**Diane Joens Receives State Parks Award**

During a 50th Anniversary Celebration at the Arizona State Capitol on March 28th, State Parks Director Ken Travous and Verde River Greenway Coordinator Max Castillo presented Cottonwood Mayor-Elect Diane Joens with the Third Annual State Parks Best Friend Award. The award recognizes a volunteer or group of volunteers who have contributed significantly to the support of a park, natural area, or the agency as a whole either with substantial fundraising efforts or outstanding advocacy support.

Joens received the award for her advocacy for the Verde River Greenway and the Verde River and leadership for Stewards of Public Lands river and ephemeral wash cleanups. Her participation in the Dead Horse Ranch Trails Coalition and the Cocopai Resource Conservation and Development Verde Valley Trails Action Team was also noted during the ceremony. Joens was also the publisher of the Verde River Almanac, a community project with the goal of connecting people to the Verde River. State Parks first presented the award in 2005 to Ron Hummel, president of Friends of Sonoita Creek. In 2006, the Benefactors of Red Rock State Park were recognized.

“Dead Horse Ranch State Park and the Verde River Greenway play a significant role in the quality of life for Cottonwood and Verde Valley residents,” Joens says. “We are fortunate to have Fort Verde, Red Rock, Slide Rock and Jerome State Parks for the enjoyment of our residents. Arizona State Parks support our local area economy and our tourism industry,” she emphasizes.

VWA members appreciate the years of volunteer effort that she has given. She is a former Vice-Chairman of VWA, has been editor of the Verde Currents, and still finds time to serve as Webmaster for the VWA website. In addition she represents the City of Cottonwood on the Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee.

Joens has indicated an interest in the establishment of a Friends of the Verde River Greenway group in conjunction with the Arizona State Parks.
The City of Cottonwood and Town of Clarkdale are co-sponsoring a free presentation on Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands on Thursday April 19th at 7pm at the Clark Memorial Clubhouse located in downtown Clarkdale. Admission is free.

Noted water conservation expert, Brad Lancaster, author of the acclaimed new book, *Harvesting Rainwater for Drylands* will be leading the presentation. On Lancaster’s 1/8th acre lot in downtown Tucson, he personally harvests 100,000 gallons of rainwater a year and has created an oasis without need for additional watering.

Lancaster’s presentations are known for their informative, easy to understand, enthusiastic and inspiring style. Please attend this very special and informative presentation to learn more about the ways in which these techniques are being used to transform the southwest desert environment. Come learn how we all can all benefit from Rainwater Harvesting.

Brad Lancaster is a water conservation and permaculture expert, teacher and designer who has taught at the University of Arizona, ECOSA Institute, Prescott College and Columbia University. He also helped design the Stone Curves and Milagro housing developments in Tucson. [http://www.harvestingrainwater.com](http://www.harvestingrainwater.com)
Upper Verde River Watershed Protection Coalition

Six Prescott-area governmental groups—Town of Chino Valley, Town of Prescott Valley, City of Prescott, Town of Dewey-Humboldt, Yavapai County, and the Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe—have signed an intergovernmental agreement to form and fund the Upper Verde River Watershed Protection Coalition. Their stated mission (presentation to the Verde Watershed Association, March 21, 2007) is to “Protect the base flow of the Upper Verde River to the maximum extent possible through the implementation of scientifically supported best management practices (BMP) pertaining to the utilization and conservation of all the water resources within the Upper Verde Watershed area.”

The Coalition, represented by an elected official from each of its member groups, meets monthly. Staff support is provided by water-resource managers of Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Chino Valley and the coordinator of the Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee.

The Coalition has identified six projects to pursue over the next three years. At its monthly meeting of March 28, 2007, the staff proposed for consideration the following prioritization of these projects:

Year 1
--Develop water conservation plans and programs.
--Examine existing Big Chino hydrologic monitoring network and design expanded network.

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Watershed Coalition Cont’d from pg 3

Year 2
--Identify natural recharge areas for protection.
--Identify artificial recharge sites and assess feasibility.

Year 3
--Examine the feasibility of a flood detention project.
--Research healthy watershed management approaches (watershed restoration)

In addition, at the March 28 meeting, the staff proposed hiring either a full-time program manager/coordinator of hiring a consulting firm to manage the Coalition programs. The representatives are to return after weighing with their respective councils both the program priorities and the program management issue. Edward W. Wolfe ewolfe@commspeed.net

Verde Reservoir Storage

As of March 27th, Verde Reservoir storage was 77,112 acre-feet which is 27% of capacity. Year-to-date SNOTEL Precipitation on the Verde Watershed is 53% of normal and current snow water equivalent is 7% of normal.

Verde inflow from January through March was approximately 45,000 acre-feet which is 29% of median. Only 20,000 acre-feet of inflow are forecasted for April and May. Unless significant wet storms develop on the Verde Watershed in April and May the current runoff forecast for January through May, 2007 is for only 65,000 acre-feet or 30% of median. The resulting 65,000 acre-feet of runoff on the Verde River for January through May 2007 would be just 4000 acre-feet more than 2006 and rank as the 5th lowest for the period of record. Contributed by Tim Skarupa, SRP

Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee Actions

At its January 17, 2007, meeting the Water Advisory Committee proposed accepting a contract, subsequently approved by the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors, with Hoyt Johnson (H3J Consulting) for preparation of long-term development scenarios in the Verde River watershed in Yavapai and Coconino Counties. The $60,000 project involves building a GIS database that incorporates such parameters as existing and projected population and land-use information from jurisdictions, communities that have community plans, and land-management agencies; roads, current and future (where available); water bodies; topography; and vegetation. The database will provide a platform from which to develop growth models, critically including how future population through 2050 may be distributed within the watershed. That, in turn, provides an invaluable basis for development of water-demand scenarios—location, volume, and timing of future ground-water demands—that will provide input to the regional ground-water model currently under preparation by the U.S. Geological Survey and expected to be completed later this year.

At its February 21, 2006 meeting the Water Advisory Committee proposed providing a grant of $13,200, subsequently approved by the Board of Supervisors, to Arizona Project WET (Water Education for Teachers; http://cals.arizona.edu:80/AZWATER/wet/). This grant matches an equal one from the Prescott Active Management Area and makes the program county-wide. The program aims to support teachers with training and curriculum materials designed to promote responsible water stewardship through excellent and effective water education.

Membership Form for the Verde Watershed Association

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Make check payable and mail to:
Verde Watershed Association
P.O. Box 4001
Cottonwood, AZ 86326

Name: ___________________________ Phone: ___________________________
Mailing Address: ___________________________ Fax: ___________________________
City, State, Zip: ___________________________
E-mail address to receive the Verde Currents E-Newsletter: ___________________________

Web site: www.vwa.org