

Collaborative Planning for the Verde Watershed Restoration Coalition



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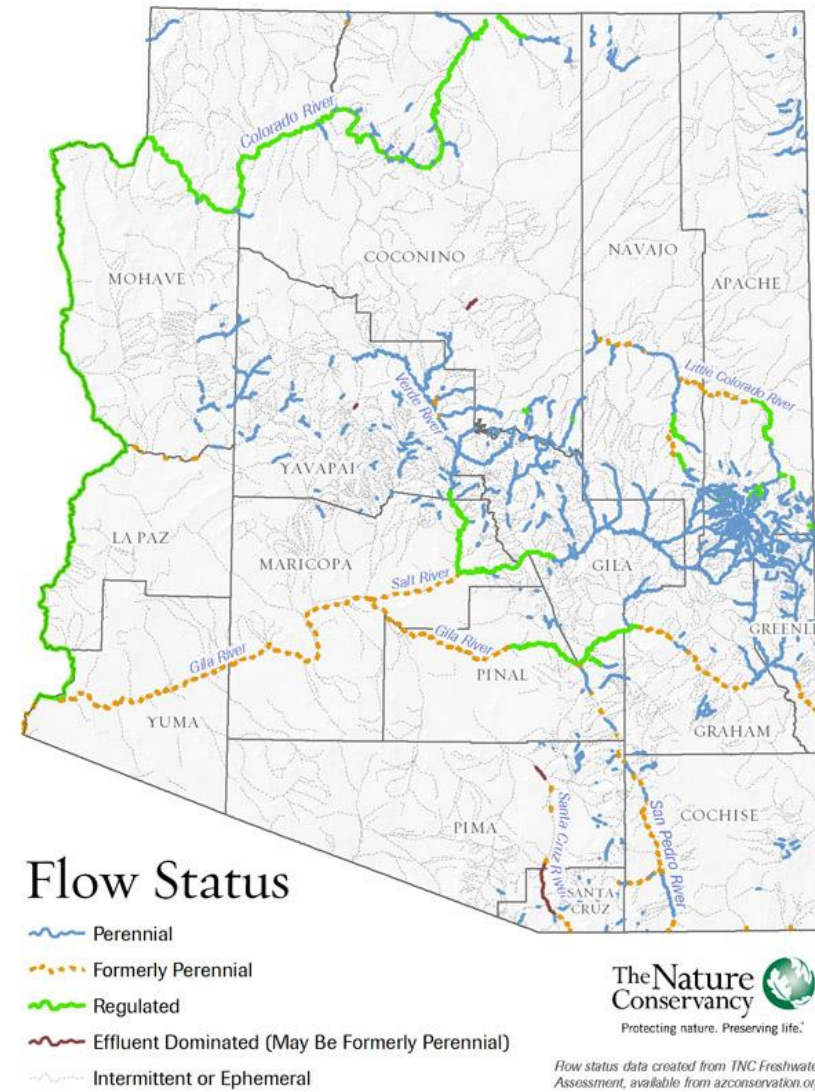
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Friends *of the*
VERDE RIVER

The Verde River

- One of the last perennial flowing rivers in AZ



Wild and Scenic

- The only two in Arizona



Verde Watershed Restoration Coalition

- Stakeholder-driven
 - >20 organizations (federal, state, municipal, tribal, non-profit)
 - >230 private landowners
- Watershed-wide approach to restoration
- Formed in 2010
 - Target riparian invasives

Cooperative Invasive Plant Management

- Tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
- Giant reed (*Arundo donax*)
- Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*)
- Saltcedar (*Tamarix* spp.)



Ecological Impacts

- Wildlife habitat
- Channel morphology
- Soil chemistry
- Wildfire frequency and intensity
- Decrease diversity and ecosystem stability



Economic Impacts

- Tourism Industry
- Reduced wildlife viewing
- Restricted recreational access
- Lower quality experience



Moving beyond the weeds

- Initial 5-year plan complete
 - Invasive targets achieved
 - >9000 acres
 - >\$4 million



Moving beyond the weeds

- Initial 5-year plan complete
 - Invasive targets achieved
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 - >\$4 million
- Now what?



Partner feedback

- What's changed since 2010?
- Who is VWRC?
- What do we value?
- How do maximize collective impact?

Shared Vision

- Native aquatic, riparian, and uplands
- Resilient and diverse native species
- Heterogeneous vegetation structure
- Wildlife corridors and habitats
- Self-sustaining and natural ecosystem functions in the watershed

Shared Goals

- Habitat improvement
- Aquatic resources
- Soil conservation
- Monitoring
- Education and stewardship
- Sustainable funding

Planning Process

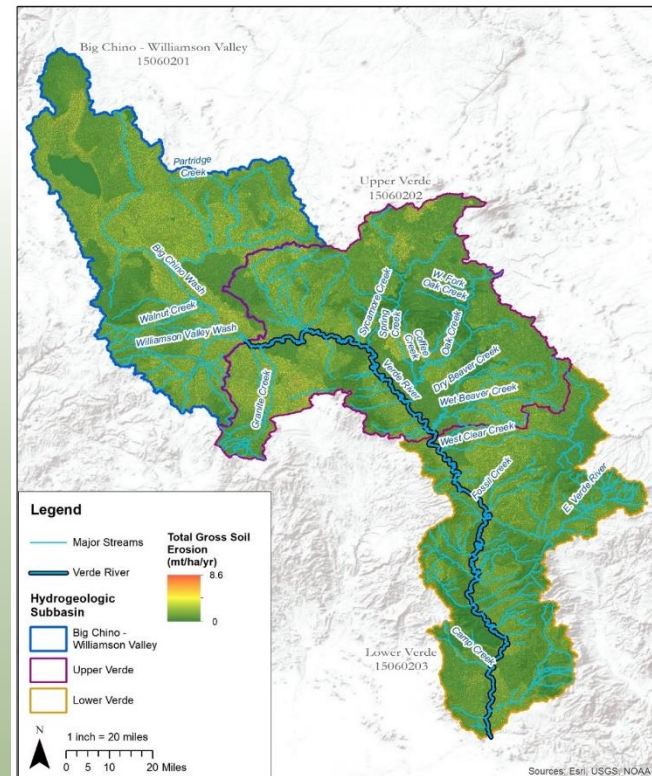
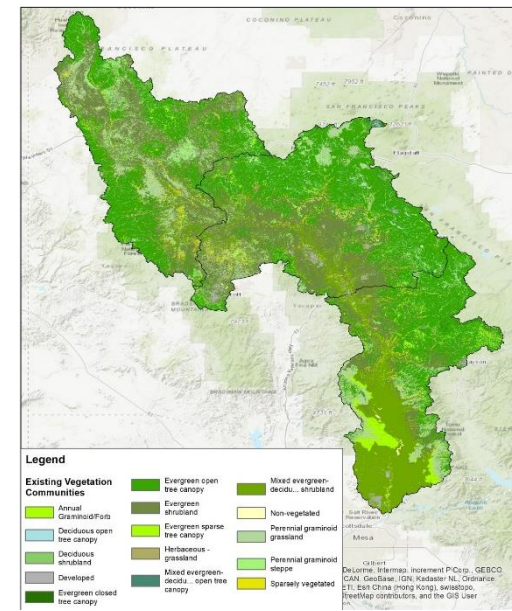
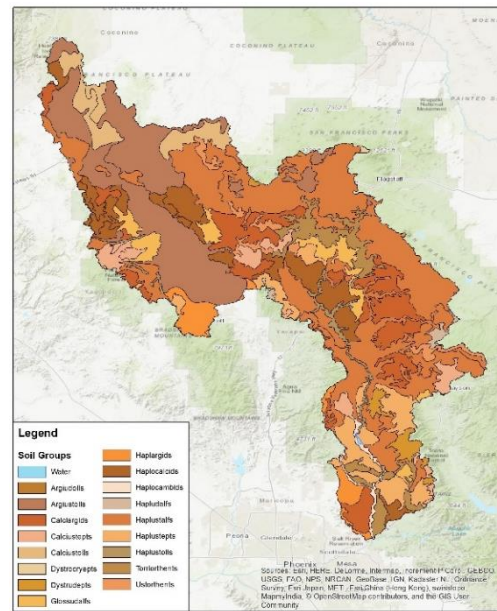
- Goal and habitat specific meetings
 - Collaboratively identify objectives and responsible parties
 - Identify gaps and needs for planning and implementation

Implementation Strategy

- Measureable objectives
- Action plans by goal
 - Expected date of completion
 - Responsible partner
 - Status
- Steering committee and working groups to monitor progress

Prioritize Projects

- Partner knowledge
- Return on investment
- Vulnerable locations
- Models for:
 - Soil erosion
 - Vegetation
 - Water quality



Next Steps

- To be completed April 2019
- Living document - iterative process
- Review progress
- Revisit plan biannually

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- Get to work!

Lessons learned

- Collaborative creation = shared ownership
- Understanding limits = realistic goals
- Data sharing = collective impact
- Hear partners = here partners

Thank you

- Questions?

