



April 23, 2007

Prescott must commit to protecting Verde

EDITOR:

I want to thank the Courier for reporting that the Center for Biological Diversity has opened a new office to advance our campaign to Save the Verde River in your April 3 front-page article.

The article accurately quoted from a letter that Rep. Rick Renzi sent to the many citizens who expressed concern about the pipeline project. Renzi's letter further stated: "It is my hope that the City of Prescott takes the proper precautions to assess the impact of this project so that the city may be allow(ed) to grow and thrive in the future."

The center strives to engage Prescott's leadership in the development of these "proper precautions." We hope the public also will encourage the city and its partners to develop a plan now, before they build the pipeline, that it can implement whenever necessary to offset future impacts to the Verde River's flows attributable to their project.

A habitat conservation plan or other comprehensive mitigation plan would protect the interests of citizens and the river and its constituent fish, plants and wildlife, and allow the city to "grow and thrive in the future."

We also call on the Prescott area communities to become members of the Verde River Basin Partnership. Though the center supports the scientific studies the partnership plans to undertake, we declined membership in hopes that Prescott would feel comfortable participating. A genuine commitment and cooperation between upstream and downstream communities will be necessary if we are to retain the jewel that is the Verde River.

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