



THE YAVAPAI Yellow Sheet



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Serving Yavapai County

Watson Woods restoration plan sees the light

BY MARK DUNCAN

It'll cost more than \$1 million and take more than five years to complete the work, but Watson Woods may be both healthier and more beautiful than ever at the end of the process.

Ten years in the making, the preservation plan for the Watson Woods Preserve, a 126-acre riparian area along Granite Creek north of Prescott, is nearly ready for implementation.

Prescott Creeks Executive Director Michael Byrd unveiled the draft plan on Jan. 29. Prescott Creeks, which entered into a 25-year lease with the city of Prescott in 1995, manages the preserve. Since taking on the care of the area, which some believe was once part of a 1,000-acre forest, Prescott Creeks staff and volunteers have

engaged in a multitude of monitoring, cleanup, revegetation and research tasks.

The draft plan for the area's preservation and rehabilitation includes re-channeling the creek, replanting the area with natural species, and the creation of wetland areas as well as hiking trails for visitors. A parking area, at the base of the Rosser Road extension across Highway 89, will also be improved.

The Watson Woods area has long been a hub of activity, but none of the previous work in the area was particularly beneficial to the environment there.

Byrd, who along with a small staff completed the draft study primarily

through a grant from the Arizona Water Protection Fund Commission, said the area has often been used as a wildcat trash dump, and that sand and gravel mining, which began in the early 1900s, diverted the creek channel, causing pockets of erosion.

Since Prescott Creeks took over the preserve, they have installed eight monitoring wells that record groundwater levels, leading to an assumption that the creek doesn't run where it wants.

"Our suspicion is that when they finished their sand and gravel operation, they just put the creek back wherever it went," he said.

That left several cottonwoods, *See Watson Woods, Page 2*



With the helping hands of Watershed Program Coordinator Ann-Marie Heins, Prescott Creeks Executive Director Michael Byrd installs the first of several interpretive signs along a trail at the Watson Woods Preserve in Prescott. The creeks organization has just released a draft plan for the restoration work it hopes to do in the 126-acre woodland on Granite Creek.

Watson Woods, from Page 1

which thrive on having their roots directly in contact with the groundwater, on high ground and in danger of demise.

The restoration plan calls for rechanneling the creek in four stretches through the preserve. That work will require a permit through the Army Corps of Engineers.

It, and the rest of the project, will also require an infusion of money.

Two grants from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, which Byrd said he expects to hear about in April, may pay for about half of the estimated \$1.05 million cost of the project. He also plans to approach the water protection commission, the city of Prescott and the community for help with the finances and the work itself.

"There are going to be tons of opportunities for community involvement," Byrd said.

The morning after the presentation, Byrd, along with Watershed Program Coordinator Ann-Marie Heins and Outreach Coordinator Jason Clay, were installing interpretive signs along a preserve trail. Byrd reflected on his involvement with Granite Creek and the preserve, which began when he was a student at Prescott College in 1995.

"One thing has led to the next in terms of my work on this project," he said. "It's been exciting to have the vision and get to this. It's a big milestone."

Other milestones await, both short-term and long-range. Prescott Creeks, Byrd said, is essentially out of money after completing the restoration plan, and the careful timeline for the work, he admits, depends on the acquisition of funding.

Beyond that hurdle lies the year 2020 and the expiration of the lease with Prescott.

"In five years, if we go according to the plan," Byrd said, "this area will be barely coming into its own. But by 2020, we hope that visitors, if they don't read the signs, won't know that people ever affected it."

And that they won't have a chance to negatively impact it again.

"In 2020 when our lease ends, what happens?" he wondered. "Will somebody build a big shopping mall? We don't know."

Anyone interested in helping with the creek restoration can contact Prescott Creeks at 928-445-5669, or at their website, prescottcreeks.org.

Design a stencil - save a creek

Prescott Creeks is holding a contest to design storm drain stencils for the Prescott area. The contest is open to students in kindergarten through high school.

Urban areas are significant sources of contamination, and storm drains are often the conveyers of that pollution. Many people mistakenly believe storm drain inlets flow to water treatment facilities, but there is no treatment for storm water, so all chemicals and debris arrive at creeks unimpeded.

Everything other than water is a potential contaminant that can degrade our water quality.

By designing a storm drain stencil, students can help Prescott Creeks clarify the connection between the storm drains and our creeks. The group will partner with the City of Prescott and community volunteers from the area to stencil the storm drains in the downtown area.

One design will be chosen from all entries received, and all entries may be used for future promotion. The design should be representative of our region, and clearly emphasize the connection between storm drains and the creeks. The winning designer will receive a T-shirt with the final design printed on it, credit on Prescott Creeks' Web site, and the pride of seeing their design making a difference.

All entries should include the designer's name, school, grade level, address, and telephone number.

Send designs by March 1 to Prescott Creeks, c/o Ann-Marie Heins, Box 3004, Prescott, AZ 86302. Winner will be notified by June 1.

2/8/07
Yavapai Yellow Sheet

Saturday • October 27, 2007

Rare bird species appear at Watson Woods

Last October, a customer came in the store and asked if it were possible that he could have seen a worm-eating warbler at Watson Woods. I pulled out Carl Tomoff's *Birds of Prescott, Arizona Checklist* to see if there had been any records of this species in the past. Sure enough, it was listed as an accidental species, indicating that it had been seen in the Prescott area five or fewer times over the last 30 plus years.

My explanation to the customer was, "It's possible, but not very likely." I dismissed the possibility of his seeing a worm-eating warbler, and didn't pursue finding it. Two days later, another birder came into the store and announced he had just come from Watson Woods where he had seen a worm-eating warbler.

My earlier skepticism turned into belief, knowing that two different birders, independent of each other, reported the same species in the same location. I went out early the next morning and scoured the area, but came up empty handed. No sign of a worm-eating warbler. I could have kicked myself for not following up on the first reported sighting. This would have been a new species for me, one I had never seen before.

Fast forward now, to October 2007. This past Thursday, I got a phone call from one of the same individuals that discovered the worm-eating warbler in Watson Woods last year. It had been rediscovered. Could it be the same bird? There is no way of knowing, but it is amazing that this species would show up in the same place, in a similar time frame, two years in a row.

Worm-eating warblers are a summer resident in heavily wooded deciduous slopes in the Appalachian region. They typically migrate over the Gulf of Mexico, and winter in the West Indies, Bermuda, Mexico and Central America, as far south as Panama. You might be wondering, how does a bird get so far off course? I don't have an answer for that question.

I met up with a group of birders last Friday morning

See *BIRD*, page 2C

From page 1C

at Watson Woods and after a lot of searching, we were successful in finding it. It was such a thrill to see a species of which I had only seen in pictures in bird books. And to think I was seeing it right here in Prescott.

After I left to go back to the store the remaining birders discovered yet

another uncommon eastern warbler, a black and white warbler. This year I have added two new bird species to my life list, the worm-eating warbler, and a Kentucky warbler, and both of them were in Watson Woods.

Ecologically, Watson Woods and the riparian areas associated with Granite Creek and

the other creeks in the Prescott area, is extremely important. As a community, we are fortunate to have a non-profit organization, Prescott Creeks Preservation Association, working to protect the creek systems laced throughout our community. If you would like information on Prescott Creeks, I invite you to come by the store.

We recently started carrying the book "Emerald Veins, A Vegetation Field Guide to the Creeks in Prescott, Arizona," as well as a map illustrating the creeks which make up the Upper Granite Creek Watershed. Emerald Veins

is a wonderful resource for individuals wanting to learn more about the native plants found in our riparian areas.

If you read this column early enough, I want to invite you to our four-year anniversary event from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. today. We are providing a free lunch at our store as a small token of appreciation to the community for their support these past four years. Happy Birding.

Eric M. Moore is the owner of Jay's Bird Barn, a backyard wild bird store located in the Safeway/ Kmart shopping center on Willow Creek Road. He has been an avid birder for over 40 years.

Restoration project on native tree cuttings

COOK
Courier

OTT – After a decade of planning, volunteers have begun the ecological restoration of Watson Lake Riparian Preserve south of the Prescott Parkway and Highway 89 intersection. On Thursday, 16 volunteers with American Conservation Experience, a non-profit conservation corps, gathered to participate in projects across the area. They helped cut and harvest six species of cottonwood and willow trees in Watson Woods and the Granite Creek Watershed.

Next year the non-profit Prescott Creeks Association, the project's sponsor, and the volunteers will plant the cuttings throughout the area in an effort to refurbish the forest to its original condition.

Planting trees, such as the arroyo willow, Prescott Creeks wants to reduce harmful bacteria in the watershed while increasing the presence of native species and bolstering the ecological conditions of Watson and Willow lakes. Storm water runoff from roads and industrial areas, roads contribute pollutants into the creeks and lakes.

The area used to be a 1,000-acre forest before the gravel mine (nearby)," Marie Benz, Prescott Creeks' watershed coordinator, as she walked through the woods on Thursday. "Trees will slow and capture the pollutants and then filter it."

The project's main goal is to relocate four reaches of the creek and enhance six wetland areas by planting 10,000 trees.

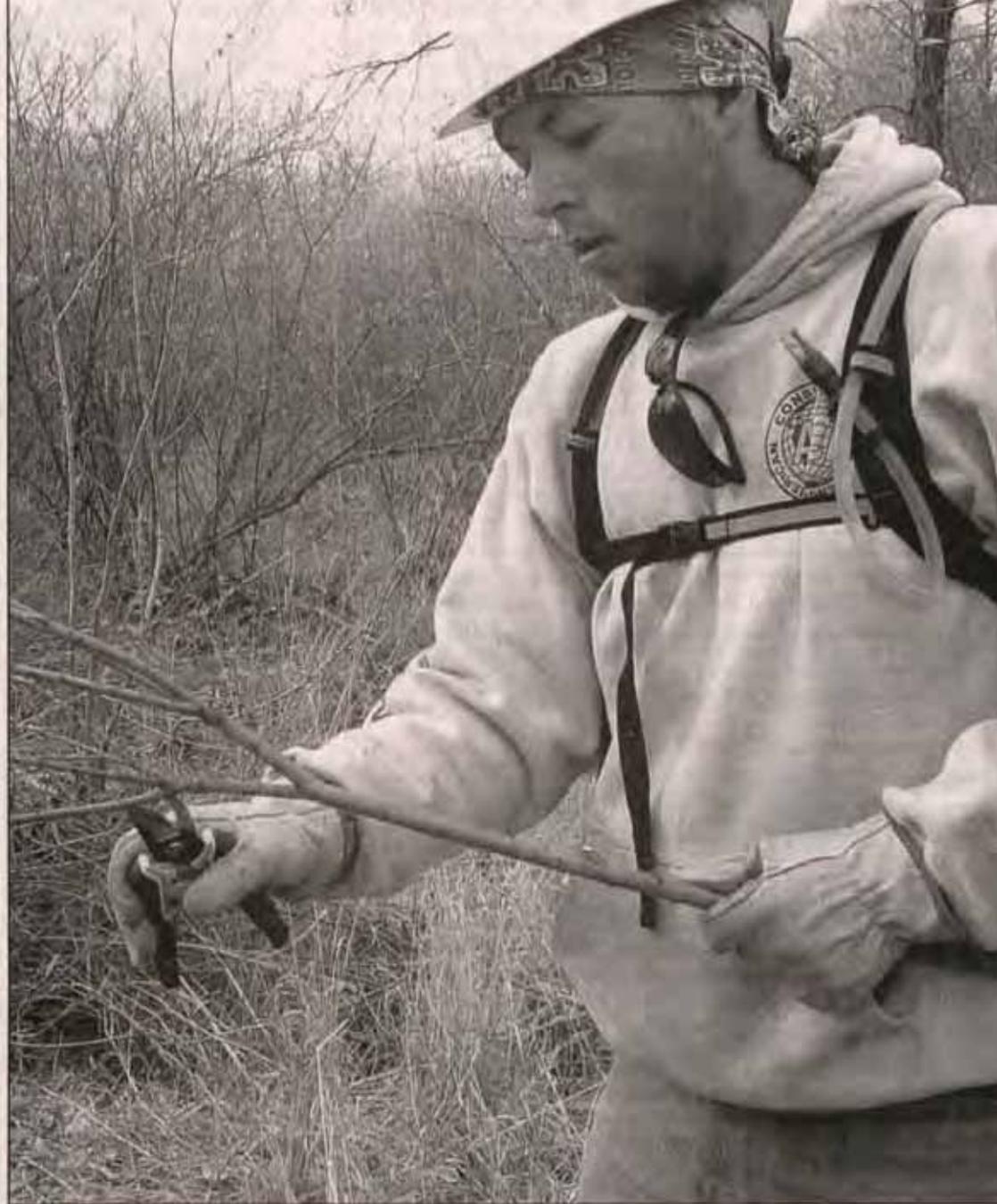
American Conservation Experience (ACE) volunteers – who are young adults that hail from the United States and countries abroad, including Italy, Holland, South Korea and France – will be at days here.

The volunteers bundled the cuttings into groups of 10 and will later haul the branches to Watson Lake. After the cuttings are submerged for a month, crews will plant them.

"Willows and cottonwoods grow really easy but they need moisture, for the most part," said Prescott Creek supervisor Diana DiMuro, 27, a full-time member of the corps, based in Flagstaff. "Most of you can dig a hole, stick a cutting in the ground and they'll grow pretty well."

Other volunteers involved with the work, a contingent harvested donor trees from the area, instead of nursery-grown vegetation, because those trees have properties that allow them to be more resilient to moist soil.

In addition to the cost-effectiveness of planting native tree cuttings, those removed at or near the site have superior genetic site adaptations because of their long-term co-evolution with the site. Volunteer Koen Stronkhorst, a 19-year-old from Germany, said he joined the corps in September while doing his studies two years ago in the



American Conservation Experience volunteer Koen Stronkhorst on Thursday prunes a tree cutting from a willow that is native to Watson Woods, located south of Prescott Parkway near Highway 89. Stronkhorst and several other volunteers are gathering the cuttings, which will be planted in the woods' riparian area early next year in an effort to refurbish the Granite Creek Watershed.

Photos taken by Doug Cook
The Daily Courier

The Daily Courier

Photo by Dale James

www.dCourier.com 

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Restoring Prescott Creeks

Group to celebrate start of Watson Woods restoration Friday

The Daily Courier

Prescott Creeks Preservation Association will play host to a groundbreaking of its Watson Woods Riparian Preserve Restoration Project 10 a.m. Friday.

Parking for the event is next to the preserve and the Peavine Trailhead at 1505 Sundog Ranch Road, but the celebration will occur along the banks of Granite Creek.

More than a decade in the making, the association designed the project to improve water quality, protect riparian habitat and provide open space for native wildlife, residents and visitors at the preserve, located off Highway 89 and Prescott Lakes Parkway.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, the Arizona Water Protection Fund, the City of Prescott and the public have collectively contributed nearly \$1.5 million in grants and donations toward the restoration.

The 126-acre preserve is the remaining portion of what was

once a 1,000-acre riparian gallery forest near Prescott.

This project primarily will restore the stability of the Granite Creek channel while maintaining natural stream function. Volunteers with Prescott Creeks will relocate four reaches of the creek and create six ephemeral wetlands. They also will plant 15,000 cottonwood and willow trees and shrubs that community volunteers harvested in December and January.

Planting of emergent vegetation in wetlands and seeding native grasses in all disturbed areas will conclude the re-vegetation effort.

Prescott Creeks, a non-profit organization, took on the project with the understanding that the Environmental Protection Agency and ADEQ listed both Granite Creek and Watson Lake as "impaired."

For more information about this project or to volunteer, call Renee Hoover at 445-5669 or e-mail her at rhoover@prescottcreeks.org.



The Daily Courier

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Prescott Creeks celebrates start of major restoration work at Watson Woods

By Doug Cook

The Daily Courier

Friday, March 27, 2009



Doug Cook/The Daily Courier

Volunteers with American Conservation Experience this past Friday begin planting harvested cottonwoods, red willows and shrubs along a creekbed northeast of the Prescott Lakes Parkway and Highway 89 intersection off Sundog Ranch Road.

Prescott Creeks Preservation Association is well on its way to restoring the city-owned Watson Woods Riparian Preserve and the Granite Creek watershed by reviving its wetlands as well as a portion of the forest.

This past Friday officials with Prescott Creeks, a not-for-profit conservation group that has a 25-year renewable management lease on the preserve, paid tribute to the ongoing restoration work in a dedication ceremony, which celebrated almost 15 years of project planning and featured some tree planting.

Volunteer crews with American Conservation Experience have already started putting in an estimated 15,000 harvested cottonwoods, red willows and shrubs along a creek bed northeast of the Prescott Lakes Parkway and Highway 89 intersection off Sundog Ranch Road.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, or ADEQ; the [City of Prescott](#); the Arizona Water Protection Fund and Prescott Creeks are teaming up to complete the project, which will purify the site's water while reducing erosion and flooding.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Prescott-area volunteers have continued to assist the aforementioned agencies in their efforts to improve the watershed's water quality, protect its riparian habitat, and provide open space for native wildlife, Prescott residents and visitors.

Prescott Creeks reports that community volunteers and American Conservation Experience crews have donated an estimated 2,200 hours since December.

To date, ADEQ, the Water Protection Fund, the city and the public have collectively contributed nearly \$1.5 million in grants and donations to pay for the project. Prescott Creeks is using the money to relocate four reaches of the creek and create six temporary wetlands.

"When you think about riparian areas, it's really important to note that in the arid Western United States there's less than 2 percent of the total landform that is associated with that," said Rodney Held, executive director of the Water Protection Fund. "And yet they provide very essential ecological functions."

ADEQ Water Quality Division Director Joan Card said as more people move to Arizona it will become imperative to protect and improve the health of riparian zones.

"Riparian areas in the Southwest, particularly in Arizona, are extremely rare, and they have been degraded over the decades," Card said. "Once the trees and grasses become established here, they'll uptake nutrients in the

stream. That will create a balance that will help prevent algae growth and filter the water that way."

One of the project's main objectives is to restore the stability of the Granite Creek channel while maintaining natural stream function and bolstering riparian habitat.

Held said, among other things, healthy riparian systems help filter and trap sediments, provide for nutrient cycling and stabilize stream banks.

"For five years after this project, we'll monitor its physical and biological aspects to make sure we're meeting the goals that we've set," Prescott Creeks Executive Director Michael Byrd said.

Prescott-based Fann Environmental, a division of Fann Contracting, is clearing and re-channeling the creek so it can develop a wooded wetland area. Natural Channel Design of Flagstaff is conducting the engineering and job-site supervision.

Mark Wirtanen of Natural Channel Design, an environmental engineering firm that specializes in river and stream restoration, said his company designed the Watson Woods project and completed the underground surveys. Natural Channel Design will monitor the restoration through to its completion and well afterward to ensure it is functioning properly.

"All total in the project, we created new meanders and about 2,700 feet of channel," Wirtanen said. "We do all of the construction supervision because we can design something on paper, but when you're on the ground in an actual system there are multitudes of changes that need to take place."

Tom Moody, a river runner and founder of Natural Channel Design who envisioned the Watson Woods restoration, died in a tragic small-plane crash in January.

"We were blessed to have had the opportunity to work with and learn from Tom," Byrd said. "His vision led Watson Woods and many other Southwestern rivers to be better places for us all."

Biologists say today's Watson Woods Preserve comprises only 126 acres of what they believe was a sprawling 1,000-acre forest stretching from Granite Dells and upstream toward downtown Prescott.

Environmental Protection Agency and ADEQ officials have listed Granite Creek and Watson Lake as "impaired" waters. They say Granite Creek and Watson Lake have low dissolved oxygen as well as high levels of E. coli bacteria, which harm wildlife.

"Unfortunately, this area has somewhat of a sordid past," Byrd said. "It was full of poorly managed livestock grazing, illegal dumping and, more recently, sand and gravel extraction operations that have probably been the most degrading factor to this ecosystem."

However, after the preserve is refurbished, it will offer myriad public recreational opportunities, such as hiking and wildlife viewing of birds, lynx, bobcats, coyotes, elk and deer.

"When this project is finished, it's going to be a jewel in our portfolio," Mayor [Jack Wilson](#) said to a small crowd of spectators along the banks of Granite Creek this past Friday. "It's going to tie into the Peavine Trail, which is the heaviest used part of our trails system."

Related Links

SHOWING PROMISE

*New channel,
vegetation
faring well at
Watson Woods
Preserve*

By DOUG COOK
The Daily Courier
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Prescott Creeks Preservation Association has made significant progress since it began work four months ago to restore the city-owned Watson Woods Riparian Preserve and Granite Creek watershed.

On Tuesday, Prescott Creeks Executive Director Michael Byrd conducted a field trip through the Watson Woods Restoration project to show commissioners and staffers with the Arizona Water Protection Fund Commission how his group is reviving the watershed's wetlands and a portion of the forest off Highway 89 and Prescott Lakes Parkway.

Byrd said he thought it was important for the commission to receive an on-site update since it has supported Prescott Creeks' effort with more than \$1 million in contributions over the past 14 years.

Prescott Creeks is using the money to relocate four reaches of the creek, create six temporary wetlands and 2,700 feet of channel with culverts. Since it completed the channel earlier this year, it has had two major flows, including one in May and another two weeks ago.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), the City of Prescott, the protection fund and



Matt Hirschow/The Daily Courier

Prescott Creeks Preservation Association Executive Director Michael Byrd, right, shows commissioners and staff from the Arizona Water Protection Fund, among others, an updated aerial map of the Watson Woods Restoration project Tuesday in Prescott.

erosion and flooding.

In late March, volunteer crews with American Conservation Experience started putting in an estimated 15,000 harvested cottonwoods, red willows and shrubs along a preserve creek bed northeast of the Prescott Lakes Parkway and Highway 89 intersection off Sundog Ranch Road.

Those plantings remain healthy and are growing all along the streambed, which was dry this week but should pick up once the monsoon

creek's banks, while cottonwoods and red willows stand above it.

"Our approach has been to irrigate 50 percent of the entire project," Byrd said. "The intent is not to water these trees forever, but to help them get established in the groundwater."

Byrd added that some noxious weeds have cropped up on the preserve, but Prescott Creeks has plans to plant a native grass seed mix to combat the problem.

get ahead of that and continue to stay with it," he said.

In addition, Prescott Creeks has partnered with the Prescott Audubon Society for habitat surveys and monitoring of reptiles and amphibians on the preserve.

Byrd opened Tuesday's tour at the preserve's kiosk, which stands at its entrance near the Peavine Trailhead. The display greets visitors with a map and background information about the project as well as a

• WOODS

From page 3C

"For the time being, this is our primary entrance," Byrd said. "And as we get the restoration work completed and move into construction of walking trails on the preserve, we'll move the primary entrance to the west side of the creek on Highway 89."

Byrd added that the new entryway will provide better, more direct access for visitors. However, Prescott Creeks will keep the current entrance because it is coupled with the Peavine Trailhead, which Byrd said gets an estimated 36,000 to 50,000 visitors each year.

Byrd later showed the field trip's 15 participants an updated aerial photograph of the restoration site that was taken in April.

"This is probably one of the bigger projects and main sites we've talked about over the years that

highlights what the Water Protection Fund has actually accomplished," said Steve Olson, executive director of the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association. "We want to use the state's resources to preserve some of these riparian areas."

Biologists say today's Watson Woods Preserve comprises only 126 acres of what they believe was once a sprawling 1,000-acre forest stretching from Granite Dells and upstream toward downtown Prescott.

Environmental Protection Agency and ADEQ officials have listed Granite Creek and Watson Lake as "impaired" waters. They say Granite Creek and Watson Lake have low dissolved oxygen as well as high levels of E. coli bacteria, which harm wildlife.

The recent plantings are designed to combat the oxygen issue. Once



Matt Hinchew/The Daily Courier

Michael Byrd, executive director of the Prescott Creeks Preservation Association, shows off the progress Tuesday afternoon that the organization has made over the past four months on the Watson Woods Restoration project in Prescott.

the preserve is refurbished, it will offer several public recreational opportunities, such as hiking and wildlife viewing of birds, lynx,

bobcats, coyotes, elk and deer.

"It's a combination of restoring water quality and water quantity, so part of the restoration

process is to re-establish the natural flow system," said Marie Light, a hydrologist and chair of the Arizona Water Protection Fund.

"When you have the natural flow system, then you have the water source that supplies water to the vegetation," Light said. "Once we have all the vegetation, then all the plants and animals can be re-established."

Prescott-based Fann Environmental, a sena-

channeled the creek so it can develop a wooded wetland area.

Meanwhile, Natural Channel Design of Flagstaff, an environmental engineering firm specializing in river and stream restoration, is still conducting the engineering and job-site supervision.

The firm designed the Watson Woods project and completed the underground surveys. It will continue to monitor the restoration through to its comple-



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Prescott Creeks seeking more volunteers to further Watson Woods' restoration

By **Doug Cook**

The Daily Courier

Thursday, December 24, 2009



Matt Hinshaw/The Daily Courier Prescott Creeks volunteer Karen Mason, above, trims a sapling Saturday morning during a tree harvesting at the Watson Woods Riparian Preserve in Prescott.

PRESCOTT - In 2010, the environmental restoration project at Watson Woods Riparian Preserve, located due north and south of Prescott Lakes Parkway near Highway 89, will continue with the planting of additional cottonwoods, willows, wetland vegetation and a mix of native grasses.

This year Prescott Creeks Preservation Association, a nonprofit that is spearheading the work, harvested and planted 13,000 cuttings at the preserve. About 95 percent of the trees that came from those cuttings survived the first growing season, which was 15 percent better than projections indicated.

Nonetheless, an additional 1,200 to 1,500 cuttings are needed to boost areas on the preserve where vegetation was lost because of past gravel mining operations in the 1950s and '60s, and where the creek was recently realigned to improve its function.

Past mining activities shifted the creek out of its historic bed and into a straight walled channel so that the water couldn't move.

When the flow is restored, natural flooding will occur once again on the preserve during seasonal rains and snows.

Flooding slows down the water and allows all of the silt and nutrients in it to seep into the ground. Those nutrients will benefit the trees and plants instead of traveling to nearby Watson Lake, which allows harmful algae to bloom.

"This was an extremely disturbed area, and what we're trying to do is put it back to the way it used to be," said Jay Crocker, Prescott Creeks' field projects coordinator, who is a former longtime lake manager in southern California. "We still have a little bit of work on last year's realignment of the creeks. You realign them and watch them work for a year to see where they're eroding or not functioning right, and then go in and fix them."

Crocker added that the creation of temporary wetlands on the preserve will allow for wetland plants, such as cottontails, to thrive.

This past week, volunteers began gathering more cottonwoods from Watson Woods and soaked them in



At left, George Sheats cuts a tree limb to use as a sapling.

Watson Lake, where they will sit for about a month to induce root growth.

"We will go out and harvest poles that are about 12 feet long and then go through and bundle them up," Kim Sieb, a project volunteer and a senior at [Prescott College](#), said this past week. "Sometimes we get 34 bundles, but the other day we got 66."

The harvesting and planting will continue through the end of December and into January, Prescott Creeks outreach and communications director Ann-Marie Benz said, although European volunteers from the American Conservation Experience are expected to provide more help in February.

said three species of cottonwoods and four species of willows will help filter stream water before it travels to the lake.

When the trees are ready, volunteers will plant them 8 to 9 feet deep in approximately 150 groups - which is how they grow naturally - in six areas on the preserve. Crocker

Within the past year, volunteers with Yavapai Exceptional Industries, Decision Point and Yavapai County Adult Probation, among others, planted native grass seeds, harvested vegetation for planting cottonwoods and willows, placed used Christmas trees along the creek edges for bank stabilization and removed invasive weeds.

The 126-acre preserve represents the remaining portion of what was once a 1,000-acre riparian gallery forest near Prescott. This current project will restore the stability of the Granite Creek channel while maintaining natural stream function and improving riparian habitat and water quality for the creek and Watson Lake.

Officials with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) have listed the creek and the lake as "impaired," and the restoration is designed to upgrade that status.

When completed, the project will have relocated four reaches of the creek - which extend about a half-mile and hook into Watson Lake - and created six ephemeral wetlands. In total, volunteers will plant about 15,000 cottonwood and willow trees and shrubs to reforest the preserve.

Planting of emergent vegetation in wetlands and seeding native grasses in all disturbed areas will complete the re-vegetation effort. Long-term monitoring of that work will help Prescott Creeks in evaluating the project's performance.

"We are going to get to a point where we have trails out here and a lot of interpretive signage once this part of the project is done," Crocker said.

The restoration will move forward in 2010, thanks to donations from the ADEQ, the Arizona Water Protection Fund, the [City of Prescott](#) and the public.

If interested, community members will have several opportunities to volunteer, Benz said. To join the effort or to receive more information about the project, call Prescott Creeks at 445-5669 or e-mail Benz at AMBenz@prescottcreeks.org.

"It's nice to come out here and do what we can to preserve some open space," Colin Thompson, another Prescott College student and project volunteer, said this past week. "After I graduate, I'm hoping to do some work like this where I'm from back in Texas."

Related Links