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Library exhibit focuses on Verde River treasures

Special to The Courier

Originally Published: February 9, 2011 9:56 p.m.

Post



Arizona Rivers and the Sierra Club have teamed up with local photographer Gary Beverly and artist Edie Dillon to deliver a mixed-media interpretive exhibit to the [Prescott Public Library](#) for the month of February.

The exhibit, titled "The Verde River: Green Heart of Arizona - Endangered Desert Jewel," celebrates this ecological and aesthetic treasure in Prescott's backyard.

"The Verde River provides important habitat for people and wildlife alike," said Sandy Bahr, Director for the Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter. "This exhibit will help

demonstrate the significance of this vibrant ecological corridor, how it is threatened, and what we can all do to help."

The Verde River exhibit will remain on display at the Prescott Public Library at 215 E. Goodwin St. through Feb. 28. Library hours are 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday, Friday, and Saturday; 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday; 1 to 9 p.m. Wednesday; and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Both Arizona Rivers and the Sierra Club-Grand Canyon Chapter host a variety of events to inform local citizens about threats to the Verde River that include groundwater pumping, destructive recreation, water pollution, and human population growth.

The Verde has attracted the concern of national conservation organizations including American Rivers, which included the river in its 2006 list of the country's Top 10 most endangered rivers.

"Projected population growth in the region will create an unmet demand for water of more than double the flow of the upper Verde River," said Michelle Harrington, executive director of Arizona Rivers. "The [City of Prescott](#)'s plans to import water from the Big Chino aquifer - the Verde's headwaters - could eventually destroy the upper river if it is not adequately mitigated.

"Clearly, though, Prescott's pipeline is only part of a very large potential problem. The public must be involved in decisions about the Verde's future, and that includes population growth and water resource planning."

The library exhibit is installed in the "Viewerie" along the back inside wall. Panels in the 42-foot display area tell the Verde's story through words and images.

Viewers are introduced to the diverse array of plants and animals that depend on the river, the myriad threats it faces and the role the community can play in speaking out for the watershed.

The exhibit includes a variety of ways the public can help protect the Verde River. It encourages recreationists to practice the principles of "leave no trace." It specifically encourages off-road vehicle users to stay on legal trails and learn about the way vehicles impact wildlife habitat and riparian vegetation.

The exhibit also urges the public to visit the Verde, support Wild and Scenic designation for the upper river segment, practice personal water conservation and encourage local

officials to transition to a sustainable water economy.

For more information or for information about displaying the exhibit in another location, call Edie Dillon at (928) 277-9155.

Arizona Rivers is a nonprofit organization working to protect the state's imperiled rivers and riparian habitats in support of diverse native fish communities, wildlife, plants, and human health and enjoyment.

The Sierra Club is a grassroots environmental organization with more than 1.3 million members and supporters nationwide, including 12,000 in Arizona's Grand Canyon Chapter.

The Sierra Club mission is "to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; and to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environments."

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