
Waved albatross; White-bearded spider monkey;  
Pygmy chimpanzee; Australian night parrot;  
Turquoise parakeet; Indian cheetah; Korean tiger;  
Eastern harbor seal; Ceylon elephant; Great Indian rhinoceros.  
One by one, like actors in a play that ran for years  
And wowed the world, they link their hands and bow  
Before the curtain falls.

—Charles Harper Webb

American Life in Poetry is made possible by The Poetry Foundation ([www.poetryfoundation.org](http://www.poetryfoundation.org)), publisher of Poetry magazine. It is also supported by the Department of English at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Poem copyright © 2006 by Charles Harper Webb. Reprinted from "Amplified Dog," by Charles Harper Webb, published by Red Hen Press, 2006, by permission of the author and publisher. Introduction copyright © 2009 by The Poetry Foundation. The introduction's author, Ted Kooser, served as United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 2004-2006. American Life in Poetry ©2006 The Poetry Foundation



Black footed ferrets are one of North America's most endangered mammals. In Arizona, 90% of their diet consists of Gunnison's prairie dogs, and ferret numbers have rapidly declined due to sagebrush habitat loss and prairie dog population control. Photo of captive ferret: USFWS

## WILDERNESS PROFILE

# Hells Canyon Wilderness

by Danica Norris

Located just northwest of Lake Pleasant, Hells Canyon Wilderness is the closest and most easily accessible wilderness to metro Phoenix. Even so, this wilderness sees few visitors and offers an easy escape from the concrete, traffic, and crowds of the city. Designated in 1990 as part of the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act, this 9,900-acre wilderness consists of a scenic portion of the Hieroglyphic Mountain Range. Numerous peaks, including Garfias and Hellsgate Mountains, surround the canyons and washes at an elevation of 3,000 feet, essentially isolating the area from the surrounding countryside and giving it a feel of remoteness.

Hells Canyon is a desert wilderness with only a few perennial water sources springing to life in the winter and after rains. Javelina, gila monsters, mule deer, and ground squirrels dart about early in the mornings, but watch for rattlers sunning themselves later in the day. Hohokam petroglyphs, remnants of old cattle operations, and mining trails give silent glimpses into Hells Canyon's past life, but the wild burro herd, still thriving decades after the prospectors are gone, remains vocal and is hard to miss.

The peaks of the area and relative isolation make this area ideal for climbers, hikers, hunters, and horseback riders. Camping is plentiful but primitive among the familiar Sonoran Desert vegetation of saguaros, ocotillos, and palo verde trees.

The perfect time to visit this area, as with all areas of the Sonoran Desert, is from November through February when the temperatures make the lack of shade bearable. Consider exploring Hells Canyon this winter...you'll be glad you found such a beautiful area so close to home.

Danica is AWC's community organizer working on protection of the Sonoran Desert in western Maricopa County.

Garfias Wash in Hells Canyon Wilderness.  
Photo: Susan Harnage





## Whitewater Rafting in the Salt River Wilderness!

We offer 1/2 day, full day and overnight rafting adventures up to 5 days in length. No Tubing Trips Here!

March through May trips through the exciting whitewater of the Upper Salt River Canyon, the best rafting in the region.

Call or Click Today!  
1-800-231-7238  
inaraft.com



## Get Out There



Join AWC for an exciting line-up of fall and winter 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 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](http://www.azwild.org) to sign up for our action alerts, if you haven't already!

**Please Note: cancellations due to fire restrictions, weather, or agency policies are always possible. Please check with the trip leader on status before signing up.**

### Butterfield Stage Pass Restoration

Join us at this historic area inside the Sonoran Desert National Monument to repair damage from irresponsible off-road vehicle use. The Butterfield Stage Pass area is one of AWC's citizen-proposed wilderness inventory areas. Both the Juan de Anza National Historic Trail and the Margie's Cove Trail through the North Maricopa Mountains Wilderness area are accessible from the Butterfield Stage Pass area. These projects go from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. Camping and hiking are allowed for volunteers before and after the event, but campers should plan to bring their own food, water, and overnight gear.

For more information on these volunteer service projects, contact Liana MacNeill at 602-252-5530. She can also be reached via email at [Liana@azwild.org](mailto:Liana@azwild.org).

- Saturday, November 14th
- Sunday, November 15th
- Saturday, November 20th
- Sunday, November 21st
- Saturday, December 5th
- Saturday, December 12th
- Sunday, December 13th
- Saturday, January 23rd
- Sunday, January 24th

### Sonoran Desert National Monument Restoration

The monument has seen significant damage from dumping, reckless shooting, and irresponsible off-road vehicle use. A significant portion of the monument was closed last year to give volunteers time to restore and recover the area. These projects go from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. Camping and hiking are allowed for volunteers before and after the event, but campers should plan to bring their own food, water, and overnight gear. Specific location will be determined based on how much work we accomplish during November, December, and January.

For more information on these volunteer service projects, contact Liana MacNeill at 602-252-5530. She can also be reached via email at [Liana@azwild.org](mailto:Liana@azwild.org).

- Saturday, February 6th
- Sunday, February 7th
- Saturday, February 20th
- Sunday, February 21st
- Saturday, February 27th
- Sunday, February 28th
- Saturday, March 6th
- Sunday, March 7th

### Hells Canyon Wilderness Expedition and Restoration

**Saturday & Sunday, January 30-31**

Come explore this rugged wilderness area just north of Phoenix with a long-time native of the area. This will be an overnight camping trip for participants. More details & information will be posted on our website later this fall. For more information, contact Liana MacNeill at 602-252-5530. She can also be reached via email at [Liana@azwild.org](mailto:Liana@azwild.org).

### Sand Tanks Wildland Inventory and Trash Clean-up

**Saturday, February 13th**

The Sand Tank Mountains, inside the Sonoran Desert National Monument, are one of the most beautiful and ecologically intact areas of Sonoran Desert in Maricopa County. It is also an AWC citizen-proposed wilderness inventory area. However, this area is seeing increased use, trash dumping, and other damage.

Join us on Saturday, February 13th to inventory this area and pick up trash. Four-wheel drive, high-clearance vehicles are required for this trip. However, we will set up carpooling options. Bring your camera! For more information, contact Liana MacNeill at 602-252-5530. She can also be reached via email at [Liana@azwild.org](mailto:Liana@azwild.org).

# Join Us to Celebrate and Support Wilderness Protection at AWC's Fall Fundraiser!

Thursday, November 12  
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
at



2013 E. Camelback Rd., Phoenix  
(in the Town and Country Shopping Center)

Sign Up or Renew Your AWC Membership and Enter to Win Special Prize Packages, including:

.....  
A multi-day guided backpacking trip in AZ with Wapiti™ powered by Canyon Tough™

.....  
A 1-day class III & IV whitewater rafting trip on the Salt River with Wilderness Aware Rafting™ — and more!

Evening includes:

- Photography show by Elias Butler
- Beer from Four Peaks Brewing Company™
- Organic Wine Tasting
- Appetizers from Cypress Grill
- Freedom to Roam presentation

With generous support from:

- Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation
- patagonia by Ducksback
- Four Peaks Brewing Co.
- Elias Butler Photography
- Wilderness Aware Rafting
- Wapiti & Canyon Tough
- Arizona Highways
- HiFi Sales Audio Video



## Become a Member!

Join us! You become a member with your yearly membership gift of \$25 or more. When you become a member you enter a community of dedicated people working to protect the special places you love and use and wish to pass along intact to future generations.

As a member you'll receive our biannual newsletter, as well as regular email updates and announcements on wilderness-related events and opportunities to take action for wild lands and waters. You will also enjoy discounts to events like our Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festivals, conferences, and special invitations to hikes and campouts.

**But most of all, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that with your membership you strengthen the case for wilderness protection for the places you love.** When you join your voice and your resources with those of so many others across Arizona you send the message to members of Congress and land managers that citizens in their districts treasure wild places and are willing to take action for them.

Yes! I want to:

- Become a member
- Renew my membership
- Become a monthly donor by credit/debit card - the easiest (and "greenest") way to join
- Make a one-time gift

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email\* \_\_\_\_\_

\*Our updates, Action Alerts and event notices are done via email to save costs, reduce paper waste, and to reach our members as quickly as possible. You may choose to stop receiving our email announcements at any time.

Enclosed is gift of:

\$250     \$100     \$50     \$25 Basic Membership     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: **Arizona Wilderness Coalition**  
Online gifts can be made at [www.azwild.org](http://www.azwild.org)  
Contributions to the Arizona Wilderness Coalition are tax deductible.

**I want to volunteer!** What are your interests and skills? (Please check all that apply.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Volunteer         | <input type="checkbox"/> Wild Land Inventory                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events            | <input type="checkbox"/> Trail Work (or other physical work) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing/Publishing        | <input type="checkbox"/> Letter Writing                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Naturalist or Hike Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography/Art/Graphic Design      |

**Mailing preferences?** (Please check any that apply.)

- Do not mail semi-annual newsletter.
- Do not share\*  
(\*We occasionally share addresses with like-minded conservation groups for one-time mailings.)

Cut and mail this form with your payment in to:  
Arizona Wilderness Coalition  
PO Box 40340 Tucson, AZ 85717

On behalf of Arizona's Wilderness,  
*thank you.*



NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

# ARIZONA WILD

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### 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.

### What is a Wild and Scenic river?

To be eligible for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, a river must be free-flowing and contain at least one “outstandingly remarkable value,” i.e., scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar value. The Act mandates that selected rivers be preserved in a free-flowing condition and be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. Today, approximately 600,000 miles of once free-flowing rivers (approximately 17% of the America’s rivers) have been altered by 60,000 dams.

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## ARIZONA WILD

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Saddle Mountain hikers enjoy a wilderness-quality area west of Phoenix. Photo: AWC