

Critical Role of the Arizona Water Protection Fund in the Upper Gila Watershed



AWPF helps to protect our state's water supply and enhances Arizona's sustainability.

Established by the Legislature in 1994 to provide funding for protecting our state's rivers, streams and associated riparian habitats.

It is the ONLY dedicated funding source to maintain and restore these unique and vital riparian resources.

Our state has benefited greatly through improvements in water quality and quantity, in-stream flows, biodiversity, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, flood control and overall watershed health. Through project implementation, jobs are created and revenue streams in local economies increase.

Current Projects in the Upper Gila Watershed

Restoration of the Gila River at Apache Grove (map #164) - \$744,747.00

Larry Barney

Proper stream geomorphology/channel characteristics will be restored along 1.6 miles of the Gila River on 200 acres near Duncan by allowing the main channel to reattach to its former floodplain. Objectives of the project include restoring natural floodplain function by removing an existing partially breached levee, reducing the risks of lateral erosion and land loss, managing salt cedar, improving riparian habitats and stream function. This project includes mechanically excavating 3,000 feet of earthen levee and returning the ground to natural grade to restore natural flooding to the floodplain. A series of overbank hedgerows will be designed and planted in the applicant's agricultural fields and designed to allow for efficient harvesting of crops. Other practices include implementation of bank stabilization measures, invasive vegetative species management, native species revegetation, monitoring, fencing, and development of a public outreach plan.



Double Circle Ranch Erosion Control Project (map #172) - \$35,356.00

Double Circle Ranch

The purpose of this project is to reduce sediment load and erosion occurring in a watershed that feeds into Eagle Creek on a portion of this 37,000 acre ranch located in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests. The project includes restoration of drainages by constructing small rock dams, media lunas, splash aprons, and armoring in eroding gullies to catch silt and soil, thereby reducing channel sediment loading, increasing vegetation, and improving channel characteristics of the drainages.



Gila River Water Conservation Education Program (map #178) - \$148,612.80

Gila Watershed Partnership

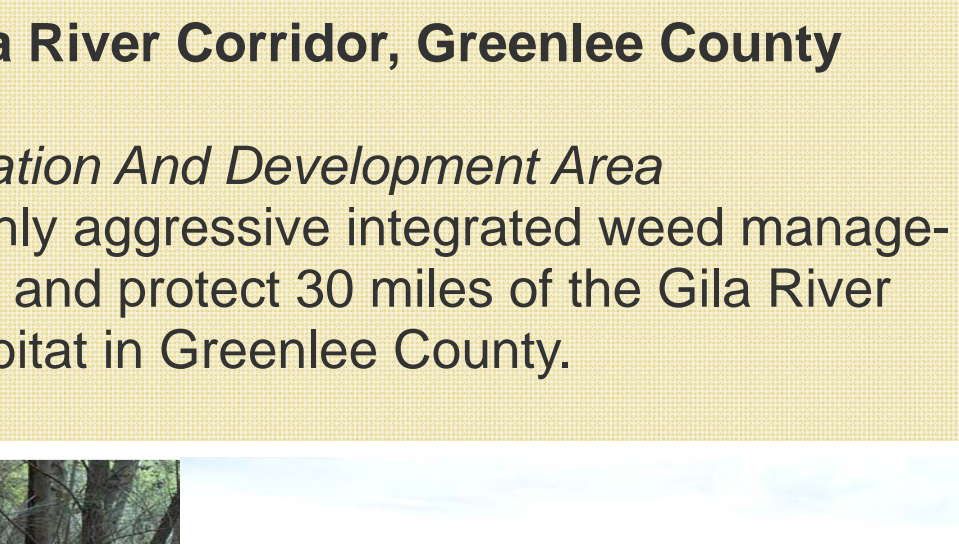
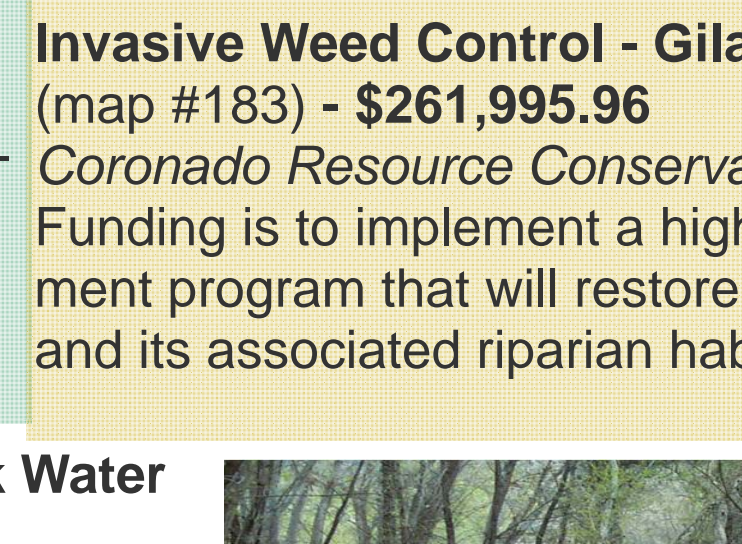
The purpose of this project is to reduce per capita per day consumption of water throughout the Upper Gila Watershed. An intense water education program will be implemented in Graham and Greenlee Counties and will include a media campaign, school education program, home and business water audit program, and educational programs at major community events.



Eagle Creek Riparian Restoration at Filleman Crossing (map #184) - \$265,776.00

Jeanette Filleman and Howard Filleman

This project will reduce downstream sedimentation and turbidity, and protect and enhance habitat for federally listed species by armoring a flood-prone road crossing located on the applicant's private property in Greenlee County. Rock rip-rap, aggregate, geo-textile fabric, and gravel surfacing will be installed and compacted across the stream channel.



E. Coli Reduction on the San Francisco River through Alternative Livestock Water on the Kaler Ranch, Phase II (map #185) - \$137,594.43

Richard and Lois Kaler

The purpose of this project is to reduce E. coli levels in the San Francisco River. The grantee will accomplish this goal by excluding livestock access to the San Francisco River. This will require the installation of an off-channel water source for the Kaler's livestock. Specifically, funding will be used to install a solar well, a water storage tank and water trough to meet the objectives.



Double Circle Ranch Erosion Control Project Phase II (map #186) - \$36,866.60

Wilma Jenkins

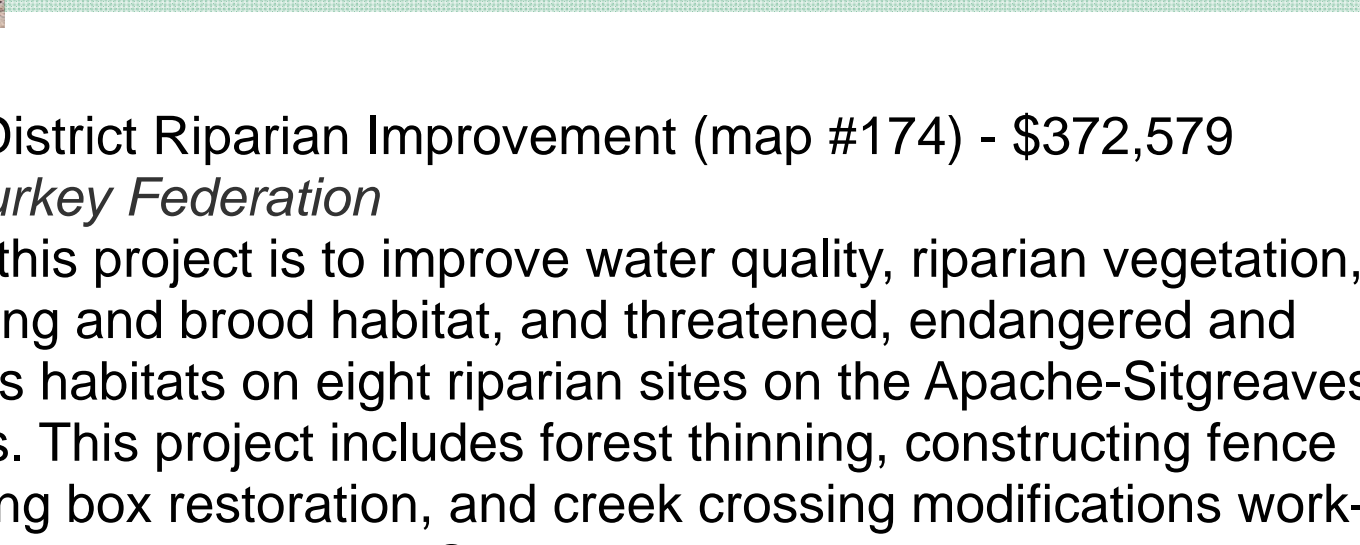
This project is designed to reduce sediment load to the watershed by constructing small rock dams, media lunas, splash aprons, and armoring in eroding gullies to catch silt and soil. Native on-site seeds are used in and around these structures. Photopoint monitoring and stream channel measurements will be employed to document the effectiveness of the erosion control practices.



Eagle Creek Riparian Protection Project (map #187) - \$136,714.11

Darcy Ely

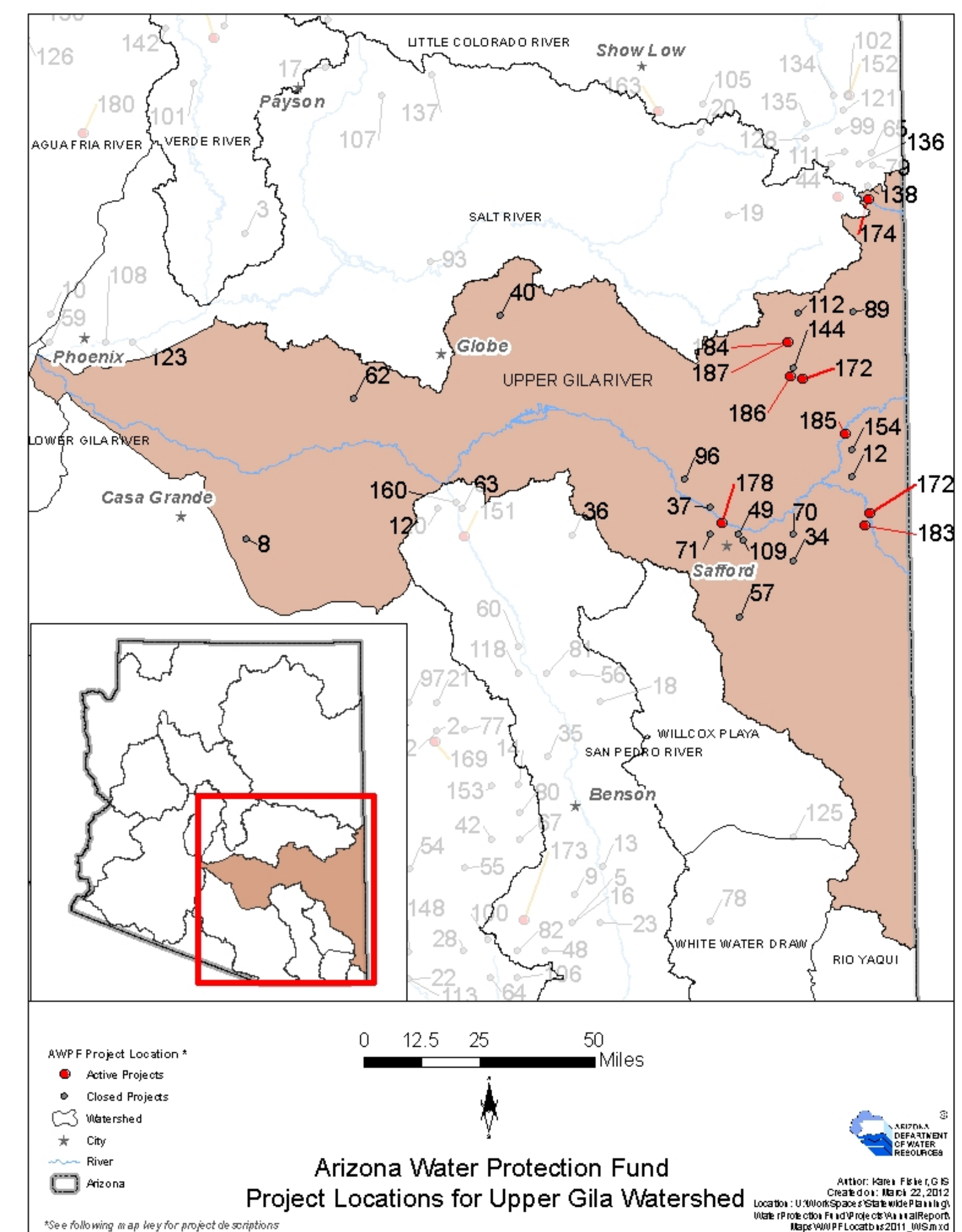
The grantee will replace five miles of an existing 50 year old boundary fence on the 4-Drage Ranch on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest bordering the San Carlos Apache Nation. The ranch is located in eastern Arizona at the southern base of the White Mountains.



Alpine Ranger District Riparian Improvement (map #174) - \$372,579

National Wild Turkey Federation

The purpose of this project is to improve water quality, riparian vegetation, wild turkey nesting and brood habitat, and threatened, endangered and sensitive species habitats on eight riparian sites on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests. This project includes forest thinning, constructing fence enclosures, spring box restoration, and creek crossing modifications working in coordination with the Forest Service's Alpine Ranger District.



**Project Successes at a Watershed Scale...
Total Investment \$4,318,183.90**

- ◆ Water quality improvements were realized in the San Francisco River, impaired due to E. Coli, and Eagle Creek, both on the 303(d) list due to excessive sediment.
- ◆ Over 25 miles of streams have benefitted from AWPF projects since 1995.
- ◆ Approximately 1,200 acres of riparian habitat have been improved.
- ◆ Leveraged over **\$2,400,000** in additional funding from other private, state and federal sources.
- ◆ Reached all 45,657 residents in both Graham and Greenlee counties through outreach. Over 40 articles have been published in the local newspapers on how the Gila Watershed Partnership is helping to protect rivers and riparian areas.

Protect the fund that protects our state's waters

In 2011, the Legislature voted to permanently eliminate general fund appropriations for the program. Without funding, AWPF cannot award new grant projects. Worse yet, the Arizona Department of Water Resources will not have adequate funding to continue managing the 27 multi-year projects that are currently underway. These budget cuts could derail years of progress in water restoration, and losing these valuable riparian areas means a permanent loss of Arizona's biodiversity. **Act Now - Contact your state legislators to protect the state's water supply and sustainability goals. For more information, visit www.azwpf.gov/savethefund.**

