

Verde Watershed Association

CONFLUENCE

Your Information Source for the Verde River Watershed

December 1997

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FREE

FLOOD VIDEO DEBUTS—The full flood fury of that Jekyll-Hyde stream known as Oak Creek is showcased in an 18-minute documentary designed to prompt public preparedness for future runoff rampages. Ten local, state and federal agencies joined forces to sponsor the RB Productions video entitled, "Oak Creek: Gentle Stream to Raging River." Producer Rick Balch captured six hours of footage during 1993's devastating flood. The video covers Oak Creek from Pumphouse Wash to Cornville and features spectacular scenes of hydraulic mayhem in Sedona's Sycamore Cove neighborhood. Viewers are encouraged to take precautions for future destructive overflows. Copies of the video are available for free rental at the Sedona Fire & Police Departments, City Hall, the Public Library and area businesses. FOR MORE INFORMATION: **John Conway @ 1-520-282-6800**

PAYSON ZONE STUDIED—The continuing specter of chronic annual water shortages in the Strawberry, Pine and Payson areas has galvanized a multi-agency effort to identify new water sources and their costs and constraints. The Northern Gila County Water Plan Steering Committee represents major water interests in the rapidly-growing area below the Mogollon Rim. The group's goal is to develop a firm water supply to meet projected growth in short, medium and long range plans. A Technical Committee is now preparing a report which will define precise study area boundaries, detail existing area data and outline a possible comprehensive water study. The next Technical Committee meeting will be December 18. The committee report is scheduled for discussion and possible action in January. Most of the study area lies in the Verde watershed. The zone's geology and aquifers differ significantly from other water-rich areas of the Verde basin. Many wells have gone dry and the area faces a possible water crises. Last summer water was trucked to the area from distant wells in the East Clear Creek drainage. FOR MORE INFORMATION: **Robert Mawson @ 1-520-402-0206**

RUNOFF YIELDS NORMAL—November inflow into Horseshoe Reservoir from the Verde River watershed was 14,115 acre-feet, slightly more than the median of 13,600. Last year, the watershed produced 15,700 ac.-ft. Looking ahead, a normal December would typically measure 19,400 ac.-ft. from the watershed. The past two years of December runoff have been below average while 1993 and 1994 were only slightly above average. However, observers speculate the upcoming December runoff could be far above normal if the much-touted El Niño begins to deliver its predicted punch. December 1992 logged 73,400 ac.-ft while the last big comparable El Niño year in 1982 produced a whopping 176,000 ac.-ft. The all-time high December monthly flow was 285,600 ac.-ft. in 1978. Other big December totals have occurred in 1965 (284,000), 1923 (215,000), 1966 (172,000), 1919 (137,000) and 1940 (133,000). Meanwhile, river flows at Camp Verde continue in the 120 cubic feet per second (cfs) range with about 250 cfs reaching the reservoir system. Horseshoe is 13-percent full and 56 feet down from the spillway. Bartlett is 44 feet down and holds 46 percent of capacity. November precipitation in the watershed was less than a half-inch or about half of normal median. FOR MORE INFORMATION: **Charlie Ester @ 1-602-236-2587**

WATER GRANTS AWARDED—The Water Protection Fund Commission in early December awarded \$2.4-million to fund 20 statewide projects. About \$3.5-million was available for this funding cycle. A Verde watershed area project sponsored by Yavapai College was among the successful applicants. The Walnut Creek Center for Education and Research Biological Inventory project will receive \$49,480 to perform a two-year ecological study and baseline resource assessment of a 280-acre site. Yavapai College will contribute an additional \$22,860 as matching financial resources for the project. FOR MORE INFORMATION: **Su Miller @ 1-602-417-2460 Ext. 7260**

TREES AVAILABLE AGAIN—Fremont cottonwood and gooding willow tree planting stock will be available in January from the Verde NRC's riparian nursery at Dead Horse State Park. This year crews from the Arizona Boys Ranch will assist the harvesting operation during the winter dormant season. A tree is sold cut, trimmed of all branches and soaked for at least a week. A single 15-foot cottonwood pole can be sectioned into as many as six stubs suitable for planting in saturated soil. With adequate irrigation and protection from predators, the stubs can produce a 25-foot tree in as little as four years. Prepared planting poles are priced at \$12 each. Trees will be available while the supply lasts. Poles or stubs must be planted before dormant season ends, normally in late March. **FOR MORE INFORMATION: Richard Thompson @ 1-520-634-7913**

RIVER AFFECTS DETAILED—A University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center book chronicling the human impacts on area waterways has proven very popular. Almost half of the early-1997 press run of "Arizona's Changing Rivers: How People Have Affected the Rivers" has been sold. The user-friendly 200-page book covers the state's major rivers and tributaries from pre-European settlement to the present using historical and anecdotal information, photos, maps and graphs. The easy-reading volume uses non-technical terms, common names for plants and animals and is cross-referenced with a thorough glossary. An optional computer disk contains 1800 bibliographic citations. Authors Barbara Tellman, Richard Yarde and Mary G. Wallace draw from history, archaeology, hydrology, ecology and water law to illustrate intentional or accidental changes brought about by cities, mining, grazing, agriculture, dams and restoration. Cost is less than \$20 including diskette and shipping. **FOR MORE INFORMATION: Ana Rodriguez @ 1-520-792-9591 Ext. # 29**

CHECK YOUR INSURANCE—The El Niño commotion continues to focus major ongoing attention on flood insurance. Regular homeowners policies do not cover losses incurred from flood damage. Federally-backed flood insurance purchased through private sector insurance companies and agents can reimburse for all covered losses up to \$250,000 for homeowners and \$500,000 for businesses. A national average annual cost of a flood insurance policy is \$316 but rates vary according to type of structure and location. Flood insurance can be purchased even if a property has been previously damaged by high water. Flood insurance isn't only for those living alongside the Verde River and its major tributaries. Properties near normally dry washes or in areas which might be subject to sheet flooding from heavy localized rains can also benefit from flood insurance. Over one-quarter of all claims paid each year are actually outside special flood hazard areas. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Preferred Risk, available for about \$100 per year, is designed for residential properties located in low to moderate flood risk zones. Flood insurance is also available for renters who wish to protect the contents of their apartments or condominiums. In most cases, there is a 30 day waiting period before flood insurance coverage becomes effective. Contact your insurance carrier to find out how to purchase flood insurance. If you do not have an homeowners insurance carrier, an agent referral service is available. **FOR MORE INFORMATION: NFIP @ 1-800-427-4661**

EQIP FUNDS AVAILABLE—Agricultural producers with farm or ranch lands anywhere in the Verde watershed can now apply for cost-sharing assistance under the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Statewide Resource Concerns category. An additional \$100,000 has been targeted to assist landowners within the Verde NRC's "Verde Riparian" Geographic Priority Area. Money can be used to reimburse actual costs for conservation practices such as irrigation pipelines, terracing or land leveling. While producers may sign-up at any time during the year, January 31 is the initial cut-off for ranking applications. The EQIP program requires a 25-percent match from applicants selected for funding. Producers who previously applied for the program and did not receive funding must reapply for the new year. All available funds may be allocated during this first ranking period. The Verde NRC will hold a Local Work Group meeting in early 1998 to determine which practices are eligible for cost-sharing assistance. USDA cost-sharing assistance has been used for decades to conserve Verde area soil and water. **FOR MORE INFORMATION: Mark Jalving @ 520-567-2496**

COORDINATOR COMMENTS—An expanded Verde Watershed Weather section has been added to the Internet Home Page. The section includes several dozen links to federal, private and international resources to help understand the evolving winter weather situations which might affect the Verde region. Another new section is the beginning of a comprehensive “government guide” with links to most of the state and federal agencies which manage or regulate various resources in the area. Eventually, this section will also include details on governments of all watershed counties, cities and towns. A comprehensive bibliography for the Verde watershed prepared by Dr. James Byrkit has also been added to the Home Page. Preparations continue for The Verde River Float Trip program but the free river trips are not expected to begin until sometime in February. In other matters, the USBOR’s Warren Greenwell (602-395-5718) is working to expand the Verde Watershed Association technical reference collection at the Cottonwood Public Library. A second reference collection will also be housed at the Yavapai County Supervisor’s Office in Cottonwood. Various hard-to-find reports, technical studies and maps will be available for on-site use. Don’t forget to mark your calendars for the 4-9 p.m. January 28 Camp Verde Community Center Open House on the endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. FOR MORE INFORMATION: **John Parsons @ 1-520-567-6645**

**Verde Watershed Association
Meeting Minutes
11/18/97 Village of Oak Creek**

The meeting room was opened at 5:30 p.m. and several attendees arrived early to exchange ideas and catch up on various activities.

The meeting itself at the Village of Oak Creek Community Assn. Clubhouse was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Vice-Chair Marsha Foutz. The two dozen people in attendance introduced themselves.

The October minutes were approved without objection. There was no financial report as the treasurer was absent.

Marsha presented a Vice-Chair’s report. She raised the possibility of obtaining monthly water quality reports as well as pertinent data from various agencies.

Chuck Dempsey, Salt River Project meteorologist, presented a graphic depiction of various perspectives on El Niño. He said odds favored a wetter than normal winter but odds also existed that the upcoming winter could be drier than normal. He expects El Niño to produce a few more storms than average along with a boost in typical watershed yields.

A lively discussion took place concerning possible community interest in studies regarding the basin’s water resources. Tom O’Halleran said Yavapai County is making an effort to bring various interest groups together to determine if and how to proceed to understand the area’s water resources. Much discussion took place about agency agendas and how to involve the public in any process which might get underway.

Ed McGavock was appointed to chair the Nominating Committee which will recommend 1998 officers. Other committee members are: Mark Peterson, Gene Holloway and Loyd Barnett. In the Chairman’s absence no other committee assignments were made.

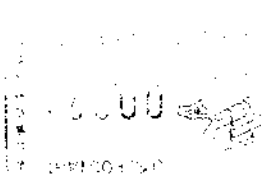
Barnett told the group about management changes involving the Big Park Domestic Wastewater Improvement District. He gave an overview of the District’s facilities, permits and future plans.

Dan Salzler described ongoing efforts to bring together private citizens working in other watersheds with VWA leaders to discuss how to join forces and work together.

John Parsons recounted various activities of the coordinator. He commended area media for reprinting many of the items which appear in the newsletter. He described the changes which are underway with the internet Home Page. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. (By J. Parsons-11/97)

VWA 1998 Meeting Schedule & Location

January	20	Chino Valley	Town Hall
February	17	Camp Verde	Town Hall
March	17	Cottonwood	Y.C.B.O.S.
April	21	Prescott	Y.C.B.O.S.
May	19	Village of Oak Ck.	Comm. Assn.
June	16	Clarkdale	Memorial Hall
July	21	Chino Valley	Town Hall
August	18	Camp Verde	Town Hall
September	15	Cottonwood	Y.C.B.O.S.
October	20	Prescott	Y.C.B.O.S.
November	17	Village of Oak Ck.	Comm. Assn.
December	15	Clarkdale	Memorial Hall



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VWA meets Dec. 16
Clarkdale, Arizona

VERDE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

AGENDA

7:00 P.M., Tuesday, December 16, 1997
(Meeting facility doors open at 6 p.m.)
Verde Canyon Railroad Depot
300 North Broadway, Clarkdale, AZ

1. Call To Order
2. Introduction of Attendees
3. Approval of November Minutes
4. Financial Report
5. Chairman's Update & Report
6. Program--Clarkdale public works update
7. Committee Reports/Appointments
8. Coordinator Report
9. Election of officers
10. Other business.
11. Adjournment by 9:00 p.m.

Next meeting: January 20, Chino Valley, Arizona

VWA Officers:

Chairman-- Jay Wilkinson, Yavapai Cattlegrowers Association
Vice-Chair-- Marsha Foutz, Friends of the Verde
Sec.-Trea.-- Tom Bonomo, Verde District Ranger, Prescott N.F.

VWA Mailing Address VWA P.O. 4595 Camp Verde, AZ 86322
 The Verde Watershed Association meets on the 3rd Tuesday each month in communities throughout the watershed. The public is always welcome.

This document is available in alternative formats by contacting:
 John Parsons ADA Coordinator at 567-6645.

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