

Journal

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Camp Verde Supports 'Wild' Listing for Verde River

Camp Verde News



A red-tailed hawk soars over the Verde River in Clarkdale on Saturday, Jan. 21. The Camp Verde Town Council approved a resolution to designate the Upper Verde River as a Wild and Scenic River at their meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 18. Daulton Venglar/Larson Newspapers

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By **Alyssa Smith**

The Camp Verde Town Council approved a resolution on Wednesday, Jan. 18, supporting the designation of the Upper Verde River as a Wild and Scenic River.

The council will send a letter of support to the members of Arizona’s congressional delegation to request the formal designation of the river as such.

Designating the Upper Verde River and its tributaries will provide protection for the river downstream before it reaches Camp Verde. The designation will protect not only the river itself but also the land

surrounding the river and riparian corridor.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, passed when dam building was at its height to protect the nation’s free flowing rivers, aims to ensure a clean water supply, protection of critical habitat, continued access to rivers and the preservation of the rivers’ character.

The act benefits rivers by banning new federally-licensed dams and other harmful water development projects, protecting the river’s outstanding values, creating a junior and federally-reserved water right, ensuring maintenance of water quality and requiring the creation of a comprehensive river management plan for each river.

As of 2019, 226 river segments totaling over 13,000 river miles have been designated as wild and scenic. A river can be designated as wild and scenic either by Congress or by the state, and is eligible if it is free flowing and has one or more outstanding or remarkable values. These values can include scenery, wildlife, recreation, geology and culture, among others.

The Verde River is very popular for its recreational uses, such as kayaking, fishing, hiking and wildlife viewing, which create important economic opportunities for surrounding towns in the valley.

The proposed wild and scenic designation would cover 74.1 river miles and encompass over 23,000 acres of riverside land. It would also protect some of the tributaries that feed the Verde north of Clarkdale, such as Granite Creek and Sycamore Creek.

For more information, visit wildverderiver.org. Contact Arizona’s 11 members of Congress to support the designation.

