

VERDE RIVER CORRIDOR PROJECT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Verde River corridor is one of Arizona's most important resources, both in its richness and in its usefulness. It provides innumerable benefits to the state's economy, its residents' quality of life, and the natural, cultural, and scenic environment. The Verde is known for its beauty and diversity of landscape, its opportunities for recreation, the bounty of its water and riparian lands for fish and wildlife populations as well as for human communities, and for the link it provides with the past and the path it opens to the future.

There is widespread concern that the attributes which make the Verde and its tributaries special are being increasingly threatened. Many area residents feel the overall quality of the Verde and its corridor lands have deteriorated in recent years. Most desert rivers in the Southwest have been so drastically altered that they are liabilities instead of assets to the communities through which they flow.

The population of the Verde Valley, and the state as a whole, is growing at a phenomenal rate. In 1980 the combined population of the Verde Valley area totaled 16,865 people. By 1990 it had nearly doubled to 31,805 people. In that same ten-year period, Arizona saw an increase of one million people—from 2.7 million to 3.7 million.

The Verde Valley is fortunate. The communities along the Verde River still enjoy a clean, flowing river, lush riparian vegetation, healthy wildlife populations, a quality of life, beautiful scenery, and a favorable economic atmosphere. But the demands on the river and its resources are increasing daily.

Because of the rapidly expanding population, the Verde Valley residents are concerned about the future of the Verde River. If there is no coordinated planning that considers both the human and environmental needs of the Verde River, the river and its resources, and subsequently the Verde Valley residents' quality of life, will suffer. Other issues of concern to the residents include water quality and quantity, erosion and loss of riparian habitat, private property and recreation access conflicts, commercial uses, confusing regulations and inconsistent management along the corridor, and open space.

In order to take a closer look at the issues facing the Verde, and to develop recommendations and a plan of action for dealing with them, local residents and organizations, with assistance from the Arizona State Parks Board and Arizona Department of Commerce, established the Verde River Corridor Project. It is a grassroots effort initiated by community leaders and individuals who saw a need for coordinated planning and management along the Verde River corridor.

Background

The Verde River Corridor Project (VRCP) began in the fall of 1989 as a locally directed effort with the goals of examining all the uses and values of the river corridor, agreeing on a common vision, and developing a plan of action that could be supported by the public and managing agencies alike.

From the initial meetings, it was clear that local citizens had a strong concern about issues affecting the Verde and a strong desire to become more involved in decision-making about the river. Local Verde Valley officials appointed people to a steering committee composed of a cross-section of the population. The twenty-six member steering committee was formed to direct the project.

Located in central Arizona, the VRCP study area covers the middle stretch of the Verde River which extends approximately 55 to 60 river miles, from Tapco, which is north of Clarkdale, to Beasley Flat, which is south of Camp Verde. The project participants also wanted the upper headwaters from Sullivan Lake downstream to Tapco considered because of its direct impact upon the corridor. A corridor width that included the 100-year floodplain was chosen.

Land ownership is extremely varied in the Verde Valley with much of it in private hands. Three incorporated communities, Clarkdale, Cottonwood, and Camp Verde, are located within the corridor as are several unincorporated communities under the jurisdiction of Yavapai County. The upper and lower stretches of the Verde outside the designated study area are primarily Forest Service land with some private inholdings.

The ultimate goal has not been to change the character of the corridor, but to conserve the river and its related resources in a way that is balanced with growth and economic vitality. The term "corridor" is not meant to be a designation of acquisition and protection like the six-mile Verde River Greenway now being planned by the Arizona State Parks Board. Rather, it refers to the general study area chosen because of its complex land ownership patterns, its natural, cultural, and scenic values, and the high level of uses and conflicts.

Process

At the beginning of the VRCP, the Steering Committee and other participants spent considerable time exploring possible visions for the future of the Verde River and its corridor lands. Together they developed the following vision and mission statement.

Overall Vision of the Verde River Corridor Project

The Verde River corridor is an invaluable resource to the people of the Verde Valley and to the State of Arizona. It is an integral part of life in the Verde Valley affecting each resident, landowner, business, and tourist in some way. Planning for its wise use, protection, and enhancement of the Verde River and its associated natural, cultural, scenic, agricultural, economic, and recreational resources should be a priority for everyone.

Mission

Identify and recognize all uses of the Verde River corridor, encourage protection of the Verde River and its natural and cultural resources, and promote coordinated decision-making for the continued enjoyment and use of the Verde River by future generations.

The Steering Committee was committed to extensive citizen-based participation in all phases of the plan's development so that the final plan would be wholly produced by members of the community in which it would be implemented and thus have a broad base of support. The VRCP involved a six-step process: (1) assessing the special resource values of the Verde, (2) identifying the issues of greatest concern to area residents, (3) ensuring a broad cross-section of the community participated in or contributed to the VRCP, (4) setting goals based on the identified issues and resources, (5) considering alternatives for resolving the identified issues, and (6) developing a final set of recommendations and a plan of action.

The planning process used for this project is multi-objective river corridor planning, so called for its all-encompassing scope looking at a wide variety of issues, including economic, social, cultural, legal, recreational, and environmental, that affect the Verde River and its corridor lands. This process acknowledges two simple yet essential ideas about river management: (1) no public action can replace wise use of a river by those living along it, and (2) effective river management cannot succeed without local consensus and support.

One of the earliest tasks involved identifying the key issues facing the Verde River. Several public meetings were held and questionnaires sent out soliciting comments from as many people as possible. A booth was set up during the annual Verde River Days event to inform the public and gather additional comments.

After reviewing the hundreds of concerns identified, most issues were combined into five main categories: private property, economics/commercial uses, land conservation, recreation, and water. Five subcommittees were formed to explore each of these issues and consider possible actions for resolving identified problems. A Technical Advisory Committee composed of agency and organization designees was also established to provide technical expertise and assistance to the citizen-directed VRCP. A large mailing list of nearly 500 residents, landowners, groups, and agencies was developed to keep interested people informed of the group's meetings and progress.

Arizona State Parks, through a grant from the State Lake Improvement Fund approved by the Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Commission, worked with local, state and federal agencies to develop a resource inventory, maps, aerial photography, and land ownership and floodplain information for use by the committees. Two related studies were conducted by two state universities that provided excellent information to the VRCP. The University of Arizona conducted a public opinion survey of local residents, and Arizona State University conducted a Visual Resource Assessment of the Verde River corridor.

The five subcommittees met between November 1989 and April 1991, researching, discussing and setting priorities and recommendations for consideration by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee met regularly to hear the subcommittees' progress, provide direction, and to explore the many sides of complex issues. Several special open forums were held for the benefit

of the committees and the general public to hear and comment on some of the most controversial issues.

Many other agencies and groups turned to the VRCP, recognizing it as an effective vehicle to reach the Verde Valley residents concerning their programs and plans and solicit public comments. This cooperative aspect worked both ways, opening up lines of communication between local residents and state and federal agencies. An important aspect of the project was to bring local people together to begin thinking and talking about the future of the Verde Valley, and to agree on ways to deal with some of the problems affecting the river.

Action Plan

The purpose of the VRCP has been to develop a workable strategy for the use, management, and protection of the river corridor that incorporates the views of its many users and supporters, residents, agencies, and elected officials. The recommendations are meant as suggestions—as a starting point. These recommendations, in many instances, piggy-back on existing community efforts, recognizing and supporting the local actions.

No one group is responsible for the implementation of all the recommendations. These actions will require a concerted effort by many individuals, groups, and agencies. As each recommended action is begun or completed, we move closer to our vision for the Verde.

The **Action Plan** for the Verde River Corridor Project is composed of:

- Overall Vision and Mission
- Guiding Principles
- Top Ten Priority Actions
- 140 Subcommittee Recommendations
- Major Goals of the Five Subcommittees
- Accomplishments achieved as a direct result of the VRCP Process
- Ongoing efforts of other individuals, groups, and agencies

Toward the end of the planning process, VRCP participants further defined their vision and created the guiding principles to provide direction when developing approaches to resolving river issues. These principles represent the diversity of issues and opinions that were the heart of the Verde River Corridor Project. They should serve as guidelines during implementation of the recommendations and plan of action.

It is not the intent of the VRCP to create another level of bureaucracy, or make sweeping changes in existing laws, regulations, or policies. The communities of the Verde Valley do an

admirable job of trying to accommodate the uses and needs of their residents. The VRCP does see a need for a more comprehensive coordination effort between the incorporated communities and unincorporated county areas, and between the public, special interest groups, and agencies.

The region is experiencing tremendous growth which will impact every facet of the valley, requiring some level of change in management, general plans, zoning, and ordinances. The VRCP encourages the county and communities to coordinate these changes so that there is consistency in management and regulation along the corridor.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Private Property

As Americans, we hold dear the right to own property. Many laws and policies exist which are designed to protect the private property owner. There are also regulations and ordinances designed for the safety, health, and welfare of others and for the conservation of the land and its resources. Personal stewardship is one of the best forms of land protection.

- ***Rights of private property ownership to the land shall be respected in all river- related management decisions.***

Economic Development

Commercial utilization of the water and other resources of the Verde River corridor is an integral part of life in the Verde Valley. The natural resources associated with a river are valuable assets to the economic health and quality of life of adjacent communities and their residents. Wise use and planning can ensure that current and future populations enjoy the many benefits of these resources.

- ***Economic development of the river corridor shall be balanced with conservation and maintenance of the natural, cultural, and scenic values of the Verde River corridor.***

Water

Water is a precious commodity in an arid environment. To enjoy both year-round flows and clean, unpolluted water in a free-flowing river at one's doorstep is an absolute treasure. The management of the water resources in the Verde Valley is a complicated task requiring continuing study. As supplies and technology for storage and reuse of water develop and change, there may be a need to consider a reordering of priorities to optimize water usage allocations among the competing demands.

- ***Maintenance of the natural instream flows adequate for identified needs and uses, and improvement of water quality of the Verde River and its major tributaries shall be a priority. Identified needs and uses include the natural ecosystem, fish and wildlife, recreation, agriculture, and commercial and domestic use.***

Resource Protection

The natural and cultural resources of the Verde River corridor constitute an important contribution to the natural diversity and quality of life in the Verde Valley and in the nation. There are several national monuments and wilderness areas located along the Verde River and its tributaries. The Verde's riparian corridor is renowned throughout the United States as one of the last remaining extensive stands of cottonwood-willow gallery forest. Committed to the preservation of this unique ecological resource, the State of Arizona has established the Verde River Greenway to assist in this goal.

- *Protection, enhancement, and restoration of the natural resources along the Verde River corridor shall be a priority.*

- *Preservation and protection of the cultural resources of the Verde River corridor shall be a priority.*

Recreation

The free-flowing waters of the Verde have offered swimming, fishing, boating, hiking, and other water-related recreational opportunities for many years. Now, this appreciation for these privileges is becoming more apparent as the population base broadens and more people are exposed to the benefits of the river and all it has to offer. Arizonans are privileged to enjoy an incredible diversity of recreation opportunities. With this privilege comes responsibility—to other recreationists, to landowners, and to the land itself.

- *Providing recreation opportunities and ensuring the availability of appropriate managed public access along the Verde River corridor shall be a priority.*

- *Informing the public of river-related recreation opportunities, access, and personal responsibilities shall be a priority.*

Education

Education about the environment and our role in it can take many forms—from formal programs, to nature walks, to books and pamphlets, to simply experiencing the wonders of nature through the eyes of a child. Environmental education should be ongoing throughout one's life. In order to participate in planning efforts and help make informed decisions regarding the Verde River and its management, the general public, businesses and government representatives need to recognize that the Verde River corridor is a special natural and cultural resource and a tremendous amenity not found in very many communities.

- *Promotion of a greater awareness, understanding, appreciation, respect, and responsibility toward the Verde River and its resources, in order to instill personal and community responsibility, shall be a priority.*

Planned Growth

The Verde Valley is a vital, growing region attracting many businesses and industries as well as new residents. Planned growth is essential to the economic and environmental health of the region. Making decisions for the Verde Valley is everyone's responsibility.

- ***Encouragement of coordinated land use policies which, while accommodating growth, are compatible with natural, aesthetic, rural, recreational, and cultural values shall be a priority.***

Coordinated Management

There are many agencies and organizations that control and regulate the resources of the Verde River corridor. In many instances, these entities do not communicate regularly with each other, causing considerable confusion and duplication of efforts. The general public encounters obstacles in trying to understand the many policies and laws and in attempting to effectively participate in planning or management decisions.

- ***Development of a strategy for the coordinated management, conservation and use of the corridor, emphasizing a shared responsibility for management between landowners, private organizations, recreationists, and appropriate levels of government shall be a priority.***

- ***Establishment of an ongoing Verde River corridor organization to help implement the recommendations outlined in this process and to continue to function in the interest of conserving the Verde River and its resources shall be a priority.***

Throughout the year and a half long project, the five subcommittees developed over 140 recommendations that included issues and action-oriented strategies. From these recommendations a series of major goals for the priority issues were identified by each of the subcommittees.

Major Goals of the Five Subcommittees

Economics and Commercial Uses

It is obvious that rivers, trails, and open space connecting natural, cultural, and recreational areas increase the aesthetic an

Many of the issues that faced this subcommittee spanned across all the subcommittees; so while there may have been issues involving recreation, private property, land conservation, or water quality, this subcommittee focused on the economic aspects of each issue. The four primary issues addressed were sand and gravel mining, agriculture, housing developments and zoning, and benefits of the river corridor to the local economy. The major goals identified by the subcommittee are:

- Utilize the river corridor and its cultural and natural resource values to promote tourism and as a quality of life incentive to attract tourists, new businesses, and new residents.

- Make provisions for the sand and gravel industry to function in the Verde Valley while protecting the river corridor values.
- Promote the retention of agricultural uses and open lands along the Verde River corridor while protecting corridor values and resources.
- Maintain and/or increase open space along the Verde River corridor while accommodating for planned growth.

Land Conservation

The Verde River corridor contains natural, cultural, and scenic resources of state and national significance. The cottonwood-willow riparian community type that thrives along the Verde is considered the most threatened forest community in North America, and the riparian area found along the Verde River corridor is one of only five remaining extensive stands in Arizona. The Verde is also home to over 50 threatened, endangered, and sensitive species of fish, wildlife, and plants. Many of these resources have come under increasing pressure from uncontrolled recreational use, pollution, inappropriate use, and development. As growth continues in the Verde Valley, some of these resources are being degraded and, in some instances, lost.

Many diverse issues were grouped under the heading of "land conservation," such as riparian habitat, fish and wildlife protection, cultural resources, flooding and erosion, scenic values, land use and development concerns, land ethics and education, and land protection strategies. Several studies and informative forums were undertaken throughout the project to investigate these issues. The results of those studies are now being finalized and evaluated, which will provide an excellent baseline to begin working on the subcommittee's recommendations; their major goals are outlined below:

- Protect, enhance and restore the riparian ecosystems along the Verde River corridor.
- Preserve and protect the prehistoric, historic, and archaeological resources of the Verde River corridor.
- Reduce the negative impacts of flooding and erosion.
- Protect, maintain and enhance the scenic qualities that the Verde River and its riparian corridor contribute to the area.
- Develop a greater recognition, understanding, appreciation, respect, and responsibility toward the Verde River and its resources.
- Promote public awareness of the Verde as a special natural resource and encourage public support for proper use of the river and its contiguous lands.
- Protect the environmentally sensitive areas of the Verde River Basin that are in need of protective management.

- Support public involvement in ongoing land use planning efforts and promote incorporation of considerations for the human and environmental needs of the Verde Valley.

Private Property

The issues surrounding the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of landowners touched every subcommittee. The priority issues identified by the Private Property Subcommittee included river access conflicts, trespassing, littering, law enforcement, landowner's liability, rights and responsibilities of landowners and recreationists, and zoning regulations. Though many Verde Valley residents purchased their riverfront properties to escape the urban problems of overcrowding, noise, pollution, crime, and the stress of urban living, some are now finding that the quiet country lifestyle is rapidly changing. Communities are expanding, more riverfront homes are being built, roads and bridges are planned, recreationists are crossing private property to access the river corridor, and pollutants are seeping into the river and underground water supply.

The population of the Verde Valley has nearly doubled over the last decade, and the growth projections for the future indicate the trend will continue. Without coordinated planning, the resulting changes to the communities, demands on the water supply and other resources, and overuse of the Verde River will result in negative changes to the Verde Valley's quality of life. Therefore, the subcommittee wanted to understand the various laws that affect private property owners and, as a result, one of the first tasks accomplished by the Private Property Subcommittee was the development of a publication, "A Summary of Rights and Duties of Private Property Ownership along the Verde River Corridor." The subcommittee's other major goals are:

- Ensure that the rights of private property owners are a priority issue in all river-related management decisions.
- Maximize private property owner participation in discussing and resolving corridor conflicts.
- Increase public awareness of private property rights and wishes.
- Identify benefits and/or liabilities to property owners of providing access to the Verde River corridor.
- Implement a plan to inform private property owners of rights, responsibilities, and opportunities.
- Identify what entity(s) have management and enforcement responsibilities over corridor lands and resources.
- Encourage private landowners to allow public access to the river corridor across their property while protecting their rights and wishes.
- Formalize the coordinating function of groups like the VRCP to ensure landowner and interagency communication and consistency on plans and decisions for the river corridor.

Recreation

The Verde Valley is a favorite destination for many Arizona recreationists. The year-round flowing river and its tributaries with their lush green vegetation, steep-walled canyons, and broad floodplains offer recreational opportunities such as fishing, canoeing, kayaking, tubing, swimming, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain biking, bird watching, history and nature study, photography, painting, picnicking, camping, backpacking, train riding, sightseeing, and just relaxing. The river supports a year-round warm water fishery for catfish and smallmouth bass and is now stocked by the Arizona Game & Fish Department with rainbow trout during the cooler winter months. The verdant riparian habitat along the Verde River supports many species of wildlife and offers an excellent place to observe bird and animal species not found elsewhere in the Verde Valley, such the river otter, beaver, bald eagle, ducks and geese, and the graceful great blue heron.

Recreational use of the Verde has increased in recent years, and the trend is expected to continue. As a result, a major concern about recreational use has been access to the river. Existing access points are overtaxed; where access points involve private land, trespassing and littering are concerns. At public access points, better monitoring and maintenance of facilities are issues. The first task completed by the Recreation Subcommittee was a recreational assessment of existing activities, access areas, and concerns along the corridor. The second task was to inform the public of the recreational opportunities and public access sites along the river corridor, so a public river access brochure was published in cooperation with local entities. Several participants may continue their cooperative efforts to monitor and help coordinate developments along the river with federal, state, county, and community agencies that affect the Verde River. The subcommittee identified the following major goals:

- Ensure adequate public access to the Verde River corridor by identifying and planning for needed access points.
- Develop a formal assessment of existing recreational activities along the Verde River corridor and identify areas of conflict.
- Develop a plan for distribution of information regarding recreational opportunities along the Verde River corridor.
- Promote improved river user behavior and cooperation by increasing public and river user behavior education, awareness, and involvement.
- Minimize conflicts between recreational uses and with private property owners.
- Minimize environmental impacts to the river corridor when planning and developing recreation access sites and facilities.

Water

Increasing demands for water by agriculture, mining, industry, and cities have taken their toll on Arizona's streams and wetlands, and the Verde River is one of the only remaining perennial desert rivers in the state. However, threats to the flows of the Verde River could loom in the future—water exchanges and transfers, inefficient irrigation practices, increased groundwater pumping, and proposed residential and commercial development requirements. Likewise, the water quality of the Verde could be jeopardized by sewage and urban runoff, toxic wastes, sediment eroded from overgrazed rangeland, chemical runoff from irrigation, leaching from mine tailings, and non-permitted sand and gravel mining processes. To complicate the situation the pool of users and agencies that affect or are affected by the quantity and the quality of the river flows is enormous and diverse.

The subcommittee discovered a clear policy need to balance competing uses to protect the river flows and riparian areas and a clear management need for a framework for comprehensive communication and coordination between various water management authorities and the Verde Valley communities. The Water Subcommittee made information gathering and dissemination a top priority, and public forums and presentations were provided on several water issues. The major goals recommended by the subcommittee follow:

- Protect, and potentially even enhance or restore, the instream flows in the river, and the habitats and recreation and other uses that depend on those flows.
- Improve the water quality where problems exist and to prevent further pollution of the waters of the Verde River.
- Investigate and evaluate the potential for a local existing organization or a coalition of agency and community representatives to consider water supply, water use, water management, and water planning activities for the Verde Valley as a region and to coordinate activities with other local, state, federal, and tribal agencies, and various water use groups.

The Steering Committee reached consensus on the over 140 different recommendations developed from the five subcommittees. As part of the Action Plan, the numerous recommendations provide a good foundation for pragmatic local initiatives in developing management strategies for the Verde River. However, logistically every recommendation could not be handled at once.

To begin an effective implementation process, it was necessary to prioritize the list of recommendations and determine which actions were most needed and appropriate for immediate application in the corridor. The Steering Committee identified the following top ten priority actions:

Top Ten Priority Actions

1) **Conduct** a landowner survey to determine who may be interested in participating in accomplishing the goals of the Verde River Corridor Project.

2) **Establish** a permanent river corridor group made up of existing community leaders, landowners, individuals, organizations, and agencies to continue the coordination and problem solving begun by the Verde River Corridor Project.

3) **Identify** and pursue sources for assistance and funding.

- Request that Arizona State Parks and Game & Fish hold an informational workshop on the Arizona Heritage Fund in the Verde Valley.

4) **Distribute** the reports and recommendations from the Verde River Corridor Project; take advantage of the public opportunity at Verde River Days.

- Final Report and Recommendations and Summary Publication

- Public River Access Brochure

- Summary Report of Private Property Rights & Responsibilities

- Recreation Assessment

- Visual Resource Assessment

5) **Participate** in the development of the Arizona State Parks' Verde River Greenway Master Plan by serving on the planning team.

6) **Facilitate** riverfront landowner and river user workshops to inform people of their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities and encourage active participation in the planning process.

7) **Develop** an identifying river corridor logo and implement its use in signing public river access sites and informational materials about the river corridor.

- A logo contest conducted as part of Verde River Days is suggested; an alternate suggestion is to use the VRCP great blue heron as the logo.

8) **Work** with cooperative groups to submit grant proposals for local parks, access sites, trails, habitat protection and enhancement, cultural resources, and environmental education to Arizona Heritage Fund, State Lake Improvement Fund, and Land & Water Conservation Fund.

9) **Initiate** a river corridor management strategy after current environmental assessments and reports of the Verde River are completed (VRCP, Verde NRCD, EPA ADID, ASPB Greenway, etc.).

10) **Support** ongoing efforts to manage and conserve the Verde River Corridor.

It is a positive outlook enhanced by the enthusiastic participation and support exhibited during the VRCP. In the past, there has been a recognized lack of information and coordination between

individuals, groups, and agencies on some issues that affect the river corridor. The VRCP was formed to bring together these people to facilitate discussion and decision-making.

The formation of a recognized coalition of those already established groups that now deal with the management and conservation of the river corridor has been identified as a priority recommended action as a result of this project. This permanent Verde River corridor "coordinating group" would oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and development of a coordinated river corridor management strategy. This coalition must include representatives of all interested groups and agencies, including landowners and members of the general public. The coalition should serve as an informational and educational force for the Verde Valley, letting people know about upcoming developments and changes. It should provide opportunities for the public to learn about and openly discuss the issues. It should also strive to reach a consensus whenever possible. It should open doors to coordinated, consistent management within the Verde River corridor.

One of the over-riding priorities of the VRCP has been the protection of private property rights. This concern has been included in all meetings, committee discussions, reports, and publications. The recommendations developed by the subcommittees include many references, suggestions, and action items intended to inform, involve, and protect the rights and responsibilities of all private landowners.

In catalyzing local action, the VRCP found that:

- 1) Citizens living along the river, and those using it, have invaluable expertise necessary for developing realistic expectations of what conservation of the Verde means, and
- 2) by understanding and embracing their role in the planning process, citizens will make legitimate, workable decisions about what can be accomplished.

The result of this planning process is a strategy for land and water management in and along the Verde River that is uniquely suited to its special qualities and the demands of the local communities.

The final report and plan of action, published in June 1991, highlights: the Verde River corridor's natural, cultural, commercial, and recreational values; current and future growth trends of the Verde Valley; overview of corridor problems; a summary of the VRCP process and committee work; recommendations and major findings, plan of action, supporting studies, summary of conservation and protection strategies, and management actions underway by various organizations.

As part of the VRCP, two stand-alone publications have also been printed as priority recommendations from the committees. There is a summary of private property rights and duties, and a public access brochure that describes the existing and planned river access sites available to the public. It is hoped that the final documents will provide a stimulus for further efforts to conserve the resources of this most precious of assets—*the Verde River*.

VERDE RIVER CORRIDOR PROJECT

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