

Arizona Department of Water Resources

3550 North Central Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85012

(602) 771-8500
www.azwater.gov

NEWS
RELEASE



Janet Napolitano,
Governor
Herb Guenther,
Director

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Public Information Office
(602) 771 8430

Governor Napolitano proclaims April "Arizona Rivers Month"

Citing her strong commitment to preservation at a time when "Arizona's rivers face increasing pressure and threats as our population and water needs grow," Gov. Janet Napolitano today proclaimed April as "Arizona Rivers Month."

"Arizona has few remaining perennially flowing rivers and is committed to protecting those that do remain, such as the San Pedro River, Verde River, and Fossil Creek," the Governor said.

"The quality of life in Arizona is particularly enhanced by the vitality of our precious and rare flowing rivers."

Herb Guenther, director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources, said the agency is keenly aware how precious Arizona's rivers are, and has a number of projects underway to help preserve them.

"We are fortunate to have these rivers," he said. "They give us a serious responsibility to manage them in ways that not only protect the rivers, but that allow our citizens to enjoy them.

"Sometimes that is a difficult balancing act. But as people become more aware of their individual responsibilities as stewards of nature's gifts, we can succeed."

Guenther pointed out the Arizona Water Protection Fund, an independent group housed in ADWR, is working in the community on many riparian and river enhancement projects. The water protection group is funded by an annual appropriation from the Legislature.

Among the projects funded in the 2008 cycle is a effort undertaken by the Tucson Audubon Society to reclaim an undeveloped half-mile section of Atturbury Wash at Abraham Lincoln Regional Park in Tucson.

One of the larger projects, Guenther said, is an effort to restore 68 acres of riparian habitat in the Yuma East Wetlands along the Colorado River. He noted also a restoration project in Prescott's Watson Woods Riparian Preserve, and a return to the Lower San Pedro to examine how much riparian areas have recovered in light of reductions in groundwater pumping..