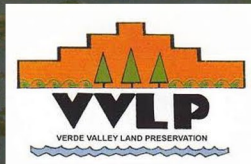


# Verde River Paddle Trail

**Highway 89A Bridge to Beasley Flat**



Verde Valley Land Preservation  
P.O. Box 3356 Cottonwood, AZ  
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Cover Photo Courtesy of Susun McCulla

# Welcome to The Verde River Paddle Trail Highway 89A Bridge to Beasley Flat

This paddle guide is the result of the vision and dedication of John Parsons. Many heartfelt thanks to John, his wife Susun, and his young boating partner Josh Wheeler for performing the entire field work for this guide. Special thanks to John for his decades of advocacy in support of a healthy Verde River.



Photo courtesy of Gary Beverly

This section of the Verde River Paddle Trail covers 31 river miles from the Highway 89A Bridgeport Bridge to Beasley Flat. The guide is composed of nine map segments, each with a corresponding descriptive narrative of GPS waypoints. A vicinity map shows how the segment maps provide coverage of each river reach, and a waypoint table provides GPS coordinates for the waypoints used in this guide.

Note that much of this section of river is located on private property. Please respect the rights of these property owners during your paddle trip; it is an act of trespass to disembark and enter riverside properties. Plan your river trip accordingly and leave the river on public lands only.

The Verde River is a dynamic natural resource. Water levels, channel obstructions and many other factors can change on a daily basis. River recreationists are advised to practice Safe Paddling.

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Highway 89A Bridge to Beasley Flat

### Safe Paddling

- Never paddle alone
- Inform friends and/or family of your paddling plans
- Check conditions before you go
- Dress appropriately for the expected weather
- Wear a life jacket
- Know your watercraft's limitations
- Paddle within your skill level
- Avoid high, swift water
- Scout any hazard about which you have doubts.
- Dispose of all trash properly

The following table contains information regarding contiguous Verde River paddle guides and RAPs contained in this paddle guide.

River mile	RAP	Miles to next RAP	Approximate time (hrs)	
			Low	Med
0.0	Sycamore (future)	No Guide at this time	-	-
9.1	Tapco (future)	See <a href="#">VR @ Clarkdale</a>	-	-
11.9	Tuzigoot	See <a href="#">paddle guide</a>	-	-
18.4	Bridgeport	4.0	3.0	1.5
22.4	Skidmore	0.6	1.0	0.5
23	Black Canyon	1.0	1.0	0.5
24	Bignotti	8.0	4.0	2.5
32	Newton Lane	3.3	2.5	1.5
35.3	I-17 Bridge	2.0	1.5	1.0
37.3	Black Bridge	2.2	2.0	1.25
39.5	White Bridge	5.5	3.0	2.0
45	Clear Creek	4.3	3.0	2.0
49.3	Beasley Flat	See <a href="#">boaters guide</a>	-	-
100.8	Sheep Bridge	-	-	-

Verde River flows can vary widely during any year or season. Low flows (<100 cfs) are typical, and boating is challenging if flows are <50 cfs. During the early summer months, the section between Clear Creek RAP and Beasley Flat may be the only boatable segment in this guide. Autumn through spring months provide the best boating flows. Floods can occur during spring snowmelt, after rain-on-snow events or following summer storms. Do not paddle during flood events.

Check real-time flow at: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/az/nwis>  
 Look for the “Verde River near Clarkdale” (Station No. 09504000), and  
 “Verde River near Camp Verde” (Station No. 09506000)

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Highway 89A Bridge to Beasley Flat

### Directions to RAPs

**Bridgeport** - In Cottonwood on Hwy 89A, turn north on to River Ave. on west side of the bridge. Park on the road. Go under the gate on the right.

**Skidmore** - At south end of Cottonwood on Hwy 260, turn east on to Prairie Lane and follow it about one mile, then turn right on East Mesa Drive. Turn right on South Arrow Drive and right again at Skidmore Drive, then left into the parking area. The river is about 150 yards down the trail.

**Prairie Lane** - (hiking only) – Following directions to Skidmore, but turn right off Prairie Lane after 0.5 mile, then right again in 0.4 mile

**Black Canyon** - Turn east off Highway 260 at 0.7 miles south of Prairie Lane. Follow road to parking area and restroom at end.

**Bignotti** - From Highway 260 turn east on Thousand Trails Road (signed on highway). Make first left at 0.3 miles on Forest Service road. Follow it to signed area with parking, restroom and picnic tables. If this is your take out be sure to reconnoiter as current is swift here.

**Newton Lane** - From Highway 260 turn east on road marked Newton Lane. Follow this road 0.1 miles and turn right at Newton Lane. Follow Newton Lane for 0.6 miles and turn left on an obscure primitive road on Forest Service land. This road is a few hundred feet beyond the intersection of Newton Lane and North Amorlie Drive and opposite Newton Lane from a large irrigation pond. Follow this road, which parallels an irrigation ditch, for 0.3 miles to the Verde River.

**I-17 Bridge** - This is not a formal RAP at the time of publication. In Camp Verde, turn east off Highway 260 on Finnie Flat Road. Follow it 1.4 miles and make the hairpin left at the Circle K on Montezuma Castle Highway. After travelling 1.8 miles, turn left on Apache Trail, just past Camp Verde High School. After 0.5 mile, turn left on Buffalo Trail. Follow Buffalo Trail as it winds around for one mile to a T-intersection with Roundup Road. Turn left and follow Roundup Road to the river just downstream from bridge.

**Black Bridge** - Follow I-17 directions above to Montezuma Castle Highway. After travelling 0.5 mile on Montezuma Castle Highway, turn right into Rezzonico Park, which is located on river right just downstream from Black Bridge. It is a short, grassy walk to the river from the parking area.

## Verde River Paddle Trail Highway 89A Bridge to Beasley Flat

**White Bridge** - This area with parking, restrooms and ramadas is at the southeast corner of the Highway 260 bridge (White Bridge) in Camp Verde. Turn east on Quarterhorse Lane and right into the facility.

**Clear Creek** - In Camp Verde, turn east off of Highway 260 on Salt Mine Road (2 miles east of Finnie Flat Road; 0.4 mile west of White Bridge). Go about 6.2 miles to signed area with parking. River is about 150 yards across ditch and down the hill.

**Beasley Flat** - Follow directions to Clear Creek and continue 2.4 miles to where paved road makes a hard left to Camp Verde Acres Access Road (first left after River Bend Road). Follow “main” road through subdivision (using Verde Lane and River View Drive, if marked) until you reach Forest Service land. Follow road to ramadas, parking, rest and changing rooms, and launch area.



Photo courtesy of Doug von Gausig

The information provided here is for general informational purposes only and is not meant to be a statement of conditions at any one time. Conditions can vary greatly in relation to temperature, weather, water level, and other factors. All persons intending to run this river are responsible for personally assessing these conditions, as well as their own ability to cope with them. You should be aware that all recreational use of this type involves a degree of risk, and persons engaging in this activity assume the risk associated therewith. The information in this guide is used entirely at the reader's discretion, and is made available on the expressed condition that no liability, expressed or implied, is accepted by Verde Valley Land Preservation, Fred Phillip Consulting, LLC., or any of their associates, employees, branches or subsidiaries for the accuracy, content or use thereof.

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Highway 89A Bridge to Beasley Flat

### Waypoint Locations

Way point	GPS Coordinates <sup>1</sup>		Notes	Segment Map
	Lat	Long		
1	34.7222	-111.9921	Bridgeport RAP	1
2	34.7215	-111.9907	Highway 89 Bridge	1
3	34.7133	-111.9891	Scouting Location	1
4	34.7101	-111.9869	Irrigation return	1
5	34.7082	-111.9822	Rock bar	1
6	34.7068	-111.9549	Great Verde Lake Bed	1 & 2
7	34.6920	-111.9658	Scouting Location	2
8	34.6930	-111.9622	Skidmore RAP	2
9	34.6903	-111.9658	Prairie Lane RAP	2
10	34.6851	-111.9644	Black Canyon RAP	2
11	34.6763	-111.9532	Bignotti RAP	2 & 3
12	34.6748	-111.9469	Caution Required	3
13	34.6761	-111.9471	Alcantara Winery	3
14	34.6785	-111.9422	Verde Lake Bed	3
15	34.6781	-111.9415	Oak Creek Confluence	3
16	34.6747	-111.9382	Sheeps Crossing	3
17	34.6674	-111.9384	Diversion Dam	3
18	34.6539	-111.9374	Willow Stands	3
19	34.6407	-111.9304	Hayfield Draw Confluence	3 & 4
20	34.6312	-111.9190	Portage Required	4
21	34.6318	-111.9129	Class II Rapids	4
22	34.6330	-111.9067	Small Diversion Dam	4
23	34.6248	-111.8998	Yavapai Apache Nation	4
24	34.6133	-111.8992	Riffle	4 & 5
25	34.6094	-111.8962	Newton Lane RAP	4 & 5
26	34.6091	-111.8882	Verde Ditch Diversion	5
27	34.6119	-111.8763	Riffles	5
28	34.6113	-111.8754	Scouting Location	5
29	34.6083	-111.8770	Verde Ditch return	5

<sup>1</sup> Coordinates are provided in Latitude for Northern Hemisphere and Longitude for Western Hemisphere. It is recommended to set GPS Coordinate Systems to either NAD83/WGS84 UTM 12N or to NAD 83 State Plane Coordinate System for Central Arizona 0202 for the most accurate readings.

Way point	GPS Coordinates <sup>2</sup>		Notes	Segment Map
	Lat	Long		
30	34.5972	-111.8793	Car Bodies	5
31	34.5897	-111.8828	Scouting Location	5
32	34.5865	-111.8800	I-17 Bridge	5 & 6
33	34.5753	-111.8634	Elk Fencing	6
34	34.5738	-111.8608	Largest Cottonwoods	6
35	34.5734	-111.8572	Black Bridge	6
36	34.5731	-111.8563	Rezzonico Park RAP	6
37	34.5739	-111.8545	Beaver Creek Confluence	6 & 7
38	34.5609	-111.8488	Captain King's Old Boat	7
39	34.5582	-111.8483	Diamond S Ditch Dam	7
40	34.5511	-111.8508	White Bridge RAP	7 & 8
41	34.5449	-111.8596	Minor Irrigation Dam	8
42	34.5433	-111.8656	Copper Canyon Confluence	8
43	34.5308	-111.8671	1 <sup>st</sup> Windy Point Rock Bar	8
44	34.5263	-111.8362	2 <sup>nd</sup> Windy Point Rock Bar	8
45	34.5168	-111.8385	Verde Lake Club Stabilization	8
46	34.5062	-111.8371	Clear Creek RAP	8 & 9
47	34.5045	-111.8297	West Clear Creek Confluence	9
48	34.5002	-111.8201	Tree Fence Ahead	9
49	34.4982	-111.8160	Gypsum Cliffs	9
50	34.4944	-111.8155	Tree Tunnel	9
51	34.4798	-111.8129	Class 2 Riffles	9
52	34.4731	-111.8014	Beasley Flat RAP	9

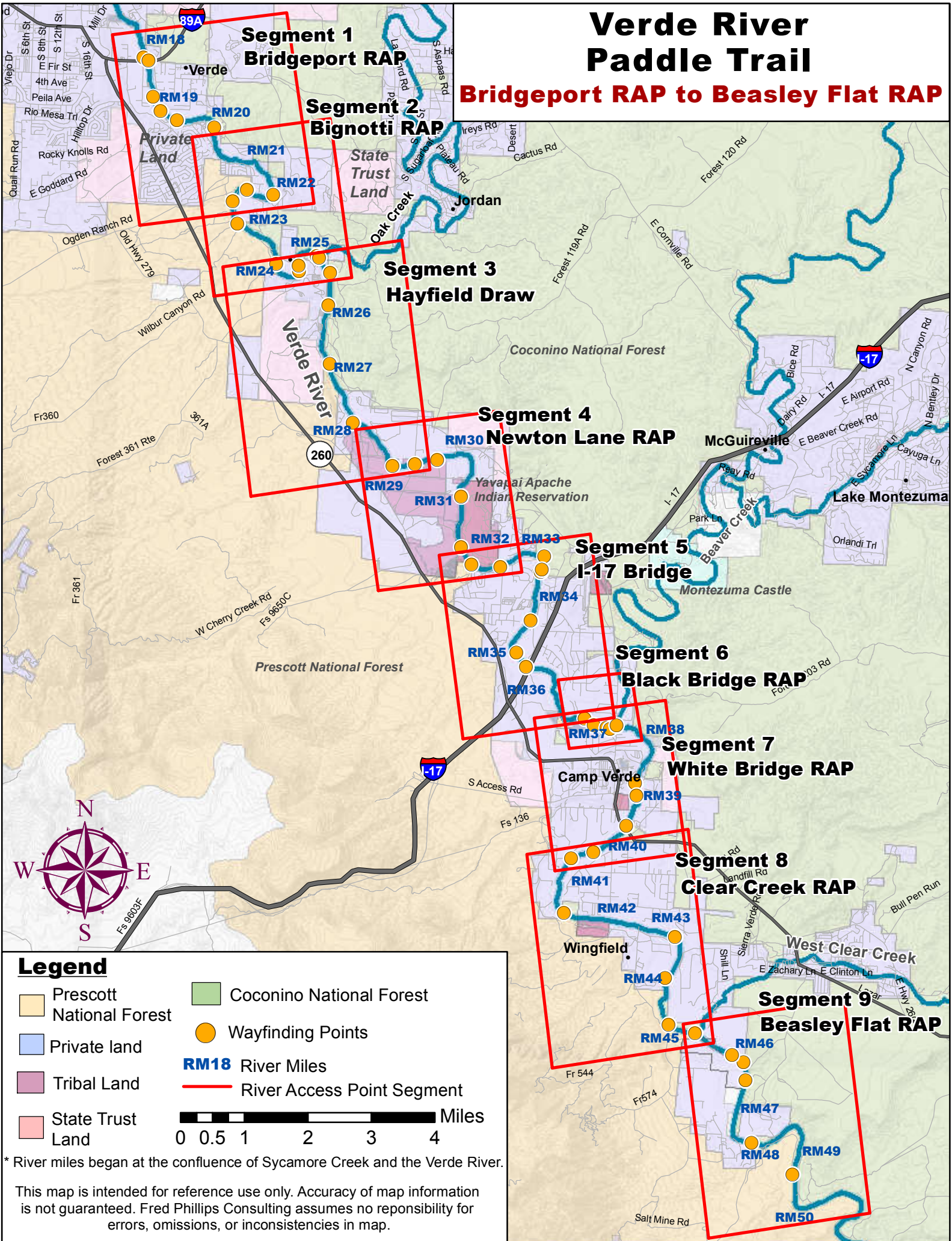
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# Verde River Paddle Trail

**Bridgeport RAP to Beasley Flat RAP**



# Verde River Paddle Trail Segment 1- Bridgeport RAP

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Miles

**P1:  
Bridgeport  
River  
Access Point**



**P3**

**P2**

**RM19**

**P4**

**P5**

**RM20**



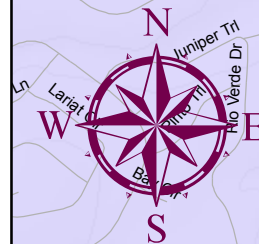
**P6:  
Great Verde  
Lake Bed  
Limestone  
Caves**

## Legend

- |                          |                             |               |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Coconino National Forest | Arizona State Parks         | Parking       |
| Private land             | <b>P1</b> Wayfinding Points | Danger        |
| Tribal Land              | <b>RM18</b> River Miles     | Riffle        |
| State Trust Land         | Scout                       | Diversion Dam |
| Prescott National Forest | River Access Point          | Trees         |
|                          | Area of Interest            |               |

\* River miles begin at the Confluence of Sycamore Creek and the Verde River.

This map is intended for reference use only. Accuracy of map information is not guaranteed. Fred Phillips Consulting assumes no responsibility for errors, omissions, or inconsistencies in map.



# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 1 - Bridgeport RAP



Photo courtesy of Doug von Gausig

**Point 1** - The Bridgeport RAP is public land managed by Arizona State Parks. Park near the pipe gate on the right and follow a narrow unimproved path through the weeds to the river.

**Point 2** - Highway 89 Bridge at Cottonwood. The unincorporated community of Bridgeport takes its name from this river crossing. At one time it was a low water crossing for horse-drawn wagons coming from Sedona and Rimrock.

**Point 3** - This stretch can be a dangerous area requiring a portage. Floods, high winds, beavers and chain saws can often drop large limbs and tree trunks into and across the river channel. Even if you have recently paddled this stretch, be prepared for unexpected blockages due to changes in stream bank vegetation.

**Point 4** - The first major irrigation return on river right provides some extra stream flow at the upper boundary of the Verde Village subdivision.

**Point 5** - The rock bar here is a naturally occurring obstruction with large rocks. There is generally a clean channel on the right.

*If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water.-Loren Eiseley*

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 2- Bignotti RAP



### LEGEND

- Coconino National Forest
- Private land
- Tribal Land
- State Trust Land
- Prescott National Forest

- P1** Wayfinding Points
- RM18** River Miles
- Scout
- River Access Point
- Area of Interest
- Parking

- Danger
- Riffle
- Diversion Dam
- Trees

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# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 2 - Bignotti RAP

The limestone cliffs that you see along the Verde River are evidence of the Verde Formation, created by an ancient freshwater lake. The footprints of saber-toothed tiger, mastodon and camel have been found in its upper layers, as have the bones and teeth of other vertebrates, large and small, and the remains of freshwater plants and animals. Lake Verde, as the ancient inland sea has been dubbed, was a shallow lake throughout the 7 million years it was contained within the basin. It was fed by the same drainage that would one day become the Verde River, along with several travertine springs, one of which is believed to have formed Montezuma Well. When the lake finally dried up some 2.5 million years ago, its last vestiges retreated to the lower end near Camp Verde. That fact is evidenced by the deposits of gypsum and salt the lake left behind.

**Point 6** - Great Verde lake bed limestone caves on river left with pebble beach on right. Please note that this is private property. The Verde River channel flows through ancient lake bed sedimentary formations from Clarkdale to Beasley Flat.

**Point 7** - This area of the Verde River will probably always be a major obstruction. It can be extraordinarily dangerous at higher flows. There may be a complete channel blockage. The river makes a 90-degree turn to the right, losing momentum and allowing debris to pile up. At the bottom of this obstruction, there are lots of old steel jacks from past bank stabilization programs. Scout on river right and portage if necessary.

**Point 8** - It is about 150 yards from Skidmore RAP, a Prescott National Forest facility, to the river. There are some picturesque cliffs on river right downstream.

**Point 9** - The steep and lengthy trail from the parking lot at Prairie Lane RAP to the river is better suited for hiking access.

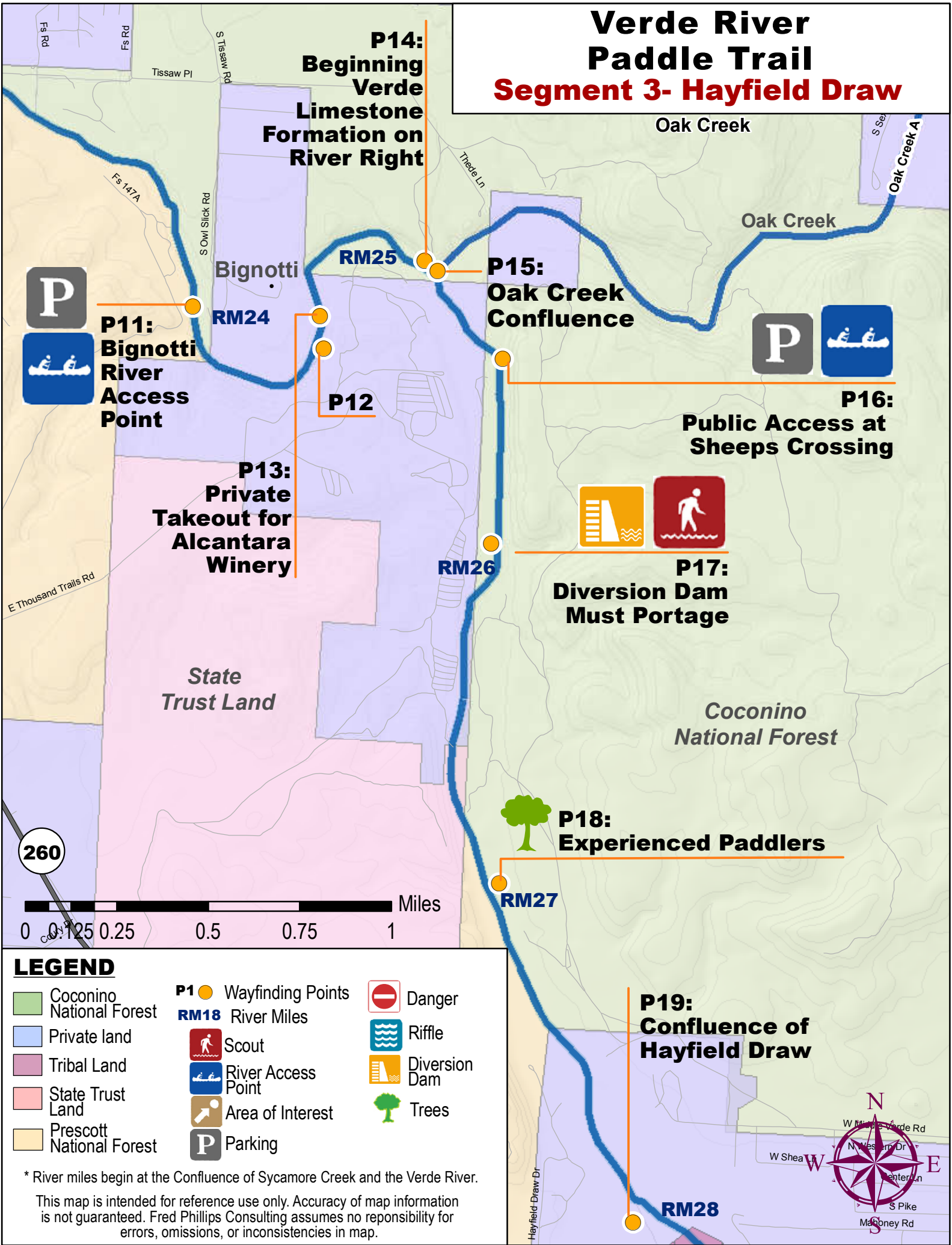
**Point 10** - There is a small parking area and a restroom at Black Canyon RAP. The extensive Black Canyon drainage can carry high flows during large monsoon events. There is a nice alluvial fan here filled with small pebbles and some sandy areas, created by Black Canyon on river right. The long pool above this RAP is one of the best areas on the river to learn how to paddle a canoe or kayak. There are many fun riffles downstream before you reach the Bignotti RAP.

**Point 11** - The Bignotti RAP features an excellent parking area. However, actual access at the river remains unimproved. Bignotti RAP is hard to identify from the river. Boaters are advised to scout the entire river right stream bank for the best available access suitable for their water craft and abilities.

*It is wonderful to have the duty of being on the river the first and last thing every day. I have loved it even in the rain. Sometimes I have loved it most in the rain. – Wendell Berry*

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 3- Hayfield Draw



### LEGEND

- |                          |                    |               |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Coconino National Forest | Wayfinding Points  | Danger        |
| Private land             | River Miles        | Riffle        |
| Tribal Land              | Scout              | Diversion Dam |
| State Trust Land         | River Access Point | Trees         |
| Prescott National Forest | Area of Interest   |               |
|                          | Parking            |               |

\* River miles begin at the Confluence of Sycamore Creek and the Verde River.

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# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 3 - Hayfield Draw

**Point 12** - At low flows the current enters a very small, narrow right hand channel which hugs the Verde Limestone formation. There are some significant undercut bluffs which could be dangerous at high flows.

**Point 13** - The commercial takeout for Alcantara Vineyards features a vehicle access ramp and retaining wall. This is private property and is marked "No Trespassing." About 100 yards downstream there are some tricky riffles. Around the bend from the Alcantara area there are many in rocks in the channel, which makes for very busy paddling.

**Point 14** - Significant limestone Verde lake bed formation on river left. These bluffs extend to the confluence with Oak Creek.

**Point 15** - The Oak Creek Confluence is one of the most beautiful spots on the Verde River between Clarkdale and Beasley Flat. This is a great spot to admire two wonderful streams as they join together at a picturesque location.

**Point 16** - There is public access to the Verde River at Sheep's Crossing, located immediately upstream from the RV resort fence line. It is a difficult carry between the parking area and the river. Sheep's Crossing is named for the river crossing of the historic Sheep Driveway from the Phoenix area to the Mogollon Rim. The limestone bluffs once again rise up on river left below the confluence with Oak Creek.

There is a large 'lake' downstream from the Sheep's Crossing RAP created by the OK Ditch diversion dam. Paddlers face almost half a mile of flat water before arriving at the diversion.

**Point 17** - The OK Ditch diversion dam is extensive and requires scouting both by boat and on foot. Most of the river current enters the ditch on river left. The diversion dam is a difficult obstruction and requires a portage back into the main river channel right of the ditch.

**Point 18** - At this point below the diversion dam, there are thick willow stands on both sides of the river and young willows in the middle of the river. All of the young willows have grown since the 1993 Flood. This "tree fence" may be run by experienced paddlers. However, many boaters will elect to portage.

**Point 19** - Industrial development is visible on river right at the confluence of Hayfield Draw and the Verde River. There are many willows obstructing the channel below and boaters may elect to portage this area.

*I feel most at home in the water. I disappear. That's where I belong.-Michael Phelps*

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 4- Newton Lane RAP

**P19: Confluence of Hayfield Draw**

**RM28**

**P20: River Portage**

**P22: Typical Small Gravel Diversion Dam**

**P21: Class II Rapid**

**P23: YAN (Yavapai Apache Nation) Low Water Crossing**

**P24: Riffle**

**P25: Newton Lane River Access Point**

*Yavapai Apache Indian Reservation*

*Private Land*



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

### LEGEND

Coconino National Forest  
Private land  
Tribal Land  
State Trust Land  
Prescott National Forest

**P1** Wayfinding Points  
**RM18** River Miles  
Scout  
River Access Point  
Area of Interest  
Parking

Danger  
Riffle  
Diversion Dam  
Trees

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# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 4 - Newton Lane RAP

**Point 20** - The dense wall of willow trees is a very large, total channel blockage. A very long portage on river right is required.

**Point 21** - This rapid, formed by limestone bedrock ledges, is one of the few rapids on the Verde River between Clarkdale and Beasley Flats. In a canoe, this rapid is definitely a Class II and could easily be rated as a Class III, depending on stream flow. There is no easy way to scout this rapid. Note that the river is making a sharp turn to the left here.

**Point 22** - The character of this gravel diversion dam will probably change after each winter-spring runoff season. The large white-roofed structure, an open-sided hay barn, is very visible from the river before reaching the diversion.

In 1826 a party of trappers worked their way up the Salt River to its junction with the Verde River. At this point, the company divided. One group, following **James Ohio Pattie**, trapped the Salt to its headwaters in the White Mountains. The other, led by **Ewing Young**, followed the Verde River to its source in the mountains southwest of the town of Williams. Young reportedly trapped along the Verde again in 1829, this time taking a party of forty men, including a teenager named **Kit Carson**, from Taos toward the Salt River, known at the time for its fine trapping grounds. They trapped the Salt to the mouth of the Verde River and from there "meandered that stream to its source."

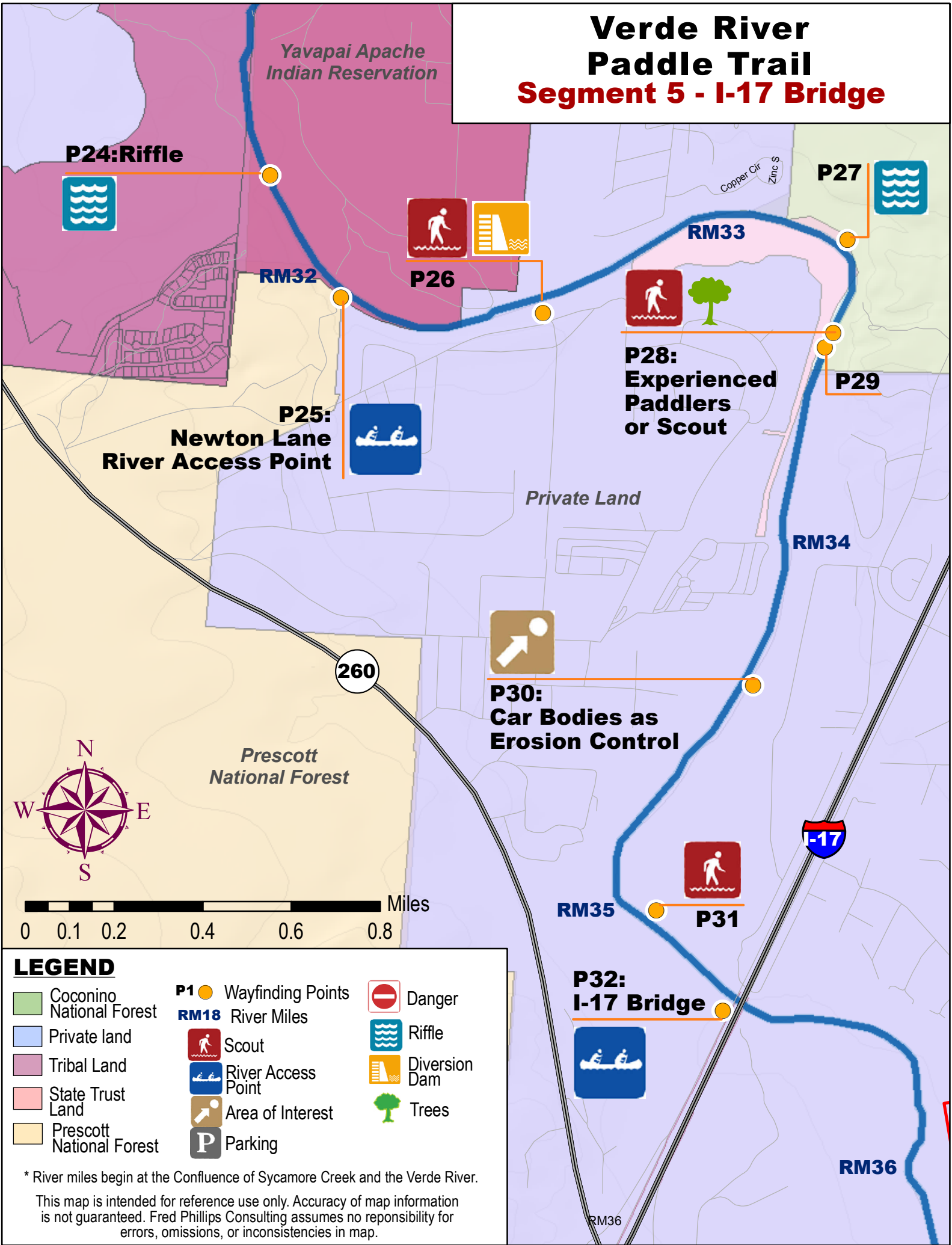
**Point 23** - This low water road crossing on the Yavapai-Apache Nation may not be used for river access without permission from Nation officials.

**Point 24** - This rock-studded riffle was created by a summer monsoon flow event that flushed a large alluvial fan into the river.

**Point 25** - The Newton Lane RAP lies just downstream from the Yavapai Apache Nation boundary. Access to this point was developed to install and service an irrigation diversion and vertical turbine pump on river right. The final portion of the unimproved road is very steep and loose and may not be suitable for low clearance, two-wheel-drive vehicles. At low flows, the diversion itself does not represent a hazard. Paddlers coming from upstream can actually land their boats on the right area of the diversion dam. Paddlers putting in here will find access-friendly stream bank about 100-200 feet below the diversion structure.




*"A good river is nature's life work in song."-Mark Helprin*

# Verde River Paddle Trail Segment 5 - I-17 Bridge



## LEGEND

- Coconino National Forest
- Private land
- Tribal Land
- State Trust Land
- Prescott National Forest

- P1**  Wayfinding Points
- RM18** River Miles
-  Scout
-  River Access Point
-  Area of Interest
- P** Parking

-  Danger
-  Riffle
-  Diversion Dam
-  Trees

\* River miles begin at the Confluence of Sycamore Creek and the Verde River.

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# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 5 - I-17 Bridge

**Point 26** - The Verde Ditch diversion structure may be one of the most difficult portages between Clarkdale and Beasley Flat. It is arguably the most challenging of the Verde's many irrigation diversions. There is much broken concrete and jagged metal here. At low flows, this structure captures the entire flow of the river, sending it into the Verde Ditch channel on river right. Some of the captured flow begins almost immediately to find its way back into the river channel. A portage from the diversion dam is long with poor footing and numerous potential boat-damaging obstacles. A less arduous portage can be found by paddling down the Verde Ditch to the main weir. Land on "ditch left" and portage down the bank to the river just before the weir. Whichever way you choose, there will be a mandatory portage at low flows. Running the diversion dam and the "tree fences" downstream could be very dangerous at higher flows.

**Point 27** - The top of a series of rocky riffles. The Verde River bends to the right beneath Verde limestone ledges ahead. These ledges could be a very dangerous spot at high flows. After the ledges there is a huge lake-like pool.

**Point 28** - A challenging channel that may be passable for experienced paddlers. Less experienced boaters may choose to portage and avoid the potential of pinning in the trees. Due to the channel configuration here, it is highly likely that this will always remain a challenging run. Scouting is recommended.

**Point 29** - A large amount of "ditch return" water from the Verde Ditch is flowing back to the river here.

**Point 30** - These old car bodies mark a historical oddity. In the past government authorities officially encouraged and promoted the use of old car bodies to protect the stream banks from erosion. As late as the 1980's car bodies were visible in many places on the Verde River banks. Subsequent floods and channel changes have buried most of those car bodies. The remnants of those cars you see here are the best remaining vestige of that discontinued erosion control practice. At one time the river channel flowed directly into these car bodies. Now there is a wide channel and the car bodies are no threat.

**Point 31** - This is a very constricted area where the river flows into a blind channel on the right. This constriction is located at the upstream end of a large willow forest which extends up from Interstate 17. Scouting is advised.

**Point 32** - The Verde River makes several confusing twists and turns amid the bridge piers of the I-17 "Dan Bell Memorial" bridge. Proceed slowly and use caution here.

*To have faith is to trust yourself to the water. When you swim you don't grab hold of the water, because if you do you will sink and drown. Instead you relax, and float.-Alan Watts*

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 6- Black Bridge RAP



### LEGEND

- |                          |                      |               |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Coconino National Forest | Arizona State Parks  | Parking       |
| Private land             | P1 Wayfinding Points | Danger        |
| Tribal Land              | RM18 River Miles     | Riffle        |
| State Trust Land         | Scout                | Diversion Dam |
| Prescott National Forest | River Access Point   | Trees         |
|                          | Area of Interest     |               |

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# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 6 - Black Bridge

**Point 33** - Below highly visible overhead power lines, the stream bed has been stabilized with jacks made with phone poles as well as limestone boulders and old broken concrete chunks. Note the tall field fencing, which prevents a local elk herd from entering the farm fields.

The Verde River is an important breeding ground for many migratory bird species, some of them threatened and endangered. Due to the abundance and diversity of birds and other wildlife, the Verde River has become a major wildlife watching destination. This is evidenced by the hundreds of visitors that participate in the [Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival](#), an annual April event.

**Point 34** - This area contains some of the largest cottonwood trees remaining on the Verde River between Clarkdale and Beasley Flats. This type of Fremont Cottonwood and Gooding Willow riparian gallery forest is one of five remaining stands in Arizona and one of 20 such stands in the world!

The Verde River and its tributaries have supported one of the richest archeological areas in the Southwest. There is evidence of native occupation during the Paleo-Indian period (11,500 to 9,000 BC), the Archaic period (9000BC to 300AD), the Sinagua culture (650 to 1400 AD), and the Yavapai and Apache cultures (1300AD to the present Yavapai-Apache Nation). When the Spanish explorer Antonio Espejo arrived in the Verde Valley in 1583, he described the Yavapai and Apache as a hunting and gathering people who “gave us what they had.” Please respect the many archeological sites located near the Verde River and leave them as you find them.

**Point 35** - The Black Bridge takes its name from a black iron bridge which once spanned the river here. The bridge was originally a trestle on a narrow gauge railroad between Chino Valley and Jerome. When that railroad was dismantled about 100 years ago, Camp Verdeans disassembled the trestle and carried it by wagon from the slopes of Woodchute Mountain to the Verde River. Remains of this bridge can still be seen on the left bank of Beaver Creek about a mile upstream from the confluence of Beaver Creek and the Verde River.

**Point 36** - The Black Bridge RAP is located on river right just downstream from the bridge, in Camp Verde’s Rezzonico Park. Take the time to check out the “Center of Arizona” plaque in the park.

*It's lovely to live on a raft. We had the sky up there, all speckled with stars, and we used to lay on our backs and look up at them, and discuss about whether they was made or only just happened."*  
- [The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn](#), Mark Twain

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 7- White Bridge RAP

0 0.050.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles



Coconino National Forest

State Trust Land

**P38:**  
Capt. King  
Old Boat  
on River Right



**P39:**  
Diamond S  
Diversion Dam



Private Land

RM39



**P40:**  
White Bridge  
River Access

### LEGEND

- |                          |                             |               |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Coconino National Forest | <b>P1</b> Wayfinding Points | Danger        |
| Private land             | <b>RM18</b> River Miles     | Riffle        |
| Tribal Land              | Scout                       | Diversion Dam |
| State Trust Land         | River Access Point          | Trees         |
| Arizona State Park       | Area of Interest            |               |
|                          | <b>P</b> Parking            |               |

\* River miles begin at the Confluence of Sycamore Creek and the Verde River.

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# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 7 - White Bridge RAP

**Point 37** - Beaver Creek enters the Verde River on river left. The Beaver Creek watershed extends many miles up onto the Mogollon Rim. Its headwaters rise to the south of Mormon Mountain. High flows from Beaver Creek can often dam the Verde River, creating a large pool of clear water upstream from the chocolate flood waters entering the river here.

**Point 38** - This long pool is created by the Diamond S Ditch diversion dam. For many years, Captain Harry King conducted float trips up and down this pool with a large barge-like boat. Look to the right and you can see Captain King's old boat beached high and dry.

Unseen and unreported on the Verde for almost 100 years, the Arizona Game and Fish Department reintroduced otters in the early 1980s. According to agency records, 46 eastern river otters, captured in Louisiana, were released into the Verde River between 1981 and 1983. Otters can now be found throughout the watershed. Look for their scat, full of crayfish shells, on mid-river boulders.

**Point 39** - For most boaters, the Diamond S Ditch diversion dam will involve a portage at all flows. At medium flows, experienced paddlers may enjoy the steep drops over the dam, but watch out for rebar! At higher flows, the combination of the diversion dam and the dense trees below may be extremely dangerous!

The least arduous and safest portage at all levels is to paddle down the Diamond S Ditch on river left and take out of the ditch below the diversion dam and above White Bridge. Put in at the first relatively clear area downstream from the diversion dam.

**Point 40** - White Bridge RAP is located on river left just below the White Bridge (Highway 260). This Forest Service facility is one of the most heavily used Verde River access points. It is well developed, with restrooms, picnic tables and ramadas. The White Bridge was so-named because bright white limestone was used to construct the original bridge. It was replaced by the current bridge in 1982.

*Life is like the river, sometimes it sweeps you gently along and sometimes the rapids come out of nowhere. –Emma Smith*

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 8- Clear Creek RAP

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Miles



**P40:**  
**White Bridge**  
**River Access**



**RM40**



**P41:**  
**Minor Irrigation**  
**Diversion Dam Keep**  
**Left of Island**

**P42:**  
**Confluence of**  
**Copper Canyon Drainage**

**RM41**

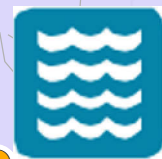
**P44:**  
**Bottom of Second**  
**Windy Point**  
**Rock Bar**  
**Angle Iron**  
**Flood**  
**Protection**

**RM42**



**P43:**  
**Bottom of First**  
**Windy Point**  
**Rock Bar**

**RM43**



**Wingfield**

**P45**

**RM44**

**P46:**  
**Clear Creek**  
**River Access**



**RM45**

**West Clear Creek**

### LEGEND

- Coconino National Forest
- Private land
- Tribal Land
- State Trust Land
- Prescott National Forest

- P1** Wayfinding Points
- RM18** River Miles
- Scout
- River Access Point
- Area of Interest
- Parking

- Danger
- Riffle
- Diversion Dam
- Trees

\* River miles begin at the Confluence of Sycamore Creek and the Verde River.

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# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 8 - Clear Creek RAP

**Point 41** - This primitive dam, a minor irrigation diversion feature, forms a pool from which water can be withdrawn by a vertical turbine pump on river left. The current below the diversion is split by a tamarisk tree island on river right. Although the right run is generally clear it has a tricky dogleg in it that might spill novice paddlers. A safer, less exciting run flows to the left of the island.

**Point 42** - The confluence of the river and Copper Canyon is located on river right. The river is constricted by a large alluvial fan here, created by flood events in this extensive drainage.

Keep on the lookout for beaver signs as you paddle the Verde River. Dam-building activity is uncommon in the Middle Verde, but evidence of beaver activity is plentiful. Fallen trees, debarked logs, and worn "beaver runs" in and out of the river are telltale signs.

Dr. L.A. Hawkins, an early Jerome dentist, described the river riparian corridor this second wave of settlers found as "one half to one mile wide, and was covered with a dense forest of trees, with thick underbrush, which was very difficult to even get through on foot, every half mile or mile there would be a beaver dam." Hawkins' description would indicate the Verde River beaver population had rebounded considerably in the 20 or so years since the last documented trapping expedition descended the river in 1844.

**Point 43** - The bottom of the first Windy Point rock bar, a steep drop to the right.

**Point 44** - The bottom of the second Windy Point rock bar, where the river comes down and piles into pottery gray clay cliffs. The first right-hand turn in this S-bend is definitely a canoe flipper if you aren't paying attention.

**Point 45** - Alongside the Verde Lake Club Estates subdivision on river right, note the stream bank stabilization project angle iron sticking out of the water. These structures were built after the 1993 Flood. At that time, the river channel was virtually barren of any vegetation here.

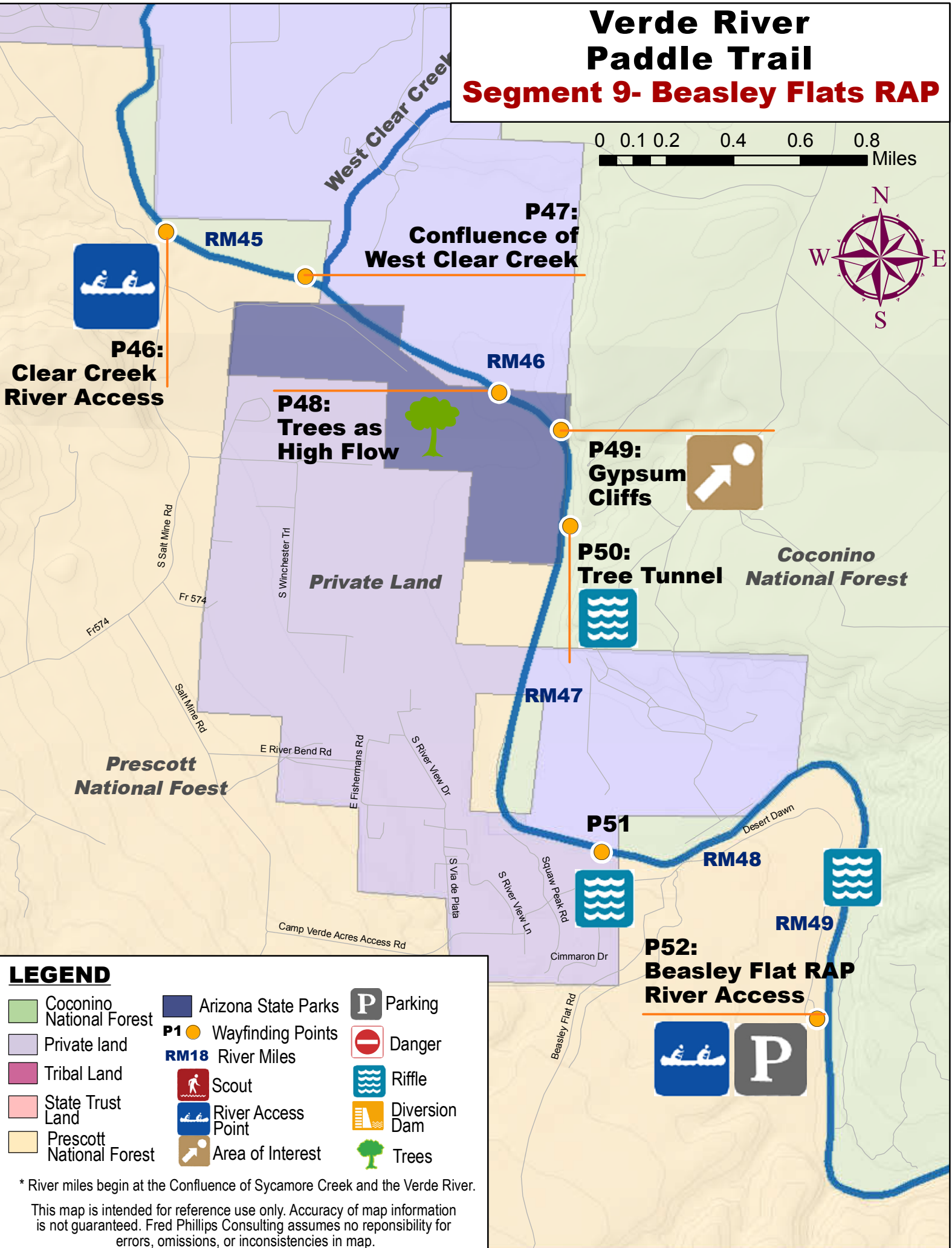
**Point 46** - Clear Creek RAP is a very popular boating access site, especially during the low water of early summer. Launch or take out on river right near the diversion dam, which creates a pool for the irrigation pump located on river right. A short but steep trail connects the Forest Service parking area off Salt Mine Road to the river below.

*There is NOTHING--absolutely nothing--half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats. - Kenneth Grahame*

# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 9- Beasley Flats RAP

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Miles



### LEGEND

- Coconino National Forest
- Private land
- Tribal Land
- State Trust Land
- Prescott National Forest

- Arizona State Parks
- P1 Wayfinding Points
- RM18 River Miles
- Scout
- River Access Point
- Area of Interest

- Parking
- Danger
- Riffle
- Diversion Dam
- Trees

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# Verde River Paddle Trail

## Segment 9 - Beasley Flat RAP

**Point 47** - West Clear Creek enters on river left, above the rocky riffle. At low flows, West Clear Creek spreads out across the wide alluvial fan and the flow disappears into the gravel before it reaches the river.

**Point 48** - Most of the current makes a sharp left turn here. A few “dead-end” channels wind left through the willow trees downstream. At higher flows, keep an eye out for this opportunity to go left and miss the tree fence downstream.

**Point 49** - The chalky white cliffs on river left are nearly pure gypsum. At one time, unsuccessful attempts were made to gain approval to mine these cliffs. The wooden structure on river left is the remnant of a zip line from the top of the cliffs to the river right area.

**Point 50** - An enjoyable run through a tree tunnel starts at the end of a long pool.

**Point 51** - Beginning of a series of enjoyable Class II riffles and pools that continue for approximately one mile. Have fun!

**Point 52** - The Beasley Flat RAP can be a very busy place in years with a good snow pack and high flows from spring runoff. This is the end of the “civilized” stretch of the Verde River, with Forest Service rest rooms, changing rooms and picnic ramadas. Wild and Scenic designation for the Verde River begins here and ends 51 miles downstream at the Sheep Bridge above Horseshoe Reservoir. The character of the river changes downstream, with many Class III/IV rapids located in a wilderness setting. The Wild and Scenic section is not recommended for novice paddlers.



*All water has a perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was-Toni Morrison*