

WINTER 2018

A WATERSHED MOMENT

A Newsletter of Watershed Management Group



watershedmg.org
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Art by Dennis Caldwell

What's Inside...

Pg. 2: River Run Network wins Fast Pitch

Pg. 3: Grant and Loan Program

Pg. 4: Conservation Hubs in the Phoenix Valley

Pg. 6: River Run Network Creek Walks

Pg. 8: Landowner's Guide to River Restoration

Pg. 14: Living Lab Event Calendar

VISION FOR FLOWING RIVERS EMERGES AT TUCSON'S BIRTHPLACE

It's a true Watershed Moment. In November, we set a new course for Tucson's rivers, gathering with many dedicated individuals working in the watershed management field. The first Santa Cruz River Watershed Forum was organized by a group of co-conveners including: Tucson Water, American Rivers, Sky Island Alliance, Sonoran Institute, Community Water Coalition, Bureau of Reclamation, Pima County, and Watershed Management Group. The participants included representation from many city and county agencies, the federal government, water utilities, and local non-profits.

We met at Mission Garden, located at the base of A Mountain, also known as Tucson's birthplace. People have thrived along these river banks for thousands of years – also known as the oldest continuously cultivated agricultural area in the U.S. In fact, the

word Tucson comes from the O'odham word S-cuk Son, literally meaning "water at the base of the black mountain." Together we created a shared history of the watershed and reconnected with our heritage of water abundance as well as addressing the decades of poor management that led to the drying of our rivers between the 1940s and 1960s.

While basking in our environmental and cultural heritage, the forum participants set a vision to restore flow to the Santa Cruz River and its tributaries in Tucson. Participants also agreed on the need to collaborate on many shared goals around managing effluent, expanding green infrastructure, enhancing groundwater recharge, and restoring our watershed's uplands. This forum was the first meeting in a growing movement to build collaborative governance around the Tucson basin watershed.



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WMG's River Run Network: A Social Venture Success!



I was recently speaking to a local family foundation representative, to ask if they would be interested in our work, and he replied they didn't fund "Save the Whales" causes. As I started to point out that our organization's goal was to serve people, he just shook his head, and realized I wasn't going to win this argument. His perspective is typical - that "environmental" organizations just benefit the environment, and don't benefit people.

Fortunately, I had the opportunity to make my case to Tucson's philanthropic community recently, which typically funds human services groups. In August, I was selected as one of 15 participants in Social Venture Partner's (SVP) Fast Pitch program. After a competitive grant round, I was chosen to pitch the River Run Network based on our passion for improving the community and our innovative solutions to society's most difficult challenges. In the three years SVP has been running the program, WMG is the first "environmental" organization selected.

Through the two-month communication and mentorship training, I rose to the challenge of sharing my – our – story and the critical importance of the River Run Network, determined to launch WMG's work into a higher plane of recognition. So I was thrilled to be selected as one of seven finalists to participate in the Fast Pitch Competition, in front of an audience of 500 people.

When I stepped on stage on Nov. 9, I delivered my pitch with the power and passion of a rushing river. Walking off stage, I knew I nailed the delivery, but when my name was called as the winner of the top Social Venture Partner Tucson Award of \$10,000, I knew I had done so much more! I had convinced the Social Venture Partners that WMG's River Run Network was solving both a social and environmental issue, leading to more dramatic long-term results than other, more conventional models.

You can watch my pitch at Watershedmg.org/FastPitch. Tucsonans, I hope you're moved to join the River Run Network; for everyone else connected to WMG in other cities, I hope you're moved to help tackle your communities' most difficult social and environmental challenges.

Sincerely,

Lisa Shipek, Executive Director

Grant & Loan Program Enables Limited-Income Households To Harvest Rainwater



Rain gardens and rain tanks should be a fixture in every yard in the Southwest. WMG is helping further this goal through the hundreds of free classes, workshops, and tours we lead every year. And now we're taking a big step forward in Tucson, through our new Rainwater Harvesting Grant and Loan Program, which makes rainwater harvesting simple and affordable. Our comprehensive program offers limited income households a free on-site consultation; rain garden and rain tank installation packages; and project financing through grants, loans, and rebates.

The financing is made possible through a new partnership with Tucson Water. This fall, the City of Tucson awarded Watershed Management Group a contract to facilitate a limited income grant and loan program to assist eligible Tucson Water customers with rainwater harvesting.

The program enables qualifying households to receive a grant of \$400 and a no-interest loan of up to \$2,000. For as little as \$50 out of pocket expenses, households can have a rain garden and/or rain tank installed by WMG. And these aren't wimpy systems – we're installing rain tanks with 1,500 to 2,000 gallons capacity, and the rain gardens include native shade trees and understory plants.

We are honored to facilitate this program and we're building on partnerships to outreach to diverse communities, through the UA's Garden Kitchen, Habitat for Humanity, and the many other schools, churches, and neighborhoods that we work with throughout Tucson. Through this program, we are expanding our outreach to the Latino community by adding rainwater harvesting classes and tours in Spanish.

Enabling Tucsonans to implement rainwater harvesting practices at home builds a more resilient Tucson, enhances the community's landscapes while also directing water back into our aquifer.

If you or someone you know is eligible for this program, please visit our website at Watershedmg.org/RainMoney for more information and to start the application process.

Through our partnership with Tucson Water, our new Rainwater Harvesting Grant and Loan Program makes rainwater harvesting simple and affordable for Tucson households with limited incomes.



Building Conservation Hubs in the Valley



Green Living Co-op members placing rocks in a swale to convey rainwater from a downspout to a rain garden basin.

Join WMG's First Ever Valley Docent Cohort

We are seeking passionate water-lovers to donate their time and energy to help educate the public and care for our rain gardens throughout the Valley. Docents are the face of Watershed Management Group out in the community. This program provides the opportunity to build skills in different areas such as water harvesting, urban forestry, river restoration, citizen science, public outreach and more. It is also an opportunity to contribute skills you may already have honed through your life's work and passions and apply to our grassroots efforts as an organization.

WMG's Valley Docent training program will kick off in March 2018, and run on Thursdays from noon to 3 p.m. from March 1 through April 26. The nine-week program will conclude with a graduation celebration, at which point docents will be ready to help with outreach and education for WMG's programs. WMG asks docents to commit to one year of service following graduations, with a minimum of 10 hours/month of volunteer service.

Application deadline is Feb 1, 2018. For more information and to apply visit Watershedmg.org/ValleyDocents or contact Ryan Mores at rmores@watershedmg.org.

Four Peaks Brewery Volunteer planting a plant that will attract pollinators to the Human Services Campus rain garden in Phoenix.

WMG is excited to create hubs of conservation in the Valley, centered around our public demonstration sites, Co-op workshops, Hydrate classes, and our new Docent program. Through these hubs, we're building communities with shared interests and values, which can be difficult to achieve across such a vast metropolitan area. When you get involved with one of our programs, you can help ignite these conservation hubs and help transform the Valley into a resilient desert oasis.



Green Living Co-op members and Four Peaks Brewery Volunteers helped create a rain garden at the Human Services Campus in Phoenix.

Host a Co-op Workshop and Boost Community Education

Are you ready to transform your home landscape into a Sonoran desert oasis? Whether you want shady trees and rain gardens, native edible gardens and rain tanks, or urban orchards and greywater systems, WMG's passionate staff and Co-op volunteers can help make your dreams a reality.

Our Green Living Co-op uses a barn-raising model, where volunteers learn practical skills by helping implement water harvesting and sustainable landscaping projects at homes around the Valley. At every workshop, our expert staff are teaching the volunteers valuable knowledge that they can apply at home.

By volunteering at Co-op workshops, you can earn enough hours to be eligible for our Co-op discount on WMG services - a good reason to come out and join us! You can request a site consultation with our certified workshop instructors and design staff to receive a summary of your water-harvesting opportunities, prioritized recommendations, and estimated project costs.

To learn more about our Green Living Co-op visit Watershedmg.org/Co-op.

Hydrate is Coming Back to Phoenix!

We're bringing our free water harvesting series back to Phoenix in early 2018. Have you ever been curious to learn what water harvesting is all about? Or maybe you have a home project in mind that you're seeking guidance on? WMG's Hydrate series is a great opportunity to dive into the wet world of water harvesting.

Whether you're looking for your first taste of water harvesting, or you're a seasoned harvester just looking to refresh your skills, Hydrate is here for you!

Our five-part Hydrate series includes: Hydrate your Yard, Hydrate your Plants, Hydrate your Food, Hydrate your Soils, and Hydrate with Greywater. Join us for your favorite topic, or attend the full series to build a comprehensive site plan. Each presentation includes a hands-on project to create a take home action plan.

Visit Watershedmg.org/Hydrate for more info.

The River Run Network: A Visionary Community Movement Gains Ground

With a goal as audacious as restoring flow to dry rivers, it can be hard to measure success in a year's time. **Just one year ago, WMG launched the River Run Network. Since then, we've: grown to 610 members, have 38 Flow365 citizen scientists monitoring Tucson streamflows, won the \$10,000 Social Venture Tucson Prize for SVP's Fast Pitch competition, and helped organize a Santa Cruz River watershed planning forum.**

It's hard to turn the tide on deeply entrenched environmental issues, but we're picking up momentum, and we need you and your neighbors to join and help us restore groundwater levels and flow to our rivers!

To engage a broader audience across Tucson, we set restoration goals for streamsheds across the basin, and we're planning monthly River Run Network Creek Walks to get people out exploring the riparian gems in their neighborhoods and beyond.

River Run Network 2018 Creek Walks Visit Watershedmg.org/RRN to register!

- Saturday, Jan 20, 3-6 p.m.: Upper Rillito - Explore the Rio Vista Natural Resource Park and Upper Rillito River. Finish with hot drinks around a fire at the Shipek's home.
- Saturday, Feb 24, 10 a.m.-noon: Paseo de las Iglesias - Explore Mission Garden and learn about the cultural history of the Santa Cruz River with WMG's Joaquin Murrieta.
- Tuesday, March 27, 5:30-7:30 p.m.: Lower Tanque Verde - Explore Rillito Spring, a lush section of the Lower Tanque Verde River with WMG's Trevor Hare and Lisa Shipek.
- Saturday, April 28, 5-8 p.m.: Middle Tanque Verde - Enjoy WMG's 3rd annual Tanque Verde Flow and Feast at Isabella Lee Nature Preserve. This family friendly event will feature creek walks, a potluck, craft beer, live music, and games.
- Tuesday, May 8, 5:30-7:30 p.m.: Sabino Creek - Walk along the lush riparian area in Sabino Canyon and learn about the many native plants that can thrive in your backyard with WMG's Catlow Shipek.



WMG board, staff, and friends celebrate after Lisa wins Social Venture Partners' top prize for her River Run Network Fast Pitch.

Join WMG's Flow 365 citizen science monitoring program and help monitor stream flows along creeks like Tanque Verde. Sign up for our next program orientation on March 20, 2018.



Spotlight on RRN Members

We are constantly amazed by and grateful for all of the work WMG's volunteers do to contribute to our mission! We checked in with couple of our River Run Network members to find out how they were inspired to get involved and what conservation efforts they are making in their lives to help restore the flow to Tucson's rivers and creeks.

For Ceanne Alvine, one of WMG's Docents who is a Ph.D. and RN living on the eastside of town in the Upper Tanque Verde streamshed, connecting with WMG was about learning how to rainwater harvest so she could implement sustainable water practices on her property. "Becoming a member of the River Run Network was an excellent way for me to reach friends and neighbors who are also concerned about the future of water in Tucson. By becoming a member, I have indicated my commitment to water conservation in order to achieve the goal of restoring ground water aquifers and flow to Tucson waterways, which will have the effect of reducing dependence on the Colorado River."

To contribute to achieving that goal, Ceanne developed a water budget for her landscaping and implemented passive water harvesting along with utilizing greywater and collecting rain – which all resulted in a 40% reduction in her Tucson Water bill.

Luke Knipe, who lives in Tucson's midtown area in the Upper Rillito streamshed, shared that he got involved with WMG because, "as a forty-something Tucson native, I remember the days of lawns and thirsty streetscapes. I was inspired by the transformation I've witnessed in our neighborhoods." Luke also mentioned that while taking a hydrology class at UofA last semester, he was "struck by how unaware people are of watersheds—especially in urban environments."



Ceanne Alvine, a River Run Network member in the Upper Tanque Verde streamshed, was honored for being a docent at WMG's fall volunteer appreciation event.

Carol Rose is a Flow365 monitor for the River Run Network who lives in the Sweetwater streamshed. She learned about WMG through her church and connected with us through our Co-op workshops. Carol said she signed up as a Flow365 monitor because, "I want to see the Santa Cruz restored!" Carol's water conservation efforts include: rain cisterns, greywater harvesting (both laundry and shower), invasive species removal, regular composting, planting natives, mulching, along with having basins and swales, and a tippy tap.

Join this community movement! Everything we do individually adds to the collective betterment of our environment and eventually to restoring our groundwater, rivers and streams. Visit Watershedmg.org/RRN to learn more and sign up.



Carol Rose and her partner Duane Ediger stand proudly with their rainwater tanks shortly after the tanks were installed.

SIMPLE WATERSHED RESTORATION PRACTICES FOR YOUR PROPERTY

To recharge our aquifer, reduce erosion, and restore flow to our creeks

Working with landowners we regularly employ simple strategies like media lunas, one rock dams, and zuni bowls to slow runoff, reduce erosion, and deeply infiltrate rainwater. These practices also contribute to our larger goal of restoring flow to our desert creeks and rivers.

However, runoff and erosion issues you see on your own property may start upstream from you. This is why it is critical that you also begin to engage your neighbors upstream as well as agencies and utilities that manage other human infrastructure which affect runoff such as roads, pipelines, streets, and neighborhood development.

Through the River Run Network, we are working to establish these linkages to restore watershed health. Our early streamshed restoration adopters like the Woodin family, the Mickle-Neuenschwander family, and most recently the Pima County Regional Flood Control District at Isabella Lee Nature Preserve, all started the healing process within the Sabino/Tanque Verde shallow groundwater area on the land they own and manage. These early adopters have since inspired their neighbors to learn more and take action.

Volunteers helped us implement all of these features through hands-on workshops. We're highlighting three of these restoration techniques to help you become a watershed steward and join us in restoring our rivers and aquifers.

No matter the size of your property, you can start building these simple practices to make incremental improvements. Remember, any work in a designated floodplain or channel will require review and permitting with your flood control agency and potentially with the Army Corps of Engineers if it is a designated "Waters of the United States."

We are thankful to Craig Sponholtz, principal of Watershed Artisans, for allowing us to share excerpts of his simple guide here. Join us on one of our Creek Walks this spring to learn more as well as stay tuned for upcoming restoration workshops if you are interested in learning how these techniques are constructed.

Volunteer builds one rock dam in small arroyo through WMG workshop along Tanque Verde Creek.



Additional resources:

WatershedArtisans.com
Erosion Control Field Guide
(featured in this newsletter)
By Craig Sponholtz and
Avery C. Anderson

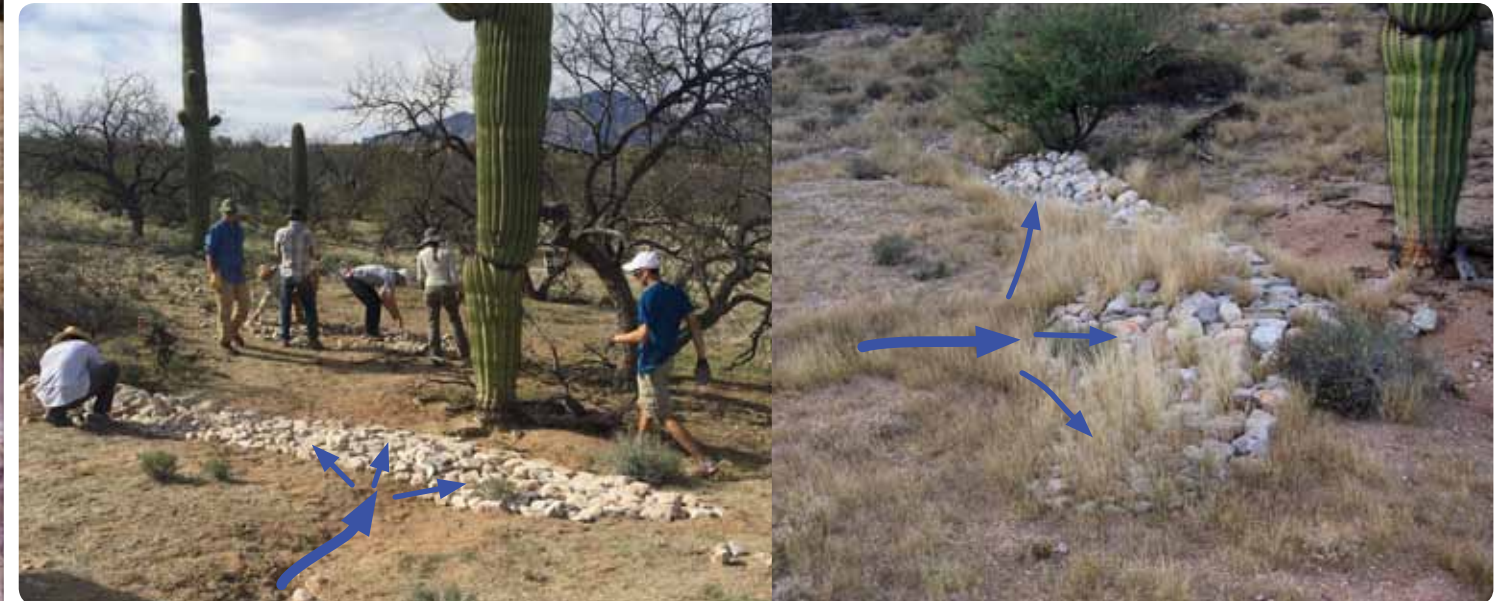
StreamDynamics.us
An Introduction to Erosion Control
By Bill Zeedyk and
Jan-Willem Jansens

Let the Water do the Work: Induced Meandering, an Evolving Method for Restoring Incised Channels
By Bill Zeedyk and Van Clothier

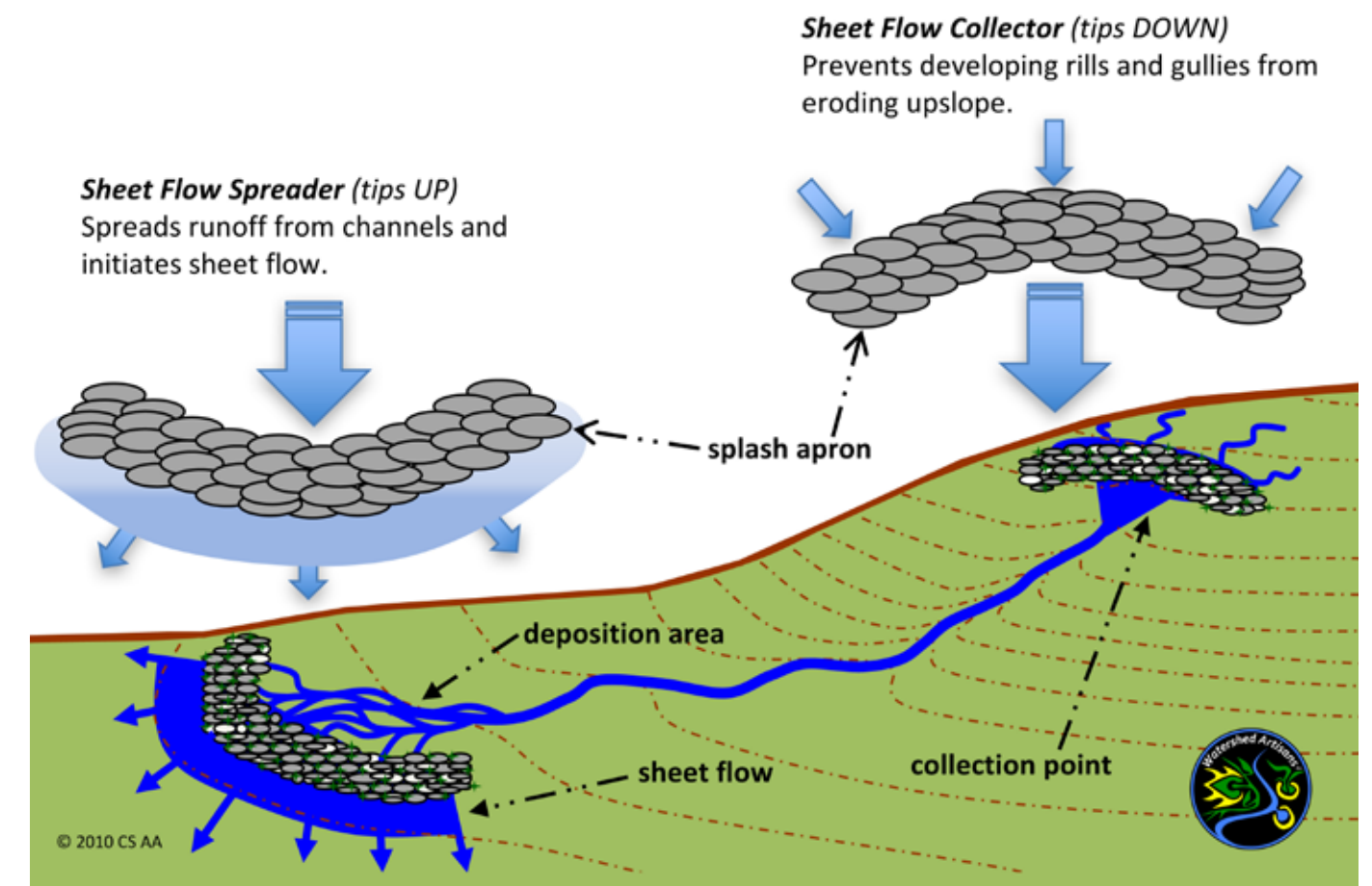
MEDIA LUNA

There are two types of Media Luna structures – both used to manage sheet flow and prevent erosion. "Sheet flow collectors" (tips DOWN) prevent erosion (small headcuts) at the head of rills and gullies by creating a stable transition from sheet flow to channel flow at the collection point. "Sheet flow spreaders" (tips UP) are

used to create a depositional area on relatively flat ground by dispersing erosive channelized flow and reestablishing sheet flow where it once occurred. Original concept developed by Van Clothier. – *Erosion Control Field Guide 2010*



Left: A broad media luna is constructed to spread concentrated flow from upstream across the gentle hillslope on the Woodin property, March 2016. Right: The same media luna after summer rains, Oct 2016.



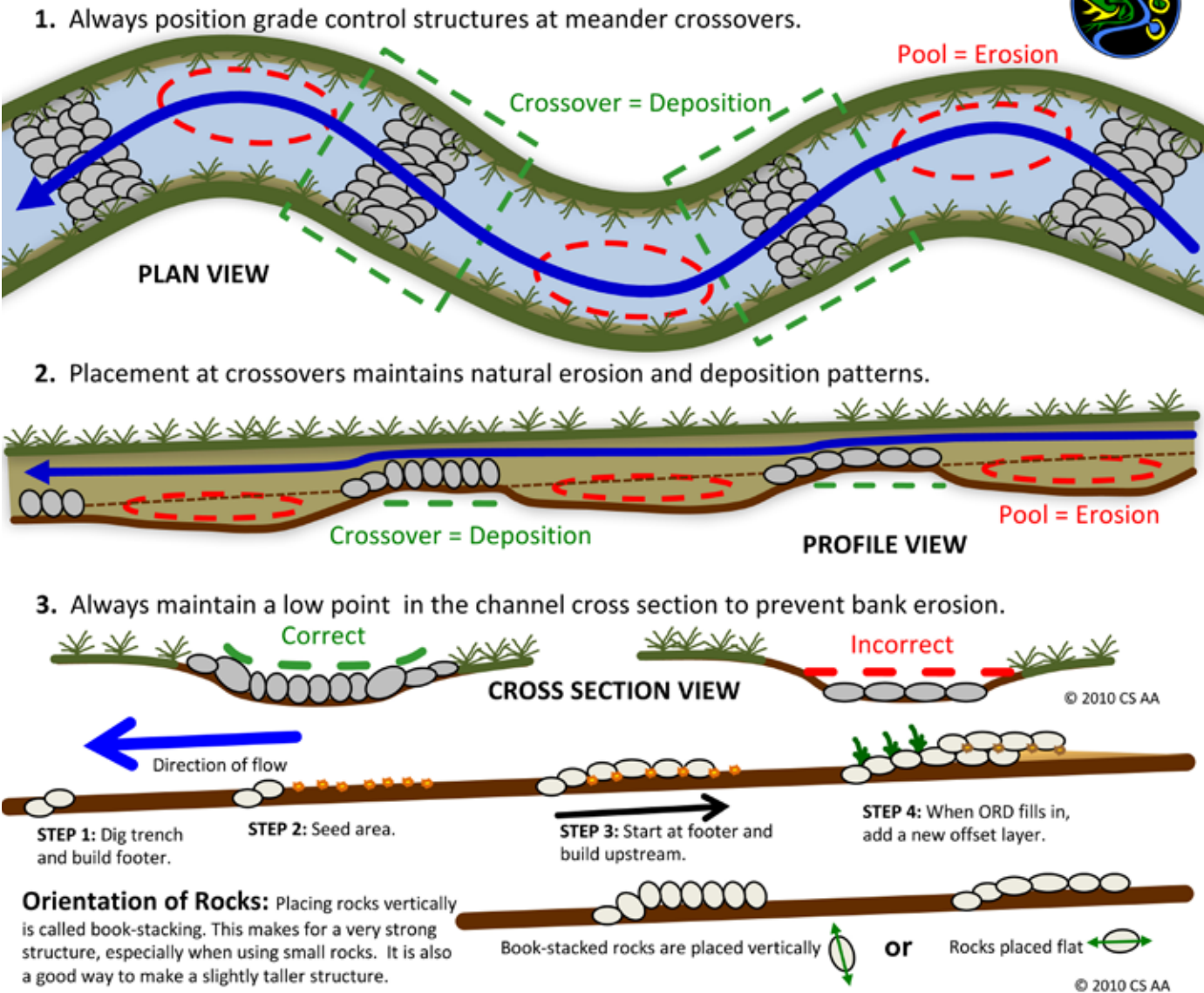
ONE ROCK DAM

A low grade control structure built with a single layer of rock on the bed of the channel. One rock dams stabilize the bed of the channel by slowing the flow of water, increasing roughness, recruiting vegetation, capturing sediment, and gradually raising the bed level over time.

The single layer of rock is an effective rock mulch that increases soil moisture, infiltration, and plant growth. Original concept developed by Bill Zeedyk. – *Erosion Control Field Guide 2010*

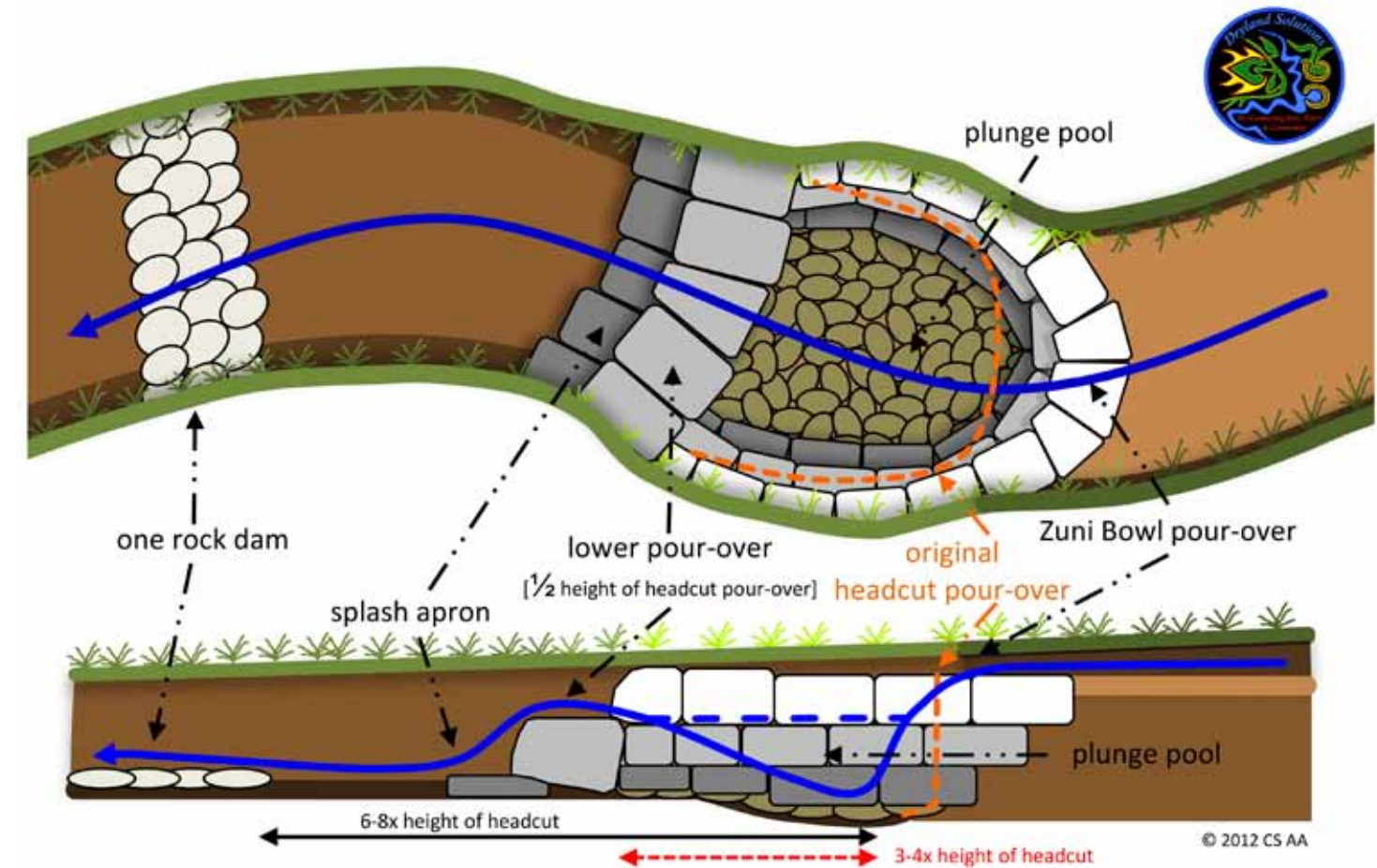


Left: A one rock dam as part of a series to treat an incised arroyo flowing into Lower Sabino Creek, March 2016.
Right: The same one rock dam following summer rains with an increase in sediment, Oct 2016.



ZUNI BOWL

An in-channel, headcut control structure composed of rock-lined step falls and plunge pools that prevents headcuts from continuing to migrate upstream. Zuni Bows stabilize actively eroding headcuts by dissipating the energy of falling water at the headcut pour-over and the bed of the channel. Zuni Bowls also maintain soil moisture on the face of the headcut, encouraging the establishment of protective vegetation. Original concept developed by the people of Zuni Pueblo and Bill Zeedyk. – *Erosion Control Field Guide 2010*



Left: A Zuni Bowl looking upstream. Right: Another Zuni Bowl showing placement within the same gully.

Your oasis awaits

Our expert staff can help you transform your yard and help create a healthy watershed.

Visit watershedmg.org/services/home or call 520-396-3266.



We Offer:

- Home consultations
- Conceptual design plans
- Installations through our Co-op or Design Build programs

WMG’s Design Build Program Transforms People’s Yards and Lives

James Reel, a life-long Arizonan who has lived in Tucson for about 45 years, contacted us in December 2016 for a water harvesting site assessment. He was motivated to create a water harvesting landscape due to his understanding of Tucson’s water history. Many of our washes used to be perennially flowing rivers that have dried up due to diminishing ground water, changing weather patterns and population increase.

James noted, “I love living here, but that won’t be possible in a few years if more of us don’t get serious about water harvesting and conserving the water that does come our way.”

Coming from a mutual understanding and respect for our natural systems, we collaborated with James to transform his blank slate into a water harvesting oasis. It combines earthworks, a cistern, and laundry greywater into a holistic system that is supporting a vibrant palette of native pollinator and edible plants as well as fruit trees and a vegetable garden. We also coordinated the installation of walkways and a patio to create a comfortable gathering space for James to enjoy his water harvesting oasis with family and friends.

James said, “One of the things I like best is the one obvious element of the system – looking out my kitchen window and seeing that big green water tank that got half full just after the first gully-washer we had when it was installed. Eventually the tank will be enveloped by the



James Reel stands proudly with his water tank.

vines crawling across the trellis WMG wrapped around it, but it’s a daily reminder that I’m actually doing something about water harvesting and that I can’t take our water for granted.”

We aren’t the typical landscape company. In addition to being certified water harvesting practitioners, members of our team bring a diversity of other experience and knowledge to the team. We have backgrounds ranging from soil and plant sciences and photojournalism, to Spanish literature and education. Perhaps most importantly, we understand the fact that our clients’ landscapes are extensions of their homes. With that in mind, we bring an attitude of respect to each project we work on. Not only do we build beautiful water harvesting landscapes, we strive to build meaningful relationships with each member of our community.

When you hire WMG, you support a nonprofit working for the prosperity of people and health of the environment.



JANUARY

Rainwater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate)Jan. 11, 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Living Lab & Learning Center TourJan. 13, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
***Field Studies Class:**
Water Harvesting Irrigation Systems Jan. 18, 5:30 p.m.-8 p.m.
Rainwater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate) Jan. 20, 9 a.m.-noon
Greywater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate).....Jan. 25, 5 p.m.-7 p.m.
Living Lab & Learning Center TourJan. 27, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
YogaFlow Mondays, noon-1 p.m.



***Field Studies Class: Water Harvesting Irrigation Systems** - On Thur., Jan. 18, learn how to make the most of your precious water resources! This class is suited for all levels of irrigation knowledge.



FEBRUARY

Rainwater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate) Feb. 8, 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Living Lab & Learning Center TourFeb. 10, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
***Edible Shade Mesquite Pancake Breakfast Feb. 11, 9 a.m.-noon**
Rainwater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate) Feb. 17, 9 a.m.-noon
Tour del Laboratorio Viviente y Centro de Aprendizaje Feb. 24, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
YogaFlow Mondays, noon-1 p.m.

***Edible Shade Mesquite Pancake Breakfast** - Celebrate the delicious edible shade of mesquite and other native and desert-adapted trees. Explore WMG's sustainable practices & enjoy live performances, local non-profits, educational activities, demonstrations + more. Bring the whole family for this tasty Tucson tradition! \$8 for 4 pancakes & a beverage.

MARCH

Rainwater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate) March 1, 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Clase de Cosecha de Agua de Lluvia (Reembolso de Tucson Water)..... March 3, 10 a.m.- 1p.m.
Living Lab & Learning Center Tour March 10, 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
***Field Studies Class: Composting Toilets March 15, 5:30 p.m.-8 p.m.**
Rainwater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate)March 17, 9 a.m.-noon
Flow365 Citizen Science Training..... March 20, 6 p.m.- 8 p.m.
Greywater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate)..... March 22, 5 p.m.-7 p.m.
***Field Studies Class: Pruning Native Shade Trees March 24, 8 a.m.-11 a.m.**
Living Lab & Learning Center Tour March 24, 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
YogaFlow Mondays, noon-1 p.m.



***Field Studies Class: Pruning Native Shade Trees** — On Sat., March 24, learn about proper tree care and pruning practices with our very own ISA Certified Arborist!

APRIL

Clase de Cosecha de Agua de Lluvia (Reembolso de Tucson Water)..... April 5, 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Rainwater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate)April 12, 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Tour del Laboratorio Viviente y Centro de AprendizajeApril 14, 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
***Field Studies Class: Rain Garden CareApril 19, 5:30 p.m.-8 p.m.**
Rainwater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate)April 21, 9 a.m.-noon
YogaFlow Mondays, 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.



Living Lab & Learning Center Tours — Join Watershed Management Group at our Living Lab and Learning Center for interactive tours that highlight our water and conservation practices, and learn what you can do at your home to save water and energy. Bring the kids to play in the Raindrop Retreat!

MAY

Clase de Cosecha de Agua de Lluvia (Reembolso de Tucson Water)..... May 3, 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Rainwater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate) May 10, 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Living Lab & Learning Center Tour May 12, 8 a.m.-9:30 a.m.
***Field Studies Class: Develop a Personal Water Budget May 17, 5:30 p.m.-8 p.m.**
Rainwater Harvesting Class: (Tucson Water Rebate)May 19, 9 a.m.-noon
Greywater Harvesting Class (Tucson Water Rebate)..... May 24, 5 p.m.-7 p.m.
Living Lab & Learning Center Tour May 26, 8 a.m.-9:30 a.m.
YogaFlow Mondays, 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.



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WMG remade the most iconic song of 2017, a Latin sensation that reminded us to enjoy life a bit more slowly, Despacito! Our music video honors all the creeks and rivers we're working to restore, and became a Facebook sensation – reaching more than 30,000 people within 3 days of posting. Watch our video at Watershedmg.org/Despacito and help restore the flow pasito a pasito, bit by bit!



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