

Verde Watershed Currents

October - December 2006

Volume 11 Issue 1

VERDE WATERSHED FACTS

The Verde River derives its surface flow from 6,600 square miles in central Arizona. The more than 4.4 million acre watershed contains some of the most diverse natural and cultural resources in the Southwest United States.

--*The Confluence*, May 1994

Verde Watershed Association
P.O. Box 4001
Cottonwood, AZ 86326

Chair **Ed Wolfe** @
ewwolfe@commspeed.net
or Ph: (928) 776-4754

Vice-Chair **Dan Campbell**
Sec. Treas. **Carol Johnson**

Liaisons:

Upper Verde **Art Coates**
Prescott Area **John Munderloh**
Middle Verde **Brenda Hauser**
Lower Verde **Greg Kornrumpf**
Currents Editor & Webmaster
Diane Joens
dianej@sedona.net
(928) 634-4112
Currents Editorial Committee
Loyd Barnett, Ed Wolfe

We're on the Web!
www.vwa.org

SRP Describes Verde Watershed Monsoon as Ho-Hum

After a terribly dry winter, all eyes in Arizona watched intently for the beginning of the Arizona monsoon and the promise of at least temporary drought relief. Arizonans were not disappointed as the monsoon arrived early, beginning July 2 in Phoenix, and lasting through September 14. The average start and end dates are July 7 and September 12. Throughout most of Arizona, the monsoon was quite productive and resulted in well above normal precipitation. This was most apparent in southeast Arizona where intense rains caused huge floods around the end of July. Across the Verde watershed, precipitation was not quite as generous. For the summer period, June 1 through Sept. 18, the Verde watershed averaged 6.75 inches which is right about the long term average. Runoff into Horseshoe Lake for the July and August period was 98% of normal. In the Oak Creek Canyon area, monsoon storms on several occasions caused rock and debris slides across US 89A as a result of the June Brins fire in the Wilson Mountain vicinity. The Salt River Watershed



CHARLIE ESTER
SRP WATER
RESOURCES
MANAGER

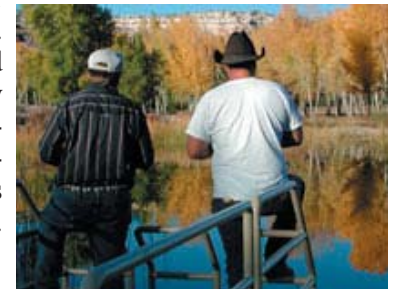
did much better—for summer—with a huge increase in storage. In comparison, on the Verde the monsoon story was fairly ho-hum and pretty much “normal.”

Charlie Ester: SRP Water Resources Manager @ ceester@srpnet.com.

VWA Membership Drive Planned for Verde River Days

Stop by the Verde Watershed Association booth at Verde River Days, Sept. 30, at Dead Horse Ranch State Park, to say hello to other members and renew your membership. VWA will hold drawings for the Verde River video to be shown at the event.

The goals of the VWA are to preserve and to protect the Verde River and its watershed by means of local initiative and control while using its water resources in a sustainable productive way, avoiding long-term damage or loss of productivity through misuse or overuse.



UPDATE ON 2006 VWA ACTIVITIES:

Collaborating with other water organizations and Yavapai County, VWA launched the Verde River Basin Partnership during a February 2006 forum in Camp Verde. In March VWA hosted members of the Upper San Pedro Partnership to gather information to further advance the formation of the Partnership. In April, Clarkdale Mayor Doug Von Gausig gave VWA a tour of Tavasci Marsh and Tuzigoot. In May, a presentation on the Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic campaign was held in Camp Verde. In September, VWA heard a presentation by Max Castillo about Arizona State Parks' natural areas program and expanding the Verde River Greenway.

Besides keeping up-to-date on watershed activities, VWA is a great place to

**FISHERMEN ENJOY FALL
DAY AT DEAD HORSE RANCH
STATE PARK**

Verde River Days 2006

Dead Horse Ranch State Park will celebrate its 18th annual Verde River Days on Saturday, Sept. 30. The park will be open to the public at no cost.

The activities during Verde River Days promote preservation and care of the environment by showcasing informative exhibits on the Verde's riparian environment and current recycling efforts. Some of the day's events include environmental exhibits, hands-on-activities and live entertainment.

The celebration brings together 40-plus nature-based exhibits, a menagerie of live animals, non-stop activities from organized canoe rides and sand castle building to geology tours, as well as local food vendors from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Guests of all ages are welcome to fish in the lagoon that is loaded with hundreds of pounds of catfish. No fishing license is needed during the scheduled clinic hours. Poles, bait, and tackle are provided for all ages. Visitors may also experience nature's history through guided tours, nature walks, and short hikes.

Each year the festival provides hands-on, participatory activities including canoe rides, a horseshoe tournament, and a hands-on pottery session that attracts crowds of participants and spectators. A climbing wall is available for rock climbers from beginner to expert. The event also includes panning for real gold with the help of expert instruction. There will be a vintage trailer club exhibiting teardrop and vintage trailers from yesteryear. And, for the

Continued on Page 3

Continued...VWA Sponsors Booth at Verde River Days

meet other people who have a common goal to save the Verde River. Membership forms are available on the Web and at Verde River Days events. Look for VWA's banner Sept. 30. See you there! **Carol Johnson: Secretary-Treasurer @ Cjinsedona@aol.com or Ph: (928) 634-6106.**

Water Consortium Plans Statewide Lobbying Efforts

The North Central Arizona Regional Watershed Consortium (NCARWC) is moving forward with its campaign to initiate a statewide collaborative effort in lobbying state and local governments regarding regional water management issues. Please visit NCARWC's Web site at www.WatershedConsortium.org for more details. Meetings are held the third Saturday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled Oct. 21, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Jerome Fire Station. Everyone is welcome. **Brian Lane: President @ hikernut@commspeed.net.**



Sedona Promotes Water Wise Program

Sedona is serious about water conservation as evidenced by its *Sedona Is Water Wise* program with special thanks to Sedona Women and Keep Sedona Beautiful for their contributions. **Mayor Pud Colquitt @ pcolquitt@sedonaaz.gov. - Web site <http://www.sedonaaz.gov>**

Cottonwood Prepares Drought Management Plan

After purchasing, merging and managing four privately owned water companies as one municipal utility, the city of Cottonwood is finalizing a Drought Management Plan. The city is also planning its conservation and water management plans. **Dan Lueder: Utilities Director @dlueder@ci.cottonwood.az.us.**

ADWR's Prescott AMA Office is Fully Staffed and Busy

Rural Watershed Initiative Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) Prescott Active Management Area (PRAMA) staff continues to work closely with the USGS to maintain hydrologic equipment in the watershed and to develop the Northern Arizona Regional Ground-Water Flow Model. See link for the latest publication, Hydrogeology of the Upper and Middle Verde River Watersheds, Central Arizona <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2005/5198/> **Leslie Graser @ (928) 778-7202.**

Drought and Conservation-Central Yavapai County Water Festival - This event is being held for 4th graders in the Chino Valley, Humboldt, Prescott and Mayer Unified School Districts. Arizona Water Festivals are structured celebrations of water that educate students through hands-on activities. Oct. 6, 2006 from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. **Crystal Frost @ (928) 778-7202.**

Local Area Impact Assessment Groups (LAIAG) are county-level groups that will coordinate drought public awareness, provide impact assessment information to local and state leaders, and implement and initiate local mitigation and response options. First meeting will be held on September 26, 2006 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Information about LAIAGs is available online at <http://www.azwater.gov/dwr/drought/LAIAG.html> **Crystal Frost @ (928) 778-7202.**

first time, the Arizona Civil War Council will have a re-enactment group encamped on the park at the west lagoon.

A group of Cottonwood residents first organized Verde River Days in 1988 to promote awareness of the Verde River's distinctive riparian habitat where 85% of all wildlife in the area looks for sustenance.

Approximately 4,000 local and out-of-area visitors enjoy this free event. For more information about Verde River Days call (928) 634-5283. For more information about Arizona State Parks visit www.azstateparks.com.

Ecological Flow Assessment for the Verde River

When: 1:00 to 5:00 Tuesday, Oct. 3

Where: Crossroads Center at Prescott College (behind Admin buildings on Grove St.)

Speakers: 1. Ecological Flows and the Natural Flow Patterns, Jeanmarie Haney, TNC; 2. Springs and Baseflow in the Verde River Watershed, Abe Springer, NAU; 3. Floods, Channels and Floodplains, Phil Pearthree, AZ State Geological Survey; 4. Riparian Vegetation and Hydrologic Measures, Julie Stromberg, ASU. 5. Wildlife Resource Values of the Verde River-Brenda Smith, US Fish and Wildlife. Details available at http://www.vwa.org/ecological_flow.htm.

Low Water Use, Drought Tolerant Plant List. A group of local experts revised the list and released the document in April 2006. The list is intended for zones from 4,400' to 7,800'. The document can be found at the Prescott AMA office or online at http://www.azwater.gov/dwr/Content/Find_by_Program/Drought_and_Conservation/LowWaterPlantLists/PrescottAMA/PRAMA_Plant_List_4-06.pdf. **Crystal Frost @ (928) 778-7202.**

Identification of Historically Irrigated Acres in the Big Chino Sub-Basin and Discussion Regarding Transportation of Groundwater into the Prescott AMA. This document was released September 2006. Copies are available at the AMA office. At this time it is not available online. **Gerry Wildeman or Jack McCormack @ (928) 778-7202.**

Groundwater Users Advisory Council (GUAC) Safe-Yield Subcommittee This committee was formed by the GUAC in September of 2005. With its Technical Advisory Committee, it is examining and identifying the impediments and opportunities for achieving safe-yield. Next meeting is Oct. 17, 2006 at the AMA office. **Crystal Frost @ (928) 778-7202.**

VRPB Proposes Organization Structure

The Verde River Basin Partnership (VRBP) will hold its quarterly meeting Thursday, Oct. 12, 2006 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Camp Verde Multi Use Complex on Camp Lincoln Dr. The purpose of the meeting is to present a proposed structure for the Partnership to the stakeholders for discussion and, if possible, approval. Many proposals by a variety of stakeholders have been discussed at length by the VRBP Structure Committee and attendees. An Ad Hoc Committee compiled the proposals. Their report is available on the VRBP Web site at www.vrpartnership.org. The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) continues its work collaborating with the USGS and other scientific groups to prepare delivery of the products specified in Title II. The VRBP welcomes the cooperation and collaboration of all stakeholders in the Verde River Basin and acknowledges its many supporters. **Dorothy O'Brien: VRBP Communications Committee, @ dotobrien@commspeed.net.**

Paulden Area Community Organization (PACO) on Arsenic Watch

Members of the Paulden Area Community Organization (PACO) have had a scare concerning high levels of arsenic in some wells. John Kaminski of PACO reports, "Around last October a large amount of arsenic was found in the Wineglass area. Three wells tested high (3500 ppb.) I believe this is the greatest level anywhere in the world, at least this is what we were told at several meetings with county and state health representatives." The state health dept furnished PACO with a kit to sample arsenic. One kit samples 100 sites. They are on their second kit. Kaminski reports, "Nowhere did we find arsenic levels this high except in the Wineglass area in Paulden. The majority of Paulden tested in the range from 10 to 20 ppb although a few were as high as 80 ppb, and some tested as low as 5 ppb." The federal standard for water companies is now 10 ppb as of January 2006. There is not a standard for private exempt wells. **John Kaminski @ polishinpaulden@yahoo.com**

YC Board of Supervisors Approves USGS Funding Increase for Verde Study

The Water Advisory Committee and Yavapai County Board of Supervisors voted to amend the Joint Funding Agreement (JFA) with the U.S. Geological Survey to program an additional \$13K into the Kyle Blasch Verde Model study. USGS had surplus funds from another project and requested reprogramming it to the Verde project. WAC met in special session to refer the item to the Board of Supervisors. The additional funds did not increase the county or WAC's contribution, and was simply a change in the USGS contribution from \$40K to \$53K. John Rasmussen, WAC Coordinator @ john.rasmussen@co.yavapai.az.us.

Currents Newsletter Switches from Print to Electronic

The Verde Watershed Association has joined the electronic revolution. Embracing the electronic format will help VWA stretch dollars to spend on other needed water projects by saving on postage and printing costs. The Currents is published by volunteers. Items for publication may be submitted to Diane Joens, VWA Currents Editor @ dianej@sedona.net.

NAU's Geology Dept. Studies Middle Verde River Springs

The Geology Department at Northern Arizona University, with funding from Sustainability of semi-Arid Hydrology and Riparian Areas (SAHRA) at the University of Arizona has been studying the hydrologic significance of springs in the Middle Verde River watershed. Data including discharge, water quality parameters, and geochemical samples were collected from a set of springs in the watershed from 2002 to 2006. Data from the springs allow for interpretations of aquifer size, hydraulic conductivity, and sensitivity to climate change. Discharge trends from many of the studied springs mimic the patterns seen in stream gauges, reservoir levels, and precipitation in the Verde watershed, which are currently used by the State of Arizona's Governor's Drought Task Force to develop triggers to designate drought status levels. The data from the springs of the Middle Verde watershed are being used to develop a supplementary set of drought indicators and triggers to those currently used by the State. **NAU Graduate Student Steve Rice and Abe Springer, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Geology NAU Coordinator, Arizona Water Institute Northern Arizona University @ abe.springer@nau.edu or Ph: (928) 523-7198.**



NAU's Watershed Research & Education Program Funds Three Projects

Designing and Implementing a Long-Term Monitoring Plan for a Dam, Decommissioning on a Travertine-Depositing Stream at Fossil Creek, AZ. Nathan Schott, NAU Department of Geology.

Groundwater Flow Modeling in the Prescott Active Management Area: A Tool for the Development of Innovative Water Management Solutions Daniel L. Timmons, NAU Department of Environmental Science and Policy.

Characterization of Organic Wastewater Contaminants from Aqueous Samples. This project will focus on endocrine disruptors in Flagstaff reclaimed effluent, with an eye towards proposed use of reclaimed effluent by the Arizona Snowbowl. Jessica S. Creamer, NAU Department of Chemistry.

Charlie Schlinger, Associate Professor, Director, Watershed Research & Education Program Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering Northern Arizona University charles.schlinger@nau.edu watershed.nau.edu, , Web site <http://watershed.nau.edu/>

