



# ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

2014–2015 Annual Report



ARIZONA  
WILDERNESS  
COALITION  
WWW.AZWILD.ORG

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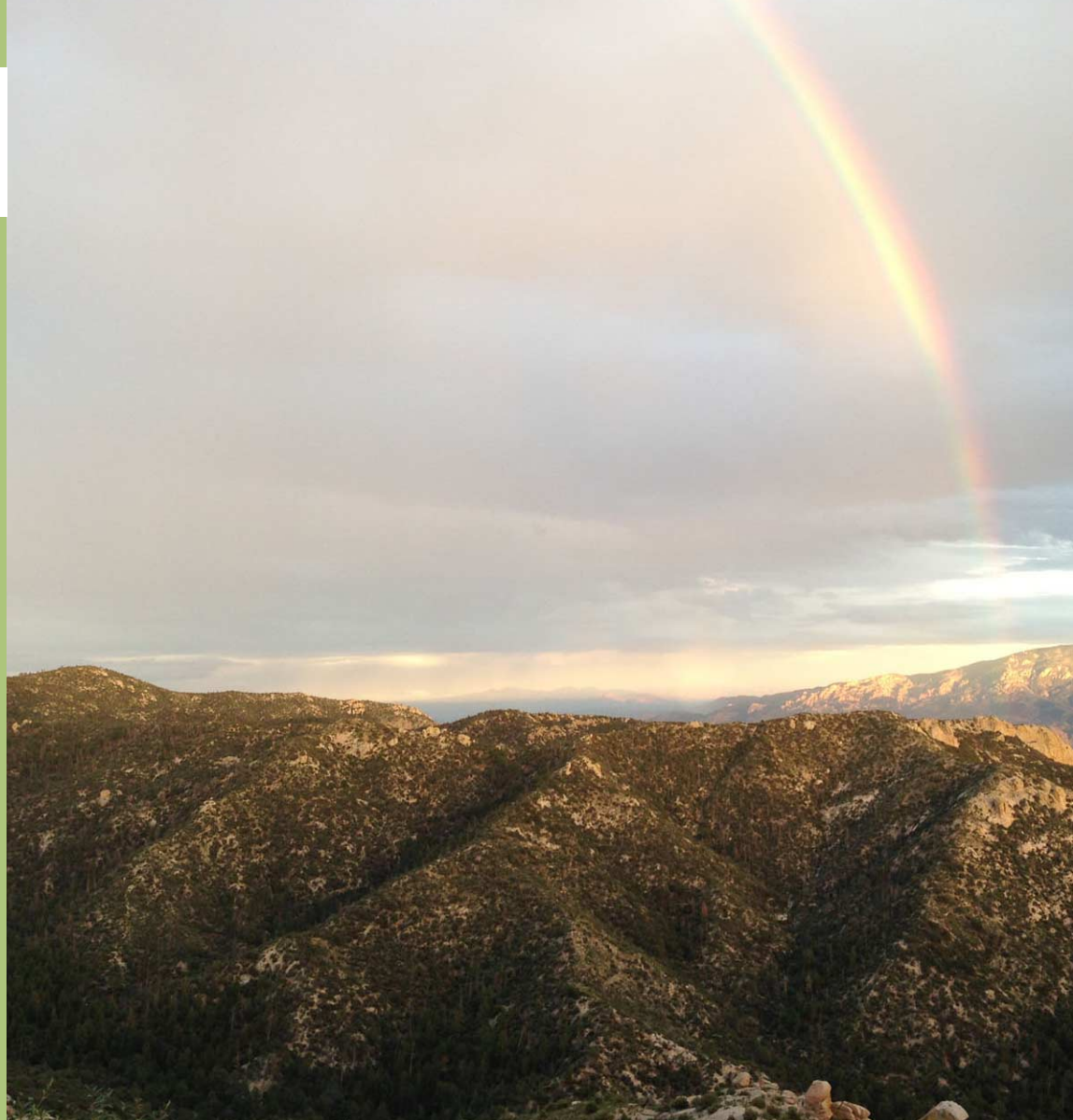
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Barbara Hawke *Executive Director*

Brian Stultz *Stewardship Coordinator*

Linda Williamson *Office Coordinator*



# Wilderness Depends on You!

We are delighted to share with you the marvelous accomplishments of Arizona Wilderness Coalition for our 2014-2015 Fiscal Year. And we've accomplished a lot, with your help and support!

Especially impressive are the successes of our growing Wilderness Stewardship program. Under the able leadership of our new Stewardship Coordinator, Brian Stultz, we are working with more partners and more diverse communities — expanding our work from National Forests onto Bureau of Land Management lands, and working more with veterans and students. This past year AWC completed stewardship projects in sixteen wilderness areas across the state, from mountains to grasslands.

Another exciting new venture is searching for wilderness-worthy lands in parts of the state that haven't seen citizen wilderness inventory for decades. Citizen wilderness inventory formed the backbone of the landmark 1984 and 1990 legislation that designated many of Arizona's 90 wilderness areas. Yet since that time, conditions and policies have changed, providing an excellent opportunity to identify additional lands in need of preservation. We've found at least thirteen new areas deserving of wilderness management this year!

**Citizen-led efforts offer great promise to achieve long-term protection of precious resources in our state.**

Volunteers are the engine that drive local preservation efforts, and this year residents in southeastern Arizona organized efforts to secure increased protection along the San Pedro River and more broadly across the Sky Islands. These citizen-led efforts offer great promise to achieve long-term protection of precious resources in our state. AWC is proud to support such citizen initiatives with information and facilitation resources.

The pace of change in our human and natural environments grows ever more rapid. Arizona Wilderness Coalition is growing and evolving to respond to conservation challenges in ways that are effective and feasible in the near term, while strengthening the foundation for permanent wilderness protections. I hope through this Annual Report you'll savor the accomplishments of the past year made possible by you, our valued donors, volunteers and supporters.

Yours in wilderness advocacy,

*Barbara Hawke,  
Executive Director*



**Wilderness is... Inspiring**



# President's Message

As a young boy and budding biologist, I often immersed myself in small pockets of nature around my home. As I grew older, I became emotionally aware of larger landscapes, and began to feel a powerful and deep-seated attraction to landscapes where the activities of man were hidden or absent. Over time, I came to realize that the environmental issue which meant the most to me was the preservation of wild lands. Aesthetically, emotionally, and biologically, I believe that land protection is essential. Protect the land, and you protect all that lives in it.

I joined the Board of Directors of the AWC just over ten years ago. My first Board meeting was November 1st, 2005. I had been recruited to the Board by Don Hoffman, who was then acting as the Executive Director. I remember feeling a mixture of excitement and trepidation at that first meeting. I still feel a mixture of excitement and trepidation before each Board meeting, some ten years later! Acting as a Board member for such a fine organization as Arizona Wilderness Coalition is an honor, and sometimes a challenge. Protecting land is never easy, but I do believe that we are on the cusp of an important moment in time where land protection may be possible and perhaps even likely. I hope that everyone who feels a desire to protect and care for our public lands will remain vigilant and engaged. AWC needs your help more than ever to advance our shared goals in this time of opportunity.

— Mike Quinlan, Board President

**Wilderness is... A place for play**



## Legacy Giving for Lasting Wilderness

What lies ahead tomorrow? Life is intertwined with uncertainty. Wilderness grounds us with a great reassurance that the earth endures, and will provide solace for anyone who seeks it in the future. Your legacy gift will assure a contribution to the lasting values of wilderness for wildlife and the coming generations. And there are many options for legacy giving, from including AWC in your will to listing AWC as a beneficiary for retirement funds. Contact Barbara Hawke at 520-326-4300 for more information.

# Wilderness Stewardship

Wild Stew is growing by springs and mountains, with the critical support of funders, volunteers and partner groups. We have been delighted with the program's new directions under Wilderness Stewardship Coordinator, Brian Stultz.

In 2015 we launched two long-anticipated initiatives—beginning work with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and engaging veterans—thanks in large part to support from Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust.

We completed a project in BLM's White Canyon Wilderness, removing purple paint that marred a wilderness trail, and hope to continue monitoring and restoring this lesser-known wilderness area east of Phoenix. In the Arrastra Wilderness near Wikieup, dedicated volunteers braved the triple-digit temperatures to support BLM's stream assessments of Lower Burro Creek and the Big Sandy by conducting photo-point monitoring within these scenic canyons.





## Veterans Back in the Saddle

In August, we delved into the Saddle Mountain Wilderness region near the North Rim of the Grand Canyon with a tremendous group of a dozen veterans as well as staff and families from the Kaibab National Forest. The crew cleared trails of downed trees and brush, relaxed with yoga, and experienced their own restoration within the Wilderness.

“I especially enjoyed the beauty and quiet seclusion of the wilderness,” said one participant, a U.S. Marine veteran. “There was nothing but friendly and professional folks running this program, and plenty of time to myself. I think the volunteer program is a major plus and would do it again if asked.”

**U.S. VETERANS**  
JOIN US FOR A  
**TRAIL RESTORATION PROJECT**  
TAKING PLACE IN THE  
**SADDLE MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS, KAIBAB NF.**  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 15TH - WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19TH**

**PARTICIPANTS WILL RESTORATION AT THE  
JACOB LAKE VISITOR CENTER AT 12 PM AUGUST 15, 2015**

**MORNING AND EVENING ACTIVITIES FACILITATED BY NICK MONRO:  
YOGA TEACHER WHO HELPS VETS FIND THEIR INNER WARRIOR.**

**DAILY TRAIL MAINTENANCE**  
CONSISTING OF LIGHT BRUSHING AND WATER EROSION MITIGATION TECHNIQUES. WILL BE COMPLETED ON THE NORTH CANYON TRAIL AND SADDLE MOUNTAIN TRAIL. WHILE VERY STEEP IN SECTIONS THIS IS A MAINTAINED FOREST SERVICE WILDERNESS TRAIL WITH HEAVY PUBLIC USE.

**THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION WILL BE PROVIDING DINNER THROUGHOUT THE EVENT.  
PARTICIPANTS WILL NEED TO PROVIDE THEIR OWN BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND SNACKS.**

Stretching the eastern edge of the Kaibab Plateau, the Saddle Mountain Wilderness is a rugged land of narrow drainage basins and steep scarps to line of cliffs produced by faulting or erosion. The gentle slopes on the main ridge of the area dip dramatically to form the horseshoe rim on the south. Elevations range from about 6,000 feet on Marble Canyon Rim to 8,000 feet on Saddle Mountain Peak, a prominent ridge with a profile that resembles a saddle, high and all.

**RSVP REQUIRED**  
VISIT THE ARIZONA WILDERNESS STEWARDSHIP PAGE ON MISTYSPOT.COM FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND RESERVATIONS.  
[www.mistyspot.com/Arizona-Wilderness-Stewardship/Events/2015/08/15/](http://www.mistyspot.com/Arizona-Wilderness-Stewardship/Events/2015/08/15/)

**CONTACT:**  
Betsy Deane  
Wilderness Stewardship Coordinator  
[betsy@azwild.org](mailto:betsy@azwild.org) 928-338-3294

**ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION**

Wilderness is... The original natural history museum

# Stew by the Numbers

Our Wilderness Stewardship program made substantial impact on conditions in Arizona wilderness areas this year. All of this is only made possible by our fantastic volunteers, partner groups, and Stewardship funding supporters including National Forest Foundation, Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, Arizona Community Foundation – Yavapai and Cochise Counties, National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Public Lands Foundation and our individual donors. Special thanks go to project partners White Mountain Conservation League for leading efforts in the Escudilla Wilderness, and to Prescott College for extensive involvement from faculty and students alike.



**16** Stewardship Projects completed in 16 Wilderness Areas



**2700** volunteer hours contributed



**200** volunteers participating



**175** acres restored or maintained



**20** campsites and 14 campfire rings naturalized



**200** miles of trail surveyed for conditions



**400** pounds of trash removed from Wilderness Areas



**152** miles of trail improved or maintained



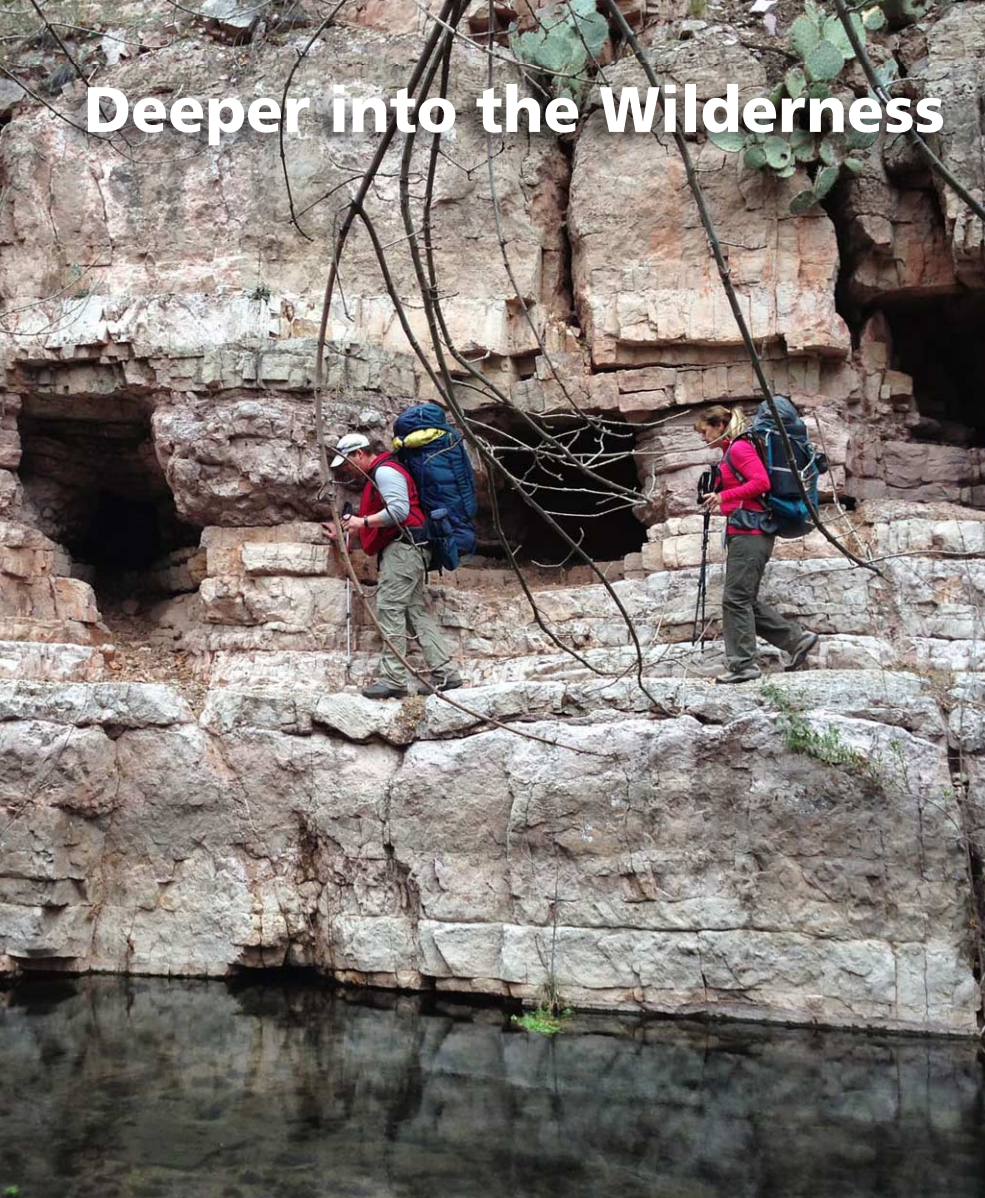
**\$60K** of volunteer labor invested in public lands



**Wilderness is... Thrilling**



# Deeper into the Wilderness



With the help of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, AWC is undertaking more extensive, longer-term riparian restoration projects for two unique streams in the Sonoran Desert — Hassayampa River Canyon Wilderness northwest of Phoenix and Arnett Creek east of Phoenix. These riparian corridors hold special qualities: rare perennial flows of water as well as habitat for threatened and sensitive species including Yellow-billed cuckoo, Longfin dace and Lowland leopard frog.

These projects assemble a wonderful array of partners, including Friends of the Tonto National Forest, Arizona Trail Association, Prescott College, Bureau of Land Management, Back Country Horsemen of Central Arizona, and Tonto National Forest. Together, we'll remove invasive tamarisk and oleander, and plant cottonwoods and willows to improve stream function and wildlife habitat. AWC will contribute our backcountry skills for remote areas that lie as much as six miles away from a trailhead.

# Preservation in the Near Horizon

While AWC's goal is to permanently preserve Arizona's remaining unprotected wilderness-worthy lands, the benefits offered by "administrative protections" are significant. Administrative protections result from agency decisions in their land management planning processes, decisions that can secure sensitive lands for up to fifteen, twenty or more years.

This year AWC worked extensively to support conservation management in several active agency planning processes, including plans for the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area; the Harquahala Mountains Wilderness; the Coronado National Forest and the Prescott National Forest. As the public phase of the Tonto National Forest planning process expands, AWC will work to advance wilderness preservation in areas that are important for ecological values and human solitude.





*Expert panel discussing “From Aravaipa to the the Colorado: Arizona Desert Wilderness Past, Present and Future” — L-R: AWC Executive Director Barbara Hawke; Saguaro National Park Lead Ranger Ray O’Neil; Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Conservation Scientist Sergio Avila; Imperial National Wildlife Refuge Manager Nathan Caswell; Southwest Decision Resources Program Associate Julia Sittig; and Mark Trautwein, former staffer to U.S. Representative Morris Udall.*

## Celebrating Arizona Desert Wilderness

This year we joined with the Bureau of Land Management, The Wilderness Society and additional partners to recognize the 25th anniversary of the 1990 Arizona Desert Wilderness Act. The 1990 Act was in many ways a culmination of early mandates of the 1964 Wilderness Act. Following the 1984 Arizona Wilderness Act that preserved 35 wilderness areas emphasizing National Forest lands, the 1990 Act brought long-needed recognition to lower-elevation lands primarily managed by the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Like the 1984 Act, the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act was grounded in citizen support and tireless volunteer survey work. The 1990 Act protected more than 1.1 million acres

of 42 Arizona wilderness gems including the Eagletail Mountains, Hassayampa River Canyon, and Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge.

Partners assembled in Tucson to commemorate the anniversary with a panel discussion evaluating the history and future of desert wilderness. Highlights of the evening included presentations by Mark Trautwein, former staffer to U.S. Representative Morris Udall; and Jack Dykinga, Pulitzer-prize winning landscape photographer. AWC was proud to be represented on the panel and to support recognition of the monumental effort that led to passage of the 1984 and 1990 Arizona wilderness acts.

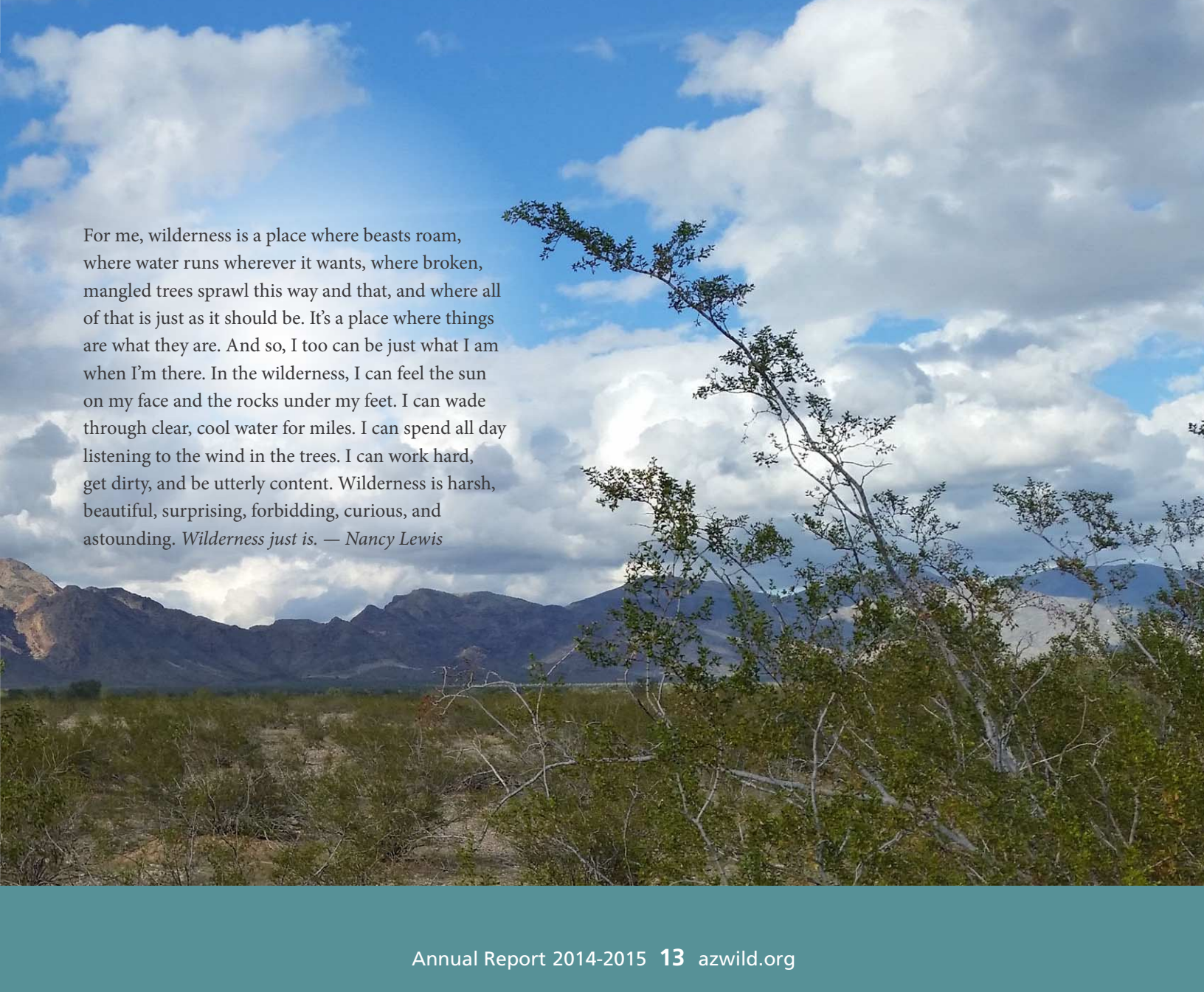
**Wilderness is... A source of clean water, air, and soil**

# Wilderness Valued

*In thinking about the values wilderness holds for those who love and cherish the untamed backcountry, we asked our volunteers what makes them give of their personal time and talent to restore and preserve wilderness. Here's what we heard:*

Wilderness: self-willed land, “an area where earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man... retaining its primeval character and influence” (Wilderness Act of 1964). These poetic words were declared law 51 years ago. As this act predicted, over time our population expanded rapidly, and currently with the influences of humans there is no place on earth that is truly ‘untrammelled’. Yet wilderness as a political construct is the closest we come as a nation to living in communion with the earth. Wilderness is a gift, the ultimate humility of our species. Wilderness is art and a place of rejuvenation for the human spirit. Ecologically vital, these areas are the heart of preservation efforts to prevent an extinction event that threatens our planet. Wilderness is walking down a desert wash and witnessing a mountain lion watching you. Wilderness is immersing in a pool of water, and witnessing other species do the same. *Wilderness is self-willed earth. Which means everything to me. — Brian Andersen*

**Wilderness is... Our past, our present, our future**



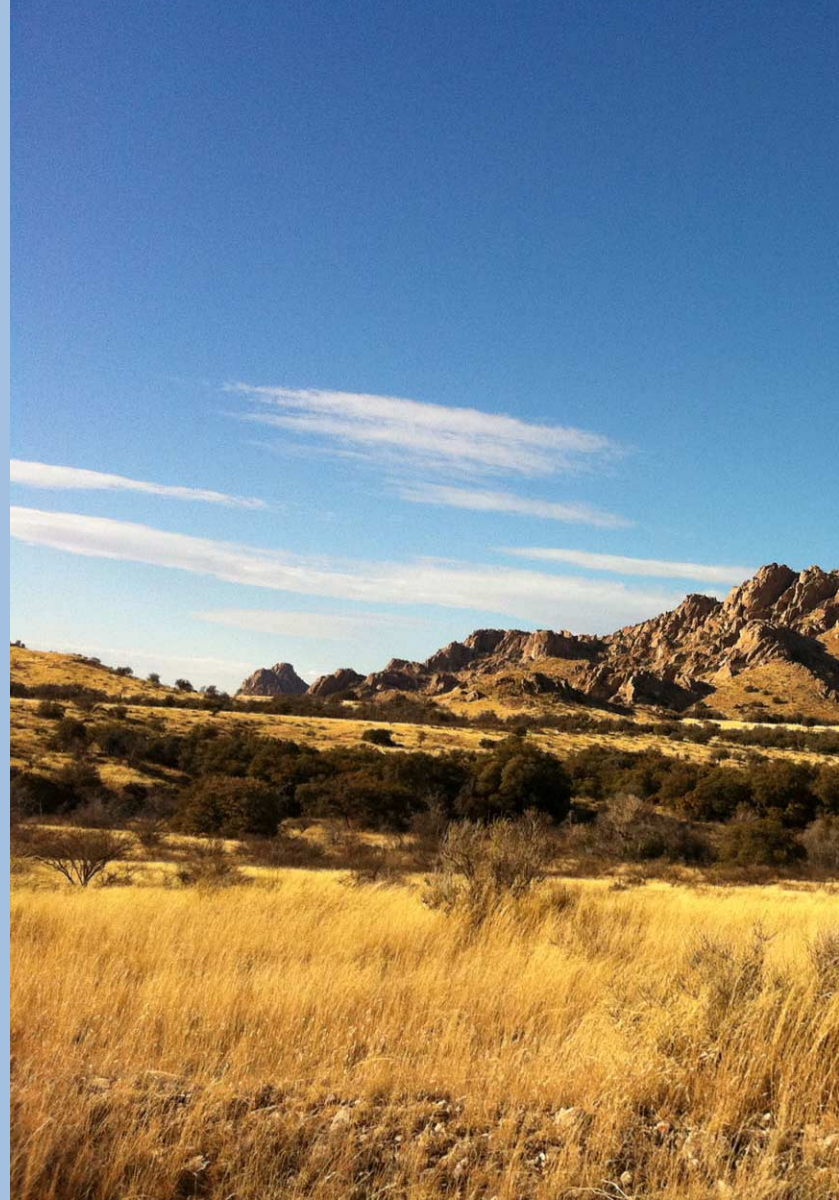
For me, wilderness is a place where beasts roam, where water runs wherever it wants, where broken, mangled trees sprawl this way and that, and where all of that is just as it should be. It's a place where things are what they are. And so, I too can be just what I am when I'm there. In the wilderness, I can feel the sun on my face and the rocks under my feet. I can wade through clear, cool water for miles. I can spend all day listening to the wind in the trees. I can work hard, get dirty, and be utterly content. Wilderness is harsh, beautiful, surprising, forbidding, curious, and astounding. *Wilderness just is.* — Nancy Lewis

# Land of Legends

This past year we've been pleased to expand our connections with working communities in southeastern Arizona to build the foundation for a broad-based conservation plan that would preserve remaining unprotected areas in this sensitive, highly biodiverse, working landscape.

More than two dozen additional businesses signed on in support of greater conservation measures for areas like the Whetstone Mountains and Cochise Stronghold. We were delighted to see the *Sierra Vista Herald* publish a thought-provoking letter from the Cochise Stronghold Retreat bed and breakfast, reflecting the importance of preserving nature and wildlife habitat for the benefit of local business. And we are expanding cooperative stewardship projects with partners active in southeastern Arizona, including the Arizona Trail Association and Climbing Association of Southern Arizona.

In June, AWC facilitated a focused input session to help more than a dozen conservation groups and individuals share perspectives with the BLM on planning for the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area. The conversation was wide-ranging and reflected the extensive collective expertise of the gathered conservation groups. Alongside this effort, we've seen a small group of volunteers from far southeastern Arizona grow into a very capable cadre of citizen activists advocating for preservation of the precious San Pedro.





## Spotlight on the Whetstone Mountains

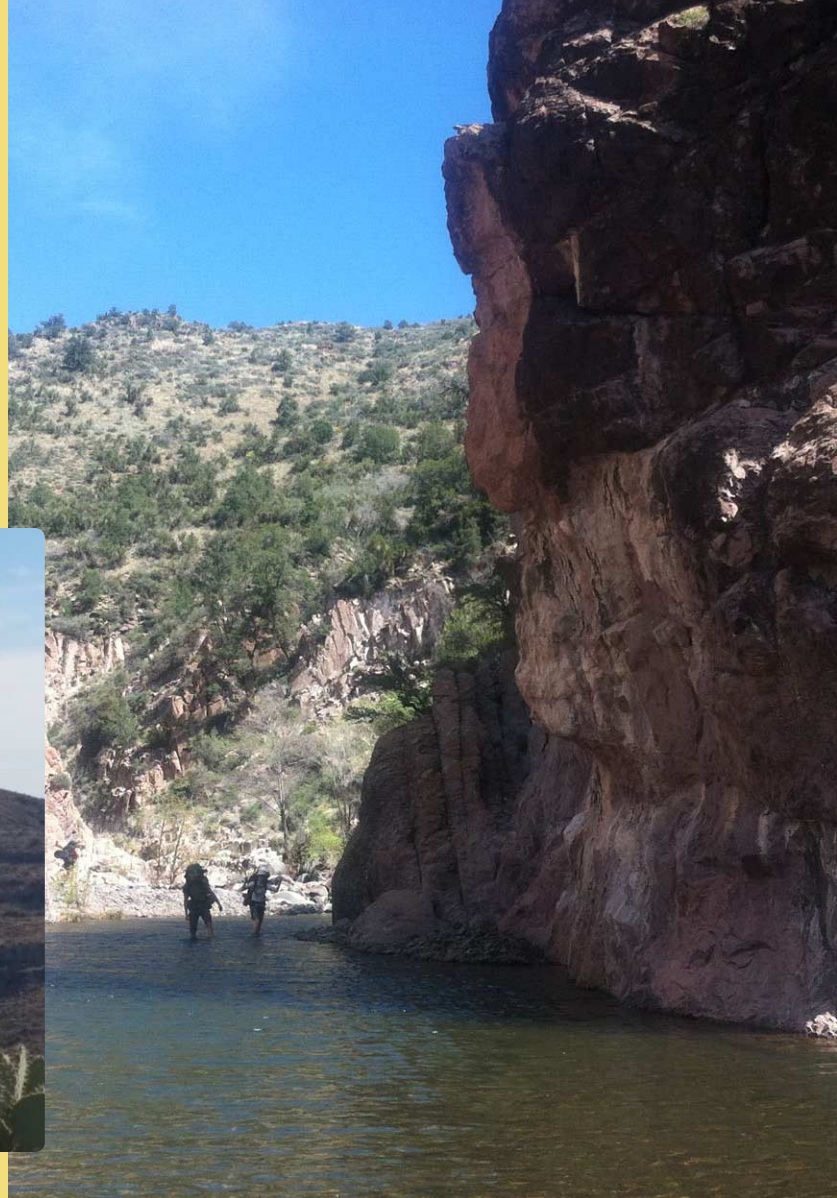
The Whetstones form a dreamlike backdrop to Kartchner Caverns State Park just outside Benson, Arizona. Often overlooked, these quiet rolling hills are awash in the soft green and yellow hues characteristic of the Sky Islands. This area has been frequented by the only known jaguar found in the United States, sees movement by endangered ocelots, and supports more than 147 bird species found in secluded ravines like French Joe Canyon. In the past year the importance of preserving this area has intensified, as major residential development moves forward directly adjacent to these currently unprotected public lands. This is a very special pocket of Arizona that deserves greater attention to preserve its phenomenal value for nature and nearby tourism.

**Wilderness is... A boost to local economies**

# Old is New: Citizen Wilderness Inventory

AWC is proud to lead new citizen inventory for potential wilderness-worthy lands, building on the work of our early days that helped permanently preserve Arizona's 90 current wilderness areas. Ably led by the stellar survey team of Joe Trudeau and Amber Fields, AWC identified thirteen new areas with wilderness characteristics among the ridges, canyons and valleys of northwestern Arizona in 2015. Volunteers assisted by documenting wilderness criteria reflecting outstanding visitor experiences.

Next up, inventory teams will roam the enigmatic landscape of far southeastern Arizona, searching for additional "Lands with Wilderness Characteristics."



**Wilderness is... A refuge for all living things**





## Sonoran Desert Heritage Act

Wilderness supporters were thrilled to see the Sonoran Desert Heritage Act reintroduced into U. S. House of Representatives on June 25th by environmental champion Congressman Raul Grijalva. Designed to preserve wildlife corridors, support military viability and manage the expansive growth of Phoenix's West Valley, this bill found support as diverse as its potential benefits.

The *Arizona Republic* published several opinion pieces supporting the bill, including a letter to the editor from our outstanding Stewardship volunteer Brian Barnes. Retired Air Force Director Jim Uken authored an insightful Guest Edito-

rial highlighting the bill's mutual benefits to conservation and military function.

Bringing greater focus to the need for conservation action in Southern Arizona, our partner the Sonoran Institute published a new report on the need to consider a variety of land conservation tools to retain military viability. A subsequent series of community forums assembled both military representatives and conservationists to evaluate conservation designations for public lands. These sorts of bridges between key interests in the state form our best chance for achieving long-term protection of landscapes like the Sonoran Desert Heritage region.



## Key Partners and Business Supporters

Arizona Community Foundations of Yavapai and Cochise Counties  
Arizona Conservation Partners  
Arizona Ecumenical Council Earthcare Commission  
Arizona Trail Association  
Arizona Wilderness Brewing Co.  
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Friends of the Tonto National Forest  
Grand Canyon Wildlands Council  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness  
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Sky Island Alliance  
Sonoran Institute  
The Wilderness Society  
The Yoga Connection  
Tucson Audubon Society  
US Vets Prescott  
White Mountain Conservation League

# Our Volunteers Make Us *Unstoppable!*

In the field, at events, being the  
Voice for Arizona Wilderness

Thearee Adkins  
Brian Andersen  
Brian Barnes  
Gary Beverly  
Stan Bindell  
Christina Burden  
Dave Dorbad  
Maleea Ezekiel  
Abby Finkelstein  
Tatyana Finkelstein  
Chris Forcum  
Craig Friesner  
Mary Gavan  
Jeff Glessing  
Janet Golio  
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Thom Hulén  
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Carol Keller  
Sarah King  
Audrey Kruse

Luara Kulish Greb  
Julian Lacroix  
Steve Larson  
Brian Leibold  
Nancy Lewis  
Winnie Liang  
Kathy Lopez  
Larry Lopez  
Bill Losh  
Andrew Maher  
Nick Mancini  
Jill Maxwell  
Sallie McCutcheon  
Flynn McFarland  
Sonia Mehren  
Lizann Michaud  
Karla Moeller  
John Morgan  
Michael Nushaws  
Howard Olién  
Tim Ormond  
Daeho Pak  
Jonathan Patt  
Peter Pierson  
Julie Polovitch  
Ann Marie Ranalli  
Rafael Reyna

Sharon Rock  
Julie Rogers  
Tedd Smith  
Mike Snodgrass  
Darrell Thompson  
Felicia Uranga  
Dao Uttsekz  
John Watkins  
Craig Weaver  
Matthew Welsh  
Marty Zumwalt



## Celebrating Wilderness Heroes

Small organizations like AWC only succeed with the help of amazing, outstanding volunteers like **Tedd Smith**. Tedd has been a Wild Stew volunteer since June of 2013, and his passion and dedication for wilderness preservation is reflected in his ongoing participation in Wild Stew events. Going above and beyond, Tedd has donated countless hours creating professional-quality event flyers and redesigning AWC's displays for outreach events. Tedd has also represented AWC at events like Arizona Trails Day in Flagstaff this past September. As a result of his inviting personality and knowledge of wilderness and AWC, Tedd recruited a number of new AWC members and Wild Stew volunteers. Bravo Tedd!



*“When doing trail maintenance, monitoring for invasive plant species, picking up trash, removing graffiti, or helping with an event, the results are positive not only for sustaining Arizona’s Wilderness areas, but also gratifying on a personal level. And as an artist, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to explore wilderness areas which provide me with inspiration and subject matter for some of my paintings.” — Tedd Smith*

**Don Heller** has served as an outstanding event volunteer for AWC this past year, making it possible for AWC to have a presence at community outreach events when it might have been otherwise impossible. Don helped staff AWC tables at the major Wild for Wilderness event at Sabino Canyon and the Tucson Folk Festival. He also helped with other AWC functions, no matter how exciting or unglamorous. We also appreciate Don's effort to provide input to AWC on programs and strategies for conservation success.

**Wilderness is... Restorative**



## Donors Make the Difference

*"I have been most fortunate to spend a great deal of my time outdoors, often in wilderness areas, and those experiences have greatly informed and enriched my life. By contributing to AWC, I help ensure those opportunities will exist for future generations by protecting the fragile, exquisite desert I live in and have come to deeply love." — Laurie Back*

**Laurie Back** has been one of AWC's most dedicated donors. We appreciate her enthusiasm that extends into volunteerism, as well. A resident of beautiful Prescott, Laurie catalyzed an author appearance for AWC at Peregrine Book Company. Thank you, Laurie for giving of yourself to advance the preservation of wilderness.

# Our Heartfelt Thanks to

### to \$2,500

Laurie Back  
Jeri Edwards  
Mike Franklin  
Half Price Books  
Community Services  
Barbara Hawke  
Doug Hulmes  
John and Janet  
McLaughlin  
Michael Quinlan  
Nichole Trushell and  
Steven Morgan

### to \$500

Tana Karen Aikins  
Brent W Bitz  
George Farmer and  
Linda Zapotek  
Darryl Geurin  
Don and Janie  
Hoffman  
Frederic and Gayle  
Jandrey  
Harvey and Ann  
Keuper-Maksvytis  
David Lutz  
Joyce Mackin

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Wilcox  
Liz Wise  
David Yetman  
Richard Yetman

### to \$50

George and Frances  
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Layla Al-Nakkash  
Philip Amorosi  
Brian Andersen  
Walter L Anderson  
Jeff Beauchamp  
Bettina Bickel

**We appreciate all the gifts you bring to the Arizona Wilderness Coalition!**

# Our Amazing Donors

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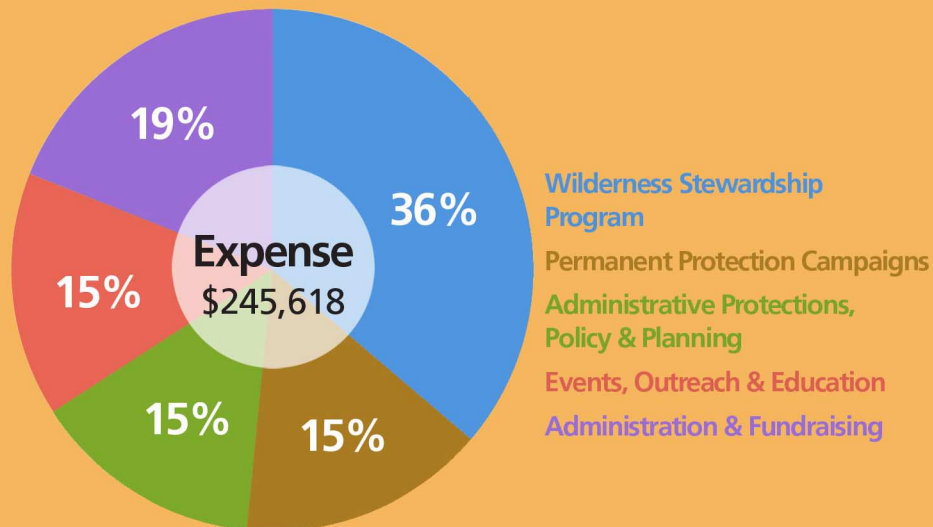
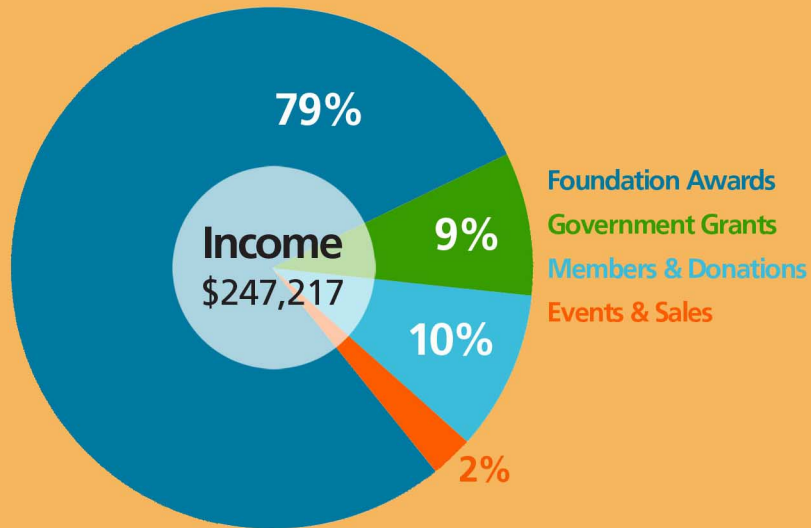
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Harold Wolters  
Bryan Wyberg

## Hurray for Wilderness Champions!

Wilderness preservation would fail without the help of dedicated wilderness rangers, planners and managers at our public lands management agencies. This year we've seen expansion of our Wilderness Stewardship Program, made possible by agency staff who help plan restoration projects, provide tools and resources, obtain permits, and write letters of support. Our hats are off to agency wilderness and recreation specialists including Zac Ribbing of the Coronado National Forest; Todd Murdock and Mike Schijf of the Safford Field Office, Bureau of Land Management (BLM); Rem Hawes and Codey Carter of the BLM Hassayampa Field Office; Greg Schuster and Patricia Bean of the Tonto National Forest; Denise Carpenter and David Hercher of the Kaibab National Forest; Francisca Adrian of the Coconino National Forest; Jason Williams of the Prescott National Forest; Matt Driscoll of the BLM Kingman Field Office; Jim Mahoney and Heather Swanson of the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area; Francisco Mendoza of the BLM Tucson Field Office; and so many additional agency staff and managers who work in partnership with groups like ours to restore and preserve public lands.

## Foundations and Agency Grants

Arizona Humanities  
Met Foundation, Inc.  
National Environmental Education Foundation  
National Forest Foundation  
National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance  
Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust  
Public Lands Foundation  
The New-Land Foundation, Inc.  
The Pew Charitable Trusts  
Tortuga Foundation  
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**Wilderness is... Community-building**



**"The American frontier is not just a physical frontier, not just unexplored spots on maps; it's the places of mystery populating the American mind."**

— Sean Prentiss, *Finding Abbey: The Search for Edward Abbey and His Hidden Desert Grave*