FIND YOUR WASH AND WATERSHED!

Use this map to find the wash closest to where you live, and the name of the watershed you live in.

Some Important Questions...

What is a wash?
A wash, also known as an arroyo, is a dry stream that flows only seasonally.

Why are washes important?
Washes in Tucson provide many important services - wildlife habitat, recreation, stormwater conveyance (flood control), and groundwater recharge. Some washes have been covered with concrete or asphalt, but many remain in more natural states, providing pockets of native habitat even in the middle of the City. Many people are interested in learning what they can do to help restore the health of our urban washes. The first step is finding them!

What is a watershed?
A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common waterway - such as a river, lake, or even a wash that is dry most of the year.

Why are watersheds important?
Watersheds can help us make connections - between each other, and between ourselves and our environment. Within a watershed, water creates many linkages.

Upstream/Downstream -
Whatever we do in upland areas - whether we deposit pollutants (like fertilizers, pesticides, oil, pet waste, etc.) or cause soil erosion - affects everything downstream. These pollutants collect in our washes and watersways, damaging plants and wildlife and polluting groundwater.

Surface/Ground Water -
Did you know that as recently as the early 1900’s the Santa Cruz River used to run above ground through Tucson? When groundwater pumping brings the water table too low, surface streams dry up.

Shared Interest -
We all need clean water and a healthy environment. Watersheds unify diverse groups of people by bringing together those who are interested in improving the management of their shared natural resources.

What is Riparian Vegetation & Habitat?
Plant communities occurring in association with any spring, cienega, lake, washcourse, river, stream, creek, wash, arroyo, or other body of water, either surface or subsurface, or channel having banks and bed through which water flows at least periodically.

Vegetation Classifications:
Hydro-
Riparian plant communities generally associated with perennial watercourses where plant species such as cottonwood and willow are present.

Meso-
Riparian habitats generally associated with perennial or intermittent watercourses or shallow ground water. Plant communities may be dominated by species that are also found in drier habitats.

Xero-
Riparian habitat generally associated with ephemeral water supply. These communities typically contain plant species also found in upland habitats, however, these plants are typically larger and/or occur at higher densities than adjacent uplands.

Important Riparian Areas - Areas adjacent to hydro-mesoriparian areas - Xeroriparian areas - are characterized vegetation.

About Watershed Management Group:
The mission of the Watershed Management Group, Inc, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is to improve rural and urban livelihoods by integrating community development and conservation. We provide local residents and community groups with the knowledge and skills necessary to sustainably manage their natural resources.