

Currents & Flow

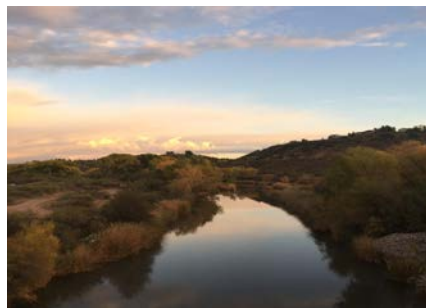
May 2021

New Ways to Support a Healthy Verde River

Dear Friends,

When I was a young girl, my father used to take me on drives around Arizona. Those were special times, just the two of us. I remember him telling me once that Arizona used to be wetter, and that the landscape was drying out. That was in the 1970's and he had been living in Arizona since 1937.

Fortunately, we still have the Verde River and Oak Creek, and many other flowing springs and creeks. But for how much longer?



There are things you can do to make sure we have flowing rivers and creeks in Arizona. In this issue of Currents and Flows you'll read about our new program, River Friendly Living. A vibrant Verde starts here! We have designed RFL to reward you, and people like you, who do the right things for our rivers. And we'll tell you about the easy ways you can support this vital work.

Let's keep the rivers flowing!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy L.C. Steele". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Nancy L.C. Steele, D.Env.

Executive Director

MISSION

Friends of the Verde River works collaboratively for a healthy, flowing Verde River system.
VerdeRiver.org



Friends of the
VERDE RIVER



Also in this newsletter:

- Launch of River Friendly Living
- Easy Ways to Give
- Fundraising and Events

*Cover image: Saguaros line the hillsides of the Lower Verde as the Verde River reaches Horseshoe Reservoir.



RIVERFRIENDLY LIVING

A Vibrant Verde Starts Here

“After the first meeting with [Friends], I knew it would be a partnership that would last a lifetime,” John Bassous, Tierra Verde Builders

Welcome to River Friendly Living! This exciting program inspires a culture of voluntary river conservation. We support and recognize those who strive to protect the river at their homes and businesses.

This new program is designed to work with every level of our communities to ensure that our rivers and streams stay healthy and flowing for generations to come. By participating in River Friendly Living, YOU can certify your home, and business. Even communities can be certified as River Friendly. You will be given a road map to reduce your impact on our waterways, and step by step guidance on the certification process.

Would you like to be a River Friendly pioneer? We are looking for people who want to certify now. We have

already started pilot projects like the *Rio Verde Plaza* River Friendly Building, seen below. This project saves **300,000 gallons of water every year**. Sign up now to get the process started. We will be working with people like YOU to certify homes and businesses. We Need YOU! Sign up through the link below, or contact MaxwellW@VerdeRiver.org for more information.



RiverFriendlyLiving.org



Pro Tax Tips - Easy Ways To Give

Tax-Smart Charitable Giving

Taxes on your mind after this season? If Uncle Sam got more from you than you wanted to give him, there are some plans you can make now for 2021 that may reduce his haul, while supporting a healthy Verde River. Read some of the pro-tips below to see some easy ways to make a lasting difference

What if you itemize your taxes?

If you are among the approximately 10% of Americans who itemize your income tax deductions, 2021 offers a special opportunity. The CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) raised the limit of a taxpayer's adjusted gross income that could be deducted from 60% to 100% for qualifying charitable organizations for gifts of CASH only. Unless Congress extends it another year, that opportunity expires at the end of 2021. If you have a major liquidity event this year or win the lottery, this opportunity is something to explore with your advisors.

What if you want to give a gift of stock?

Let's say you've owned stocks for more than a year and they are worth more than you paid for them. Lucky you!

Rather than paying capital gains tax when you sell, you can make a gift to Friends of the Verde River. Simply ask your broker to transfer them to our account; we don't pay capital gains tax and you qualify for a deduction of the fair market value of the stock on the date of the transfer. If you are a whiz at selecting stocks that grow in value, this may be a smart charitable gift for you.

What if you take the standard deduction?

The CARES Act also made it possible for those of us who no longer itemize to deduct charitable contributions of up to \$300 for single people or \$600 for joint filers in 2021. Friends will happily put your contribution to work immediately in sustaining the Verde River.

What if you have an IRA and have to take your required minimum distribution?

Those taxpayers who are required to take minimum distributions from an IRA account can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution directly to Friends. It can be for the full amount of your RMD or for part of your RMD up to \$100,000 a year.

Contact us at IsaacD@VerdeRiver.org, and please consult your own advisors about the tax-smart way to give that work for you!



Easy Ways to Give!

- Gifts of Stock
- Standard Deduction of \$300 if you are Single, \$600 if you are Married.
- Required Distribution of IRA's
- Itemizers can deduct up to 100% of their adjusted gross income for CASH Gifts.

You Make It Possible!

Boots on the Banks

Each fall, dedicated crews take to the banks of the Verde and other tributaries to monitor and treat invasive plant species. Even during this unprecedented season the crews saw great success. Following stringent health regulations, these great crew members worked on over 1000 acres of crucial habitat.

Thank YOU!

Monitoring: 1032 acres

Retreatment: 326 acres

Initial Treatment: 34 acres



Fossil Spring Blackberry Removal

I Support This Work

\$25 can provide vital tools for our field crews

\$50 can plant 10 willow trees

\$100 can plant five cottonwood trees

\$250 can allow us to hire a military veteran to spend a day restoring the river bank

\$500 can protect an acre of habitat for an entire year

Want to learn about our new legacy program?

Contact Kegn Moorcroft at 928-274-2077 or KegnM@VerdeRiver.org. More details to come in the summer newsletter.



VerdeRiver.org/donate

A special THANK YOU to everyone that participated in this year's Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival and other events!



**Friends of the
VERDE RIVER**

