

## **Please act now to protect the fund that protects our state's waters**

**HOW YOU CAN HELP:** Contact your legislators by email or telephone. To find the legislative district you live in, visit <http://2001.azredistricting.org> and enter your address and zip code in the *Find & Map Your Districts*: area of the webpage (lower left corner). E-mail addresses for all senate and house representatives can be found by district by visiting <http://www.azleg.gov/MemberRoster.asp>.

**WHAT TO SAY:** I respectfully request your support to reinstate a statutorily authorized General Fund appropriation for the Arizona Water Protection Fund (AWPF) previously mandated in A.R.S. § 45-2112(B). The statute was amended in the last legislative session to permanently eliminate the program's ability to receive general fund appropriations for grant awards. I also urge you to provide an appropriation for program administration via special line item in the Arizona Department of Water Resources (Department) budget pursuant to § 45-2114(A), or eliminate the five percent statutory limitation established under A.R.S § 45-2114(C) regarding the amount of funding the Commission can award to the Department for program administration. Without your support, it will not be possible for the Commission to award new grants; or the Department to maintain essential staff support beyond the current fiscal year.

The AWPF is vital to the citizens of Arizona, as it is the only funding source dedicated to protect and restore the state's river and riparian resources. Since 1994 the AWPF has funded projects that have maintained, enhanced and restored rivers, streams and riparian resources throughout the state. It is an essential program that protects water resources and wildlife, conserves our forests, farms, ranches, and open spaces, and enhances outdoor recreational opportunities. Sustaining the AWPF is essential to our state's economy, unique quality of life, and the future of our state's most precious resource. Even during difficult budget times, we must invest in water, protect our state's water supply and work toward securing a sustainable future. Permanent loss of riparian resources and associated biotic communities will have profound consequences for current and future generations of Arizonans.

Without the AWPF, the number of river, stream and riparian habitat restoration projects in Arizona will significantly decrease because of the very limited availability of other funding sources. Opportunities for leveraging other funding sources will likewise disappear. The resulting degradation of natural resources also will have serious negative economic impacts to the State. This is particularly troubling for the State's rural areas, as tourism, recreational opportunities, water quality and water supplies are likely to be diminished.

I ask that you, as my elected official, defend the AWPF and provide funding for projects and program administration. In order to ensure the long-term viability of the program, it is imperative that a stable funding source be established through either general fund appropriations, or another dedicated source. I urge your support to continue these critical efforts!

***Please act now to protect the fund that protects the State's waters... Save the Arizona Water Protection Fund!***

For more information, visit [www.azwpf.gov/savethefund](http://www.azwpf.gov/savethefund). If you have questions, please contact Rodney Held, Executive Director, at 602-771-8525 or [rjhheld@azwpf.gov](mailto:rjhheld@azwpf.gov).

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