

# Currents & Flow

JUNE 2018

Welcome to the second edition of the quarterly Friends newsletter, *Currents & Flow*.

## Exciting possibilities ahead.

In this issue, we're excited to reveal our new logo to promote our work of Sustaining Flows, Restoring Habitat, and Promoting Community in support of a healthy Verde River.

## A New Friends Logo

As with most organizations, growth brings change. In order to bring all of our programs under the Friends name and logo we had it redesigned, allowing for greater versatility in its use and broader recognition.

## Logo Launch Party.

**Save the date!  
August 11, 2018!!!**

Please join us for our logo launch party on Saturday, August 11th at Bueno Marketplace in Old Town Cottonwood.

Bueno Marketplace is the new retail outlet for official Friends merchandise including "I love the Verde River" tee-shirts and hats. Your purchase of any Friends branded merchandise goes to fund the work that we do for a healthy Verde.

Follow us on social media for updates on the party and our new merchandise line.



*Working Collaboratively for a Healthy Verde River*

## MISSION

Friends of the Verde River works collaboratively to restore habitat, sustain flows and promote community stewardship to support a healthy Verde River system.

*"The care of rivers is not a question of rivers but of the human heart."*

*- Shozo Tanaka*

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## Friends of the Verde River

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**VerdeRiver.org**

## A Message From the Executive Director

I love to travel. While I love having new experiences at favorite places, like hiking different trails in the Verde Valley or the same trails in different seasons, I also like to visit places I've never been before, places that are unfamiliar. I always have questions, like how do they get their water? What is the name of that bird? Why is the water polluted (or clean)? How do people make a living? What do they do for fun?



From left to right: Dominican farmer, Kimberly Schonek, TNC, Carlos Garcia, TNC DR Director, Scottsdale Mayor Jim Lane, Christian Stumpf, TNC, Diana Bermudez, TNC, Rebecca Garrett, TNC, & Nancy Steele.

There is something rewarding about stretching my boundaries and getting a little bit uncomfortable with the world. Maybe you've found yourself, as I have, going the wrong way on a subway in Busan, South Korea, or walking in circles in Paris, trying to find the starting point of a tour. Maybe you've upset your kayak in the river, laughing at yourself and vowing not to do that again. For me, the best trips are the ones where I learn about a new place, how people work, play, and get along with their world.

This June I was lucky to have been asked by our Arizona chapter of The Nature Conservancy to join them on their tour of the Dominican Republic. The purpose of the tour was to share knowledge and experience about people and projects for improving ecosystem conservation, biodiversity, and water quality and supply. TNC has pioneered a financial mechanism called a water fund, which is a market-based strategy to integrate people into conservation. The concept is simple in theory. The downstream users of water should willingly and voluntarily provide resources to conserve those areas that generate the water. The DR has two water funds, established in the Yaque Del Norte and the Santo Domingo watersheds.

With our TNC host, country director Carlos Garcia, we visited with the mayors, city councilmembers, farmers, and ranchers who are partners and recipients of water fund projects and business people who contribute to and sit on the boards of the water funds. We also met with staff of two local NGOs, Plan Yaque and Plan Sierra, each working in their communities to restore and conserve their respective watersheds. We saw projects as diverse as neighborhood scale waste water treatment systems to improve water quality, shade coffee production to prevent land degradation and support location communities, and reforestation of woodlands to allow for sustainable grazing (silvopasture) while preserving the ability of the soils to soak up rain.

I returned to the Verde Valley with my head buzzing about possibilities and new ways of achieving our goals, based on what I learned in the Dominican Republic. I am grateful to TNC for inviting me on this learning adventure. While this was a work trip, I did have a chance to visit one of the islands, go snorkeling, and dance Zumba on a catamaran. Fortunately, there are no pictures of that last experience!

May your summer be filled with experiences that answer your questions and enrich your life.

## Wine & Music



## \$20K Raised for Kids & Conservation!

This year, Eric Glomski and Page Springs Cellars partnered with Friends of the Verde River, Prescott Creeks and Yavapai Big Brothers/Big Sisters as beneficiary of this year's Tilted Earth Festival Silent Auction. Three organizations managed all aspects off the auction, from donation item collections, auction setup, bidding software setup, and clean up. Special thanks to all of our community partners that donated items and to all of you that bid! A special thanks to Laura Jones and Amanda Webster of Friends, and Michael Byrd and Oren Thomas of Prescott Creeks for making the auction such a success.

## Arizona's Wild & Scenic Rivers



Did you know that the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968?

“There are approximately 3.6 million miles of streams in the United States. Only 12,734 miles are protected by the **Wild & Scenic Rivers.**” (Rivers.gov)

Sections of the Verde River and Fossil Creek are designated *Wild & Scenic*. Help us to celebrate this 50th anniversary by joining us in continuing to protect the Verde River and its tributaries.

Learn more by visiting our website, [VerdeRiver.org](http://VerdeRiver.org).

# Collaborating for Riparian Health

Have you seen the new interpretive trail signs along the Jail Trail in Cottonwood? Friends of the Verde River partnered with The Nature Conservancy, REI, Arizona State Parks, and the City of Cottonwood and hosted volunteers from Prescott, Verde Valley and Phoenix metropolitan area to improve riparian habitat and recreation sites. This project was funded by REI and The Nature Conservancy.



Jail Trail Interpretive Sign - Photo by Selena Pao.

Volunteers had the choice of working on four distinct projects:

- **Jail Trail Signage:** The Jail Trail connects Old Town Cottonwood to Dead Horse Ranch State Park and River Front Park. This shaded mile walk brings visitors through the Cottonwood/Willow Gallery Forest along the Verde River. New interpretive signs were installed along the trail, so visitors have a better understanding of the unique riparian habitat of the Verde Valley. Volunteers did the heavy work, including transporting bags of concrete, tools and equipment, digging post holes, and everything involved to get the signs in place.
- **Dead Horse Ranch State Park Trail Maintenance:** One of the wonders of Dead Horse Ranch State Park is its diverse habitat. Mesquite Bosque meets riparian habitat. Volunteers worked to maintain a well-used trail off of the Owl Loop Day Use access area. This trail winds through shady hills and makes its way along the Verde River.
- **Tuzigoot National Monument:** Adjacent to Dead Horse Ranch State Park, Tuzigoot National Monuments boasts one of the few intact pueblo ruins in the Verde Valley. Volunteers started at Dead Horse Ranch State Park and walked to the monument along the Verde River. They then worked with park staff to remove invasive plants at Tavasci Marsh in an effort to support and encourage native vegetation.
- **River Front Park:** Volunteers blazed a new trail! Along the Cottonwood Ditch that runs along the boundary of River Front Park, volunteers began the first phase of starting a new trail that runs behind the Dog Park and Community Garden and winds its way to the Verde River at the 10th Street Bridge. This trail will be another wonderful way to find some shade along with some beautiful scenery.

In total, 57 volunteers worked for over 200 hours improving recreational resources across the public lands in Cottonwood. It was great to have locals and visitors come out and put boots on the ground working to improve our community. Thanks to everyone that came out and made the day so much fun and a great success.

# Promoting Community



## Local Businesses Supporting a Healthy Verde River

Our business partner program is changing. One For The Verde began under the concept of a one percent donation for items sold by local business partners. As the program has evolved, our business partners have found many ways to partner with Friends for river conservation. Our Conservation Partners host outreach events, donate product for fundraisers, educate visitors and the community and commit to making monthly donations via our online giving portal. Sign up and give now., [VerdeRiver.org](http://VerdeRiver.org).

## Conservation Partner Events

We're pleased to add "Hump Day Happy Hour" at **3 Kings Kasbar** in Cottonwood to our monthly schedule of events. The last Wednesday of every month, enjoy a beverage and support the Verde River.

### Save the Date

**July 12th** - Thirsty Thursday at The State Bar in Cottonwood.

**July 25th** - Hump Day Happy Hour at 3 Kings Kasbar.

**August 11th** - Logo launch party at Bueno Marketplace.



Isaac Dudley,  
Business Development Coordinator

## Conservation Partners

On Saturday, June 9th, **The State Bar** in Cottonwood held an all-day Music Festival event with proceeds benefiting the work of Friends of the Verde River. We'd like to thank **The State Bar** for their generous donation of \$535 and for continuing to support our work with their monthly Thirsty Thursdays.

**Olsen's** in Clarkdale held a Round Up for the Verde event June 1st - 16th which raised over \$300. Thank you to **Olsen's** and all of you that came out to Round Up for the Verde!

We'd like to welcome and thank **The Vineyards at Cottonwood** as a new Conservation Partner. The Vineyards joined our Conservation Partner Program in April and has committed to monthly online donations to support river conservation projects.

[Contact Isaac via email](#) or call 928-821-2002 to learn more about our Business Conservation Partner opportunities.

### Thank you to our Business Conservation Partners for their generous support.

#### \$500 and above:

The State Bar

#### \$300 and above:

Blazin' M Ranch

Coldwell Banker Mabery Real Estate

Olsen's

The Vineyards at Cottonwood

#### \$200 and above:

Cottonwood Chamber

Kactus Kate's

#### \$100 and above:

Cellar 433

Century 21 Sexton Real Estate

Chateau Tumbleweed

Chef Wayne's Creations

Page Springs Cellars

Vino de Sedona

Donations received April 1 - June 30, 2018

**Business Conservation Partners** bring together the collective resources of local business to raise funds to implement conservation projects across the Verde River Watershed. These conservation projects go directly to enhancing the natural resources of the watershed which is essential to our community's way of life.

# Sustaining Flows

## Verde River Exchange

Friends is pleased to welcome our newest team member, Max Wilson. Max is joining us in July as the new Sustaining Flows Manager

### Max Wilson

I am a born and raised Arizonan who grew up loving the Verde River and its tributaries. My wife and I have two young sons, Jack and Henry, who spend every waking moment outside exploring with their Mom and Dad. I am an avid fly fisher and hiker with a knack for finding pools filled with native fish deep far from the trailhead.



I am truly passionate about Verde River conservation. I've spent my whole life on the Verde, and in doing so have come to appreciate the joys of a nearly free flowing Western river. Some of my earliest memories are of days exploring Dead Horse State Park with my Dad. In my spare time, I have written a guide to fly fishing Fossil Creek, as well as countless articles about exploring the Verde and its tributaries. As an ecologist and lover of Arizona's wildlife, I know just how important the Verde's water is as a refuge for the strange and wonderful animals that call our state home. The Verde is the essence of Arizona, a cornerstone of Arizona's heritage and its ecology. Conserving the Verde is an imperative, not an option.

See how you can help Sustain Flows.

To learn more about how to participate visit our website, <https://verderiver.org/verde-river-exchange/>

## Investing in Arizona's Water Future

Page Springs Cellars is a key partner with Friends, participating in all of our programs and leading the way in water conservation. As one of the founding participants in the Verde River Exchange program. Eric Glomski, owner at Page Springs Cellars recently shared his story about the importance of being a conservation minded business owner when considering the environment.



“We think a lot about the health of Arizona's rivers, and how that impacts the landscape we all love. Our goal is to create wines that express the unique character of our surroundings, and that means taking responsibility for the lands and waters we steward.”

[Read the full article here.](#)

**The Verde River Exchange** is an innovative, community-driven program to help address unmanaged groundwater pumping that threatens to deplete flows in the Verde River. The Exchange is a key part of our work to preserve a perennially flowing Verde River while also promoting sustainable economic development in the Verde Valley.

# Restoring Habitat

## Partnerships

Article by Amanda Webster and Ben Kowalewski

Friends prides ourselves on our partnerships to work collaboratively for a healthy Verde River. In the article on page three, *Collaborating for Riparian Health*, we shared our story of partnering with REI and The Nature Conservancy to build and improve trails while installing interpretive trail signs.



Amanda Webster, Friends of the Verde River

In another collaborative effort Friends joined Arizona Game and Fish Department to reintroduce Gila Trout into Oak Creek.

Friends staff members, Amanda Webster and Ben Kowalewski spent a morning in early June reintroducing Gila trout to their native waters in the West Fork of Oak Creek. There have

been efforts to reintroduce this native trout back into these waters with mixed success. Over 20 volunteers participated, hiking 1-4 miles with buckets strapped to backpack frames, each carrying water and 15-20 juvenile trout.

When the team reached the designated locations, the fish were carefully placed in the creek in spots that had good stream flow and tree cover. The Gila Trout is one of only two native trout fish in Arizona and is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

These trout began their journey in spring 2017 when they came to Sterling Springs Hatchery in Sedona as “eyed eggs” from Mora National Fish Hatchery in New Mexico. During this stage of development, the fish are more durable and can be easily transported. One year



later, those stocked in West Fork were in excess of population criteria for recovery efforts.

Although it is listed as threatened, the population reintroduced during this project is available for limited angling use.

Fishing between Call of the Canyon Crossing and Junipine Crossing is under special regulation: catch-and-release only, trout must be released immediately unharmed, none may be kept, and only artificial flies, lures, & single barbless hooks may be used.

The Gila Trout is one of Arizona’s two native trout species. Historically, this fish was native to the San Francisco, Verde, Gila, and Agua Fria River drainages. However, by the 1950s none were left in Arizona. One major cause of Gila Trout population decline was (and still is) hybridization with non-native Rainbow Trout.



Young Gila Trout in bucket. Trout released were 5-8 inches long.



Thanks to successful recovery efforts in Arizona and New Mexico, the fish was re-classified as federally threatened in 2006. With the help of volunteers and participation from many organizations and agencies, the Gila trout is making a comeback in Arizona and now the Verde Valley.

**Verde Watershed Restoration Coalition (VWRC)**, is a collaborative effort among a diverse group of public and private stakeholders to improve and restore riparian habitat in the Verde River Watershed.

Working with over twenty partners and more than 200 private landowners, VWRC focuses on three core methods to protect the Verde River from the harm caused by invasive plants: 1) outreach to local communities and private landowners; 2) treatment to remove invasive species; and 3) monitoring treated areas to ensure their continued health.

## Ways to Give

You can help Friends with our work to restore habitat, sustain flows and promote community stewardship every time you shop at Fry's or Amazon. Click the links here to join the [Fry's Community Rewards Program](#) and [Amazon Smile](#). Select "**Friends of Verde River Greenway**" for your charity.

Please visit our [website](#) for information on charitable gifts and estate planning.



### Friends of the Verde River

PO Box 2535  
Cottonwood, AZ 86326  
928.641.6013

[VerdeRiver.org](http://VerdeRiver.org)

## Thanks to our donors! Donations received April - June, 2018

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## You can make a difference!

Friends of the Verde River is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Please visit our [website](#) to make a donation and for information on charitable gifts and estate planning.



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**Please join us! Learn more, volunteer, donate. [VerdeRiver.org](http://VerdeRiver.org)**

## 2018 Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival

In April we held a successful birding festival that brought in over 400 attendees from Arizona, 13 additional states, as well as Canada and England. Thank you to all of the 60+ wonderful volunteers that make this festival such a success.



It is with heavy heart that Friends of the Verde River and the Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival shares the sad news of the passing of *Dena Greenwood Miller* in June. Dena helped shape and lead the festival for more than 17 years, and taught her love for birds to countless people through the festival and through workshops across the Verde Valley. Even as Dena battled her illness this past year, she was always with us. Dena was an early champion of the Verde River and the overall environmental health of the Sedona/Verde Valley region. Our hearts go out to her friends and family. She will be missed by so many near and far.

*Sustaining Flows, Restoring Habitat, and Promoting Community Stewardship.*