

FY 2025 IMPACT REPORT



Friends *of the*
VERDE RIVER

Letter From the Director

To all of our Verde River friends,

Our Annual Impact Report is a very good, and usually satisfying, moment for me to reflect on our work over the last year. I am pleased to see that the core work Friends has been carrying out for more than a decade continue to receive strong support whether through donor funding, volunteer contributions, local authority support, or through our talented group of community scientists. Removing invasive species, restoring upland habitat, supporting wildlife corridors, monitoring water quality, supporting water conservation and promoting community stewardship remain our core mission.

However, Friends hardly acted alone. I have equally been impressed by the broad coalition of partners among nonprofits, foundations, and government entities from the local to state and federal level that are dedicated to preserving the Verde River. The Yavapai Apache Nation, in particular, continues to play a central role in protecting the river. I look forward to further supporting and strengthening our working relationships with all partners. I believe the release of the 2025 Verde River Watershed Report Card will show the value of the broad partnerships we see in the Verde Valley.

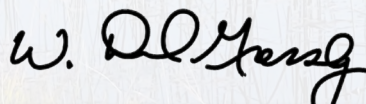
Despite progress made so far, the river remains fragile and continues to face many challenges. These challenges include strengthening the protection of the Upper Verde River, enhancing water quality monitoring, as well as identifying mitigation measures for the proposed raising of the Bartlett Dam on the Lower Verde River. Without vigilant monitoring and follow up action, invasive species will return and once again choke out native riparian species. We have barely started the immense work required for upland restoration. Wildlife corridors remain incomplete. Unfortunately, there is still much work to be done.

Long term success for preserving the Verde River requires enhancing our work with children, teenagers, and young adults so that they too learn to appreciate and value a healthy, flowing river. We have seen good progress in this effort with our BioBlitz campaigns, Family Nature Day and through our new fellowship program for teachers to promote STEM education through study of the Verde River.

As always, I must thank our dynamic Board of Directors which continues to provide strong and clear guidance under the leadership of our president, Jeanne Swarhout. I also must thank the great staff of the Friends, without whose dedication and determination we would not have seen the success described in this report. By sustaining this spirit, we will continue to see a healthy and flowing river for generations to come.

W. David Gressly

Executive Director of Friends of the Verde River



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verderiver.org/donate



Volunteers

This year, students across the Verde Valley stepped into the role of scientists through the Verde Watershed Fellowship Research Project, a new partnership between Friends of the Verde River and the Cottonwood School District. With clipboards, water testing kits, and plenty of curiosity, students have been exploring the health of the rivers and creeks they live alongside, discovering firsthand how science connects to the places they care about most.

One group of students set out to map trash along the riverbanks. What at first looked like scattered litter soon became an investigation into patterns and sources of pollution. Sorting through plastics, glass, and other debris, they asked big questions: Why does this kind of trash end up here? How does it affect wildlife and plants? Their discoveries didn't stop at the data—they began brainstorming solutions, from educational campaigns to river cleanups, determined to make a difference.

Another class waded into research near The Farm at Bent River, where agriculture and river health intersect. With turbidity meters and dissolved oxygen sensors in hand, they compared water quality upstream and downstream of the farm. Each reading told a story about farming practices, soil, and water, giving students a direct look at how land use can shape the health of a river system. Sharing their findings with farm managers gave the students a sense of responsibility and pride, knowing their work could spark conversations about sustainable practices.

Meanwhile, Oak Creek School's 5th graders took on a yearlong study of Oak Creek at Mormon's Crossing. For many of them, this was the first time they truly examined the creek beyond its surface beauty. They measured water clarity, tracked air and water temperatures, and searched for macroinvertebrates—tiny creatures that signal the health of aquatic ecosystems. Along the way, they began noticing the seasonal rhythms of the creek and reflecting on how people impact its balance. By the end of the year, these young scientists had not only gathered meaningful data but also developed a deep sense of connection and responsibility to their local environment.

Through these experiences, students are learning that science is not confined to a classroom—it's alive in the rivers, creeks, and communities around them. Their investigations are building critical skills, sparking new ideas for stewardship, and inspiring action that reaches far beyond the school year. The Verde Watershed Fellowship Research Project is creating a generation of young leaders who see themselves as caretakers of the Verde River system, ensuring its health for the future.

Volunteer Appreciation

The 2024 Volunteer Appreciation Event at Dead Horse Ranch State Park was a joyful celebration of the incredible people who give their time, energy, and passion to protect the Verde River and its surroundings. Against the backdrop of the park's golden autumn landscape, Friends of the Verde River honored volunteers whose dedication sustains river stewardship, habitat restoration, and community education programs throughout the year.

Volunteers gathered to share stories, laughter, and a sense of camaraderie, reflecting on the tangible impact of their work—from planting native species and removing invasive plants to leading educational programs and river cleanups. The event was a heartfelt reminder that the Verde River thrives because of these generous individuals. Through their commitment, enthusiasm, and care, they not only preserve the river today but inspire others to join in safeguarding this treasured resource.



Riparian Restoration

In FY 2025 Friends of the Verde River (FVR) in collaboration with Verde Watershed Restoration Coalition (VWRC) partners, continued its longstanding mission of safeguarding the Verde River's riparian ecosystems by removing invasive plant species.

FVR contracted local crews from Arizona Conservation Corps (AZCC), Verde Earth Technologies and Wild AZ to remove giant reed, salt cedar, Russian olive and tree of heaven. These plants can form dense monocultures, decreasing the biodiversity of our riparian forests, increasing wildfire risk and impeding access to the river.

Wild and Scenic - Boating Support

Last winter, in partnership with US Forest Service (USFS), FVR contracted AZCC crews to remove tamarisk and giant reed along the Wild and Scenic section of the Lower Verde. Crews accessed the river via Chasm Creek and began working upstream towards the Verde River/ Fossil Creek Confluence and will continue to remove invasive species downstream of Chasm over the next five years.

FVR is working with the Forest Service Wild and Scenic River Coordinator to plan river trips for our restoration crews to treat along the more remote Wild and Scenic section of the Lower Verde, where access is more limited. Forest Service River Rangers were able to drop water for Wild AZ crews this past season. This allowed them to have a much lighter load on their ten-mile backpacking trip. This is a great example of the strength and efficiency we have when we work together.



Verde River Greenway

Friends of the Verde River got its start as Friends of the Verde River Greenway. The Verde River Greenway is a stretch river with multiple parcels owned by Arizona State Parks from Tuzigoot River Access Point (RAP) through 89A bridge. Over the last two years, with funding from Arizona Department of Fire and Forestry Management, FVR has worked to remove invasive plants from the riparian area throughout the Greenway. Crews have treated and monitored ecological health to ensure these areas are meeting health goals. Continued monitoring and maintenance of treatment is essential to ensure that the invasive plants do not return.



The Verde Earth Technologies (VET) crew worked on this project for most of the winter. This company is owned and managed by recent era Veterans Chris Young and Sean Borruso. FVR staff and board members visited the crew on site for Veterans Day to thank Sean and Chris for their service to our country and continued commitment to bettering the Verde River environment.

Donor Recognition

In May 2025, Friends of the Verde River proudly celebrated our River Champions event, a gathering that shines a light on the incredible generosity and leadership of those who stand with us to protect the river. Among the many champions we honored, we are especially grateful to Kristine Crandall for her steadfast support of our water quality monitoring program, ensuring that science continues to guide the protection of this vital resource. We also celebrate Jeni and Mike O'Callaghan, whose ongoing support of Friends was beautifully demonstrated through their gracious hosting of a tour of Tres Brisas, offering our community a unique and inspiring experience of river-connected stewardship. These acts of generosity exemplify the heart of our mission—linking people, science, and nature—and we are honored to recognize and celebrate our supporters who make lasting conservation possible.

Verde River Partners Restore Nearly 17 Miles of Riparian Habitat Along Fossil Creek

Friends of the Verde River (FVR), in partnership with the Verde Watershed Restoration Coalition (VWRC) and other key organizations, proudly announces the successful removal of invasive plant species along the nearly 17-mile length of Fossil Creek. This monumental achievement restores the riparian habitat of Fossil Creek, a federally designated Wild and Scenic River and one of Arizona's most treasured natural resources.

For nearly 100 years, Fossil Creek was diverted and used for power generation, leaving much of the creek dry. A large effort to decommission the dam took place in the early 2000s, culminating in Fossil Creek's designation as a Wild and Scenic River in 2009. Restoring the flow allowed the creek to heal naturally, reviving the unique and diverse Fremont cottonwood-Goodding's willow riparian forests. With the flow restored, it became essential to focus on restoring the surrounding habitat to native vegetation and ensuring the creek's full ecological recovery.

Over the past five years, FVR has led collaborative efforts to eradicate high-priority invasive plants, including tamarisk, giant reed, and Russian olive, which threaten the health of the unique Fremont cottonwood-Goodding's willow riparian forests. These ecosystems are vital to a diversity of wildlife, including migratory birds, and provide economic and recreational opportunities to local communities.

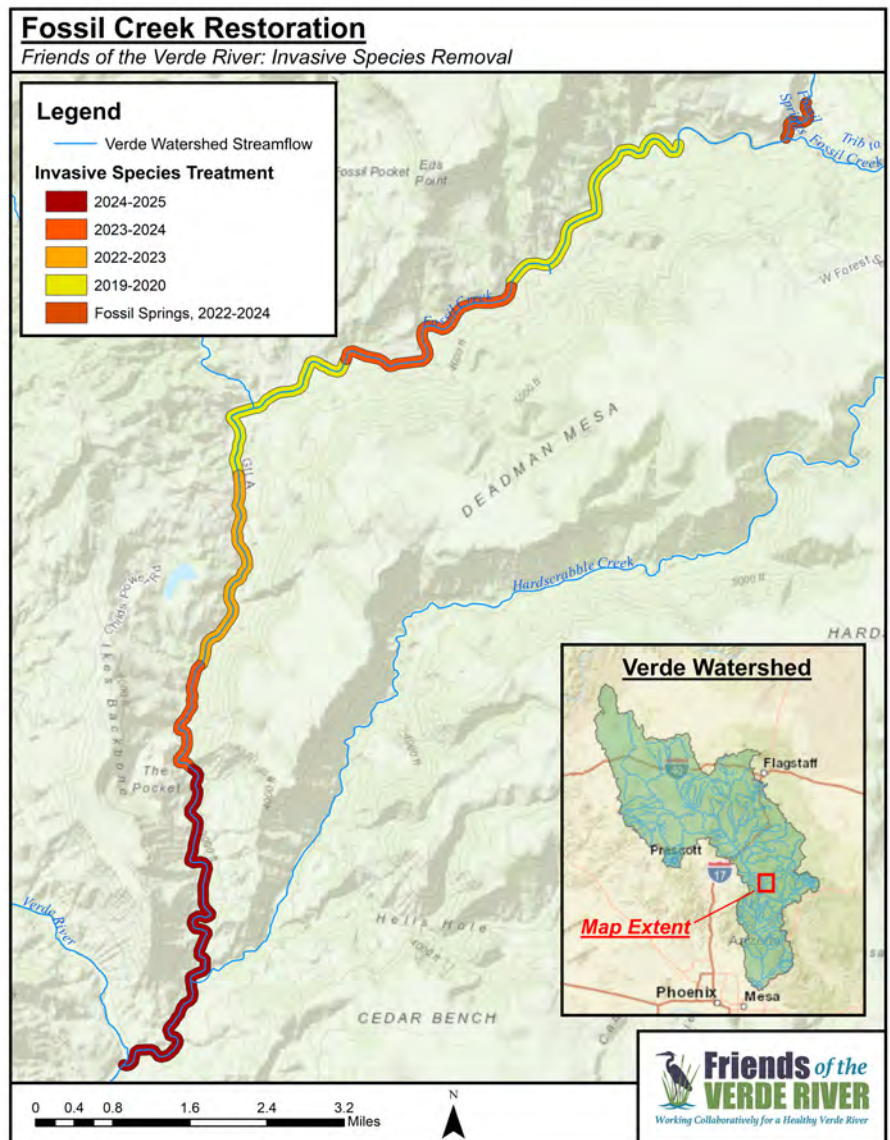
This project was identified as a priority through the development of Fossil Creek's Comprehensive River Management Plan. Implementation work began in 2019, with conservation crews conducting inventory and removal efforts, starting at Fossil Springs and working downstream through rugged terrain, including the remote Mazatzal Wilderness. Challenges such as limited access and the 2021 Backbone Fire temporarily paused the project but also offered an opportunity to study ecosystem recovery after fire events.

Through nearly 30 weeks of crew work, supported by partners such as the National Forest Foundation, Arizona Water Protection Fund, Coconino National Forest, Arizona Conservation Corps, Wild AZ, and others, Friends has cleared Fossil Creek of priority invasive species, significantly improving its ecological health.

"Friends of the Verde has been an instrumental conservation partner on the Coconino National Forest by collaboratively managing invasive species within the Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic River Corridor," explained Andy Pigg, Forest Botanist with Coconino National Forest. "Their recent efforts have helped the Coconino National Forest restore critical riparian habitat along 17 miles of Fossil Creek and have encouraged a healthier, more diverse native plant community. Controlling invasive plant species is rarely a one-time event, and continued restoration within Fossil Creek is expected to occur to maintain this initial investment of time and resources with Friends of the Verde River."

"We are thrilled to celebrate this milestone for Fossil Creek," said David Gressly, Executive Director of Friends of the Verde River. "This achievement reflects years of dedication by our team and partners to protect and restore Arizona's invaluable riparian habitats."

Although the initial treatment is complete, the work is ongoing. Continued monitoring and follow-up treatments will be necessary to prevent invasive species from returning and to ensure the habitat remains healthy for generations to come.



Upland Restoration

Stringtown Wash and Pine Creek Low Tech Process Based Restoration (LTPBR)

FVR worked with the National Forest Foundation and Prescott National Forest to implement a Low Tech Process Based Restoration (LTPBR) project on Stringtown Wash and Pine Creek.

Maybe a special box – Low Tech Process Based Restoration refers to ecological restoration methods that install simple hand built structures made of logs or rocks into the channel to mimic and drive natural river or channel processes.

The goal of LTPBR projects is to nudge the system in the right direction towards healing itself using its natural processes. By installing structures in degraded channels and gullies, we slow down the water allowing it to spread across the floodplain, recharge into the ground, build the resiliency of the local landscape and improve local wildlife habitat.



FVR is looking forward to continuing this important work and building a community of practitioners who are implementing these projects throughout the watershed. We are planning a training session for Arizona land managers to learn how to implement these projects in fall of 2025.

A Bit About Rachel

Friends of the Verde River welcomed Rachel Laura as our new Deputy Executive Director in late April. Rachel has devoted her career to wildlife conservation and habitat restoration across the western United States.

She earned her Bachelor's degree in Wildlife and Habitat Restoration from Arizona State University and began her career as a wildlife biologist on Department of Defense lands in Arizona and across the country. She later joined the Arizona Game and Fish Department in Pinetop, where she partnered with ranchers, landowners, and agencies to plan, fund, and implement large-scale habitat restoration projects. During this time, she also began her Master's degree in Natural Resources, studying how sagebrush ecosystems respond to restoration treatments.

Rachel's career then took her to Salt Lake City as Senior GIS Analyst for the Utah Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining, where she managed their geospatial data and conducted bat surveys in abandoned uranium mines. From there, she moved to Bishop, California, to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, leading restoration efforts with private landowners—including river restoration—and trained in applied fluvial geomorphology.

In 2018, Rachel returned to her home state of Arizona with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Flagstaff. Two years later, she was promoted to the Southwest Regional Office, where she evaluated species' extinction risks to guide Endangered Species Act decisions. In 2022, while continuing her federal role, Rachel began her PhD at the University of Arizona, focusing on a little-known firefly species native to Arizona, including here in the Verde Valley.

This summer, she partnered with the U.S. Forest Service in Sedona and Camp Verde, Friends of the Forest, and the Xerces Society to recruit and train volunteers to survey for this elusive firefly. She plans to continue this work in the coming years, raising awareness of this unique species and its importance to the Verde Watershed.

Rachel lives in Flagstaff with her husband, their three children, a dog, and a cat. She enjoys hiking, camping, backpacking, swimming, and playing the cello.



Water Quality

Caring for the River Together

Our Verde Water Watcher volunteers played a vital role this year in protecting the health of our rivers and creeks. Their work helped identify new problem spots for arsenic and *E. coli*, while also contributing to the good news of other areas being officially removed from the "impaired" list. Each sample collected gives state and local land managers a clearer understanding of local stream and river water conditions.

This summer's sampling focused on *E. coli*, a bacterium found in humans, pets, livestock, and wildlife. While most types of *E. coli* are harmless, high levels of certain strains can cause serious illness and often point to other waterborne diseases. Past analysis in Oak Creek revealed that much of the *E. coli* came from human and dog waste which can pose health risks ranging from stomach cramps and diarrhea to, in severe cases, kidney problems. After storms, rivers and streams often become muddy or turbid, which is usually linked to higher levels of bacteria and other pollutants that can exceed safe limits. During these times it's advisable to avoid swimming and drinking.

With these findings, attention remains on Oak Creek and parts of the Verde River where recreation is highest. Exceedances in these areas have prompted restoration projects to reduce recreation-related impacts and have also guided efforts to trace sources of contamination. From May through October, volunteers sampled monthly along the Verde River, Oak Creek, and Spring Creek, reporting results directly to land managers. Thanks to their efforts, exceedances were reported quickly, helping managers issue timely public advisories.

In total, 25 dedicated volunteers gave more than 257 hours, monitoring 26 sites and collecting 263 samples for *E. coli*, turbidity, nutrients, and metals. Their dedication ensures that the Verde River continues to provide clean water, healthy habitats, and safe recreation for the community.



I've had a 40-year relationship with the Verde that has enhanced my life in so many ways. Getting involved with water quality monitoring will enable me to take this love affair to the next level.

-Andrew Berman

Volunteering as a water quality monitor gives me the chance to intimately connect with the land, air, our precious water source, and all its inhabitants.

-Elisa Rios



River Friendly Living



Building a Culture of Conservation

The River Friendly Living program inspires a voluntary culture of river conservation in our communities. Over the last year, Friends of the Verde River has partnered with homeowners, businesses, agricultural producers, and even municipalities to advance practices that support sustainable water supply, clean water, healthy habitat, and community education.

One of the program's most significant achievements this year was the award of 45 small grants to support water conservation projects. These projects—ranging from irrigation efficiency upgrades and lawn removal to rain harvesting systems and indoor fixture replacements—are estimated to save roughly 81 million gallons of water.

By working together across the watershed, River Friendly Living participants are proving that small actions add up to a big impact. This growing movement is helping to ensure that the Verde River remains a vibrant, flowing resource for people and wildlife alike.

Wastewater Reuse Planning

Friends of the Verde River is committed to sustaining flows in our river by helping communities and landowners explore innovative solutions for water use. One key strategy is wastewater reuse—capturing and reusing treated effluent and gray water to reduce demands on groundwater and surface water.

In FY 25, Friends began working with landowners across the Verde Valley to plan for wastewater reuse systems that not only meet their needs but also protect the health of the river system. Our team is providing support with planning and engineering to ensure each project is designed with a healthy Verde River in mind.

One exciting project is in partnership with Page Springs Vineyards. Together, we are planning a system to reuse treated wastewater for vineyard irrigation. This collaboration has the potential to reduce surface water diverted for agriculture by 1 million gallons per year, helping to preserve more water in the river for wildlife, recreation, and downstream communities.

By investing in projects like these, Friends of the Verde River is advancing creative solutions that balance human needs with river health, ensuring that the Verde continues to flow for generations to come.



Celebrating Stewardship!

The Friends of the Verde River Stewardship Team serves as a cornerstone of the organization's mission by providing critical support to program teams and advancing the integration of educational science within local communities. Throughout FY 2025, the team worked to strengthen the relationship between ecological restoration, community engagement, and long-term sustainability of the Verde River. Restoration and Stewardship staff, alongside volunteers, work together to conduct science-based monitoring and habitat restoration, ensuring that projects are informed by data and aligned with best practices for river health. Equally important, these programs create opportunities for residents, students, and volunteers to participate directly in conservation activities, transforming education into action. These hands-on experiences foster environmental literacy and empower community members to become active stewards of their watershed.

The Stewardship Team also places a strong emphasis on relationship building across watershed communities, recognizing that lasting conservation outcomes depend on trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility. By engaging with landowners, local governments, partner organizations, and diverse community groups, the team works to strengthen partnerships that support both ecological and community well-being. Through ongoing dialogue, joint projects, and inclusive engagement opportunities, the Stewardship Team helps create a network of connected communities that are invested in the future of the Verde River.

By linking people to the science of conservation and the natural systems that sustain the region, the Stewardship Team not only advances ecological resilience but also builds local capacity to safeguard the Verde River.

Fiesta de la Garza 2024

The 2024 Fiesta celebration was more than a heartfelt gathering—it was a celebration of the people and partners who go above and beyond to protect and preserve the Verde River. Under the glow of winter lights, Friends of the Verde River came together with our community to honor those whose dedication makes a lasting impact on the watershed.

From local businesses like Pur Solar & Electrical, who bring sustainable solutions to the region, to individuals such as Albert Sillas, Robert Busich, Tamra Gibbons, and James Green, each honoree has contributed time, energy, and expertise that extend far beyond expectation. Organizations like the Prescott National Forest, Southwest Conservation Corps, Oak Creek Valley Property Owners Association, and The Nature Conservancy were recognized for their collaborative work in conservation and stewardship. Community champions such as Nate Peters, Kristine and Tom William, Tice Supplee, and Jeni O'Callaghan and Tony Gioia remind us that protecting the river is as much about passion and perseverance as it is about science.

The evening was filled with gratitude and celebration, but also with inspiration. Each awardee's story echoed a shared truth: preserving the Verde River takes all of us—working together, dreaming big, and committing to action. The annual celebration shines a spotlight on those leading the way.



Special Features

EcoFlights (The Verde from Earth to Sky)

Friends of the Verde River recently hosted a special day of EcoFlights for donors and partners in Cottonwood, Arizona, offering a rare opportunity to view conservation work from the sky. Held in May 2025, the flights provided participants with a breathtaking aerial perspective of Fossil Creek and the surrounding Upper Verde River watershed, showcasing the results of years of collaboration and restoration.

EcoFlight, a nonprofit organization, makes these experiences possible through its mission of using small aircraft to educate and advocate for the protection of wildlands, watersheds, and culturally significant landscapes. By offering the aerial view, EcoFlight connects stakeholders with differing viewpoints, helping to build understanding and promote conservation and environmental justice. Their work is grounded in elevating the voices of impacted communities and supporting policies that protect both people and place. Through the shared and transformative experience of flight, EcoFlight meets people where they are, creating a powerful platform for awareness and action.

Friends of the Verde River coordinates these flights periodically to help partners, supporters, and community members see firsthand the scale and impact of watershed restoration efforts.

"The restoration of Fossil Creek could not have happened without tribes, legislators, nonprofits, and community members working together to protect such a vital part of Central Arizona's heritage."
– Dana Walsh, Friends Board Director

"It's phenomenal to see so many acres restored from the air."
– Mason Bradshaw, Business Owner

"A different perspective of the topography gave me a deeper appreciation for the area."
– Jordan Ford, Business Owner



By hosting these EcoFlights, Friends of the Verde River continues its commitment to engaging the community and its partners in watershed stewardship and conservation. More than a unique experience, these flights inspire renewed investment and collaboration in preserving one of Arizona's most vital and beautiful river systems.

Celebrating Five Years of the Verde BioBlitz

In 2025, Friends of the Verde River and our partner Science Vortex, proudly celebrated the fifth annual Verde BioBlitz, held each spring in conjunction with the Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival. This community-powered science engages both local fifth-grade students and public participants across the Verde Valley in exploring and documenting biodiversity using the iNaturalist app.



The 2025 BioBlitz was another outstanding success! Students from eight schools throughout the watershed took part, with eighteen fifth-grade classes participating in hands-on field trips. During these trips, students explored natural areas, recorded observations of plants, animals, birds, insects, and more, and contributed real scientific data to a growing body of local ecological knowledge.

After the fieldwork, Friends of the Verde River and Science Vortex visited each participating classroom to help students analyze their data and reflect on the biodiversity they observed. In total, 502 students took part in this year's Verde BioBlitz—deepening their connection to nature while building skills in observation, inquiry, and environmental stewardship.

	Observations	Observers	Classes Engaged	Students Engaged
'21	1028	31	5	122
'22	4951	466	7	201
'23	5928	584	18	476
'24	7155	429	19	418
'25	6820	448	18	502

Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival

The 2025 Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival was a standout success, set against the scenic backdrop of Dead Horse Ranch State Park. This year, the festival expanded its vendor area—doubling in size—to feature a paleontology scientist, local crafters, and artists, offering attendees a wide array of nature-inspired goods and experiences. Family Nature Day was enhanced with hands-on interactions featuring raptors and reptiles, engaging participants of all ages. Promotion through Yavapai Broadcasting helped broaden the festival’s reach, and for the first time, Channel 12 News provided coverage and conducted interviews that increased visibility for this signature community event. Attendees enjoyed diverse nature trips and immersive night photography outings under the stars. The festival also expanded its educational offerings with new workshops and inspiring keynote presentations, including a screening of a powerful pronghorn film and a talk by renowned naturalist and artist Walt Anderson. The event continues to flourish as a vibrant celebration of birds, wildlife, and community in the Verde Valley.



The 25th Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival celebrates a community tradition that began with Barbie Hart’s vision in 2000. She proposed hosting the festival at Dead Horse Ranch State Park, gaining support from Park Manager Les Bovee and the Cottonwood Chamber of Commerce, and brought in key partners including Susie Beach, the Audubon Society, expert birder Dena Greenwood, and Michael Durgain. The first festival was a success, and over the years it has grown with the dedication of committee members—many still active today—reflecting Barbie’s pride in this vibrant celebration of birds, nature, and community.



A standout feature of the 2025 Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival was the Otter Spotter Walk, led by Megan Isadore of Otters for Waters. Participants were guided along the Verde River to observe river otters in their natural habitat, learning about their behaviors, ecology, and the vital conservation efforts that support these elusive animals. Megan shared expert insights on river health, habitat restoration, and ways attendees could engage in local wildlife protection, making the walk both educational and memorable.

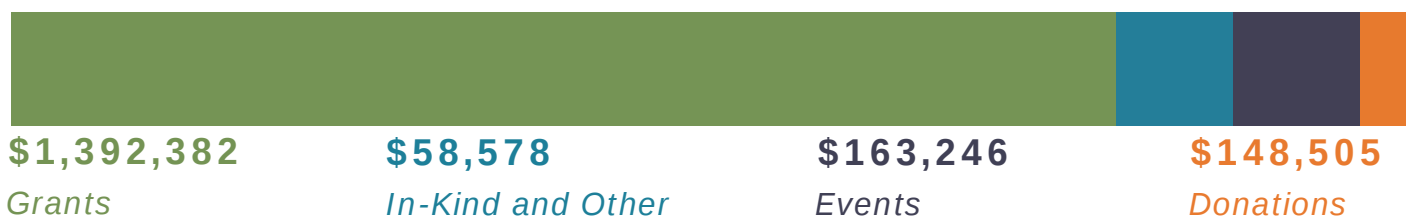


Financials

Expenses



Revenue and Support





Letter From the President

I continue to have the rewarding and challenging experience of leading a very high functioning nonprofit board for the Friends of the Verde River (FVR). The 2025 year has been filled with positive changes for the FVR Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers in response to a changing nonprofit environment. The organization has done a truly remarkable job of identifying new directions, strategic planning around those, and leadership growth. I continue to be very impressed with the professionalism and creative direction of the FVR staff lead by Executive Director David Gressly.

Scientific approaches remain the central focus of all FVR projects and activities directed toward keeping the Verde River healthy and flowing. The science shared between colleagues, collaborators, peers, and federal/state agencies continues to form the highlights in the 2024 State of the Verde Watershed report. Again, the key factor noted in this report remains with the essential nature of partnerships and collaborations from Flagstaff to Phoenix, Prescott to Payson and well beyond geographic boundaries. While these partnerships continue to provide extraordinary results, they also provide a growing mutual sense of vision for the future of the river and a satisfaction as we can demonstrate positive improvements as well as critical needs in river habitat and flow.

If you share my passion and vision for the future of the Verde River and the entire watershed, please consider joining us as a volunteer, a partner, a donor, or simply as a booster for the work of this important nonprofit organization. There is a role with FVR for everyone and increasingly for the next couple of generations, young adults and yep, those kids! Our watershed is home to wondrous creatures from bald eagles nesting to blue herons, otters to an amazing variety of critical insects. The future of the Verde River Watershed is not just for the few, it's for every single one of us! Please consider joining our work in whatever capacity you can; the future of the Verde River Watershed is an invaluable resource for all of Arizona and beyond.

Jeanne Swarthout

President of Friends of the Verde River

We Won Two Arizona Forward Awards!

We are beyond thrilled to share that Friends of the Verde River has won two Arizona Forward Awards for our work restoring riparian habitat at Wild & Scenic Fossil Creek.

President's Award – The highest honor of the night

Natural Environment Preservation Award

Over the past several years, we've worked alongside our Verde Watershed Restoration Coalition partners to remove invasive plants along nearly 17 miles of Fossil Creek. Thanks to this effort, we've improved habitat for native wildlife, strengthened our watershed, and shown the power of collaboration.

These awards are for all of us—you, your family, our community, and Arizona's future. Thank you for supporting this project and help making this work possible!

