

on on Prescott Valley location; The Lookout celebrating its first anniversary this week Pin

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## Film festival showcases new Verde film Friday



AWC/Courtesy photo  
A still from “Viva La Verde!” features a rainbow over the Upper Verde River and its canyon.

The Daily Courier

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Post



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PRESCOTT - The Arizona Wilderness Coalition has expanded its annual Tempe film festival to include Prescott for the first time this year.

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival takes place from 7 to 10 p.m. Friday at the Elks Opera House in downtown Prescott. Cost is \$15 for adults, \$13 for children, students and seniors, and \$30 to add a year-long coalition membership. A social mixer with Wilderness Coalition staff precedes the festival from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Raven Café a few blocks away.

The theme for this year's festival is exploration and stewardship of Arizona's wild places.

One of the featured films is the newly completed "Viva La Verde," which celebrates the Verde River that originates near Paulden in Yavapai County. The film explores humans' role as stewards of this rare ecosystem. New [Prescott College](#) graduate Hugh Denno created the film.

"I think it's going to be a great way to draw attention to the Upper Verde" and the campaign to make it a Wild and Scenic River through Congressional action, said Kate Mackay, interim executive director of the Wilderness Coalition.

"As AWC's Upper Verde Wild & Scenic campaign is building community support and political momentum, Prescott is an invaluable location to continue our efforts finding additional supporters and raising awareness about the value of the river - not just

locally, but to the region and state as a whole," said Carla Olson, film festival organizer and outreach associate for the Arizona Wilderness Coalition.

Wild & Scenic campaign organizers including the Wilderness Coalition hope to find a member of Congress to sponsor the legislation next year, Mackay said.

The other Arizona film and new feature at the festival is "The Last of the Great Unknown," an award-winning documentary that showcases drainages of the Grand Canyon that few people ever see.

Ten shorter films at the festival explore environmental issues and solutions relating to the Pacific Gyre, biomimcry, weed-eating goats, fracking and the journey of the Colorado River from headwaters to end, among others.

The film festival aims to help the Arizona Wilderness Coalition build membership, raise money and increase awareness of its mission to "protect and restore wilderness and other wild lands and waters in Arizona for the enjoyment of all citizens, and to ensure that Arizona's native plants and animals have a lasting home in wild nature."

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival tours the country using film to bring communities together around a message of stewardship for natural resources. This is the fifth year that the Arizona Wilderness Coalition has hosted the festival in the Grand Canyon State.

"This is a chance for people to connect with us and get involved, whether it's in the field with our volunteer-based Wilderness Stewardship Program, or in their office, writing letters to Congress that support our critical campaigns to protect additional wild places," Mackay said.

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