

Summer 2022



# A Watershed Moment

A NEWSLETTER OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT GROUP

[watershedmg.org](http://watershedmg.org) 520-396-3266



**Replenishing Desert Waters  
From the Bottom Up**

***Reponiendo Las Aguas del Desierto  
Desde Abajo Hacia Arriba***



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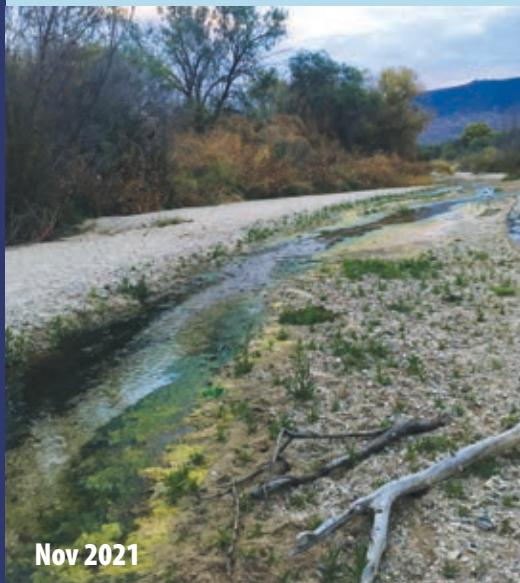
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Nov 2021



Dec 2021



Jan 2022



Feb 2022



March 2022



April 2022

Through WMG's Flow365 monitoring program, volunteers recorded surface flow in the Tanque Verde Bosque for 288 consecutive days in the past year.

# What creek do you daydream about on a summer day?

I often dream of Sabino and Tanque Verde Creeks, some of my favorite riparian areas in Tucson. In June, I anticipate the monsoon rains that will replenish our creeks and swimming holes, and the sweaty bike rides that will transport me to the creek and end with a refreshing dip.

While the Colorado River needs our attention, so do all the smaller creeks and rivers that make up our watersheds and give us so much joy. Many of these creeks across the West depend on groundwater to sustain flows.

This newsletter highlights Tanque Verde Creek, a creek that historically had stretches of year-round and seasonal flows on Tucson's east side. Fed by mountain runoff and snowmelt, and sustained by shallow groundwater, unsustainable development and overpumping dried it up for decades.

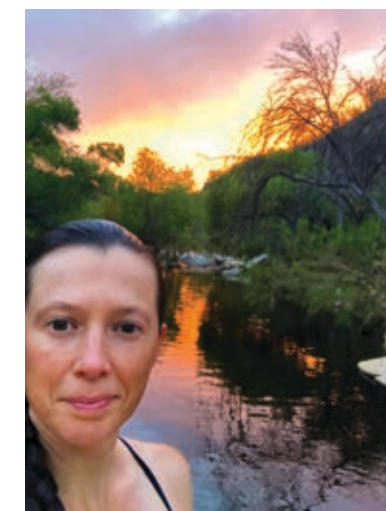
**But the tide may be turning. This year, WMG Flow365 volunteers documented a major milestone along the middle stretch of Tanque Verde Creek: 288 days of consecutive flow.**

This data reinforces a trend we've seen over the last year of returning seasonal flows, thanks to a reduction in local groundwater pumping and cumulative conservation efforts.

While the Tanque Verde's recent flows are modest, the creek's story provides tangible hope for our watershed and beyond, especially in a time of drought and climate change. Tanque Verde Creek tells us it is possible to restore groundwater-based river flows, if groundwater levels are restored.

How do you restore groundwater? You take a holistic, watershed-wide approach: reduce pumping, increase recharge with rain gardens and green infrastructure, preserve the floodplain, remove thirsty invasive species (like *Arundo donax*), and expand native riparian forests.

**In a place like Tanque Verde Creek, restoration happens when hundreds of individuals replenish the creek from the bottom up — through grassroots efforts that ultimately recharge the aquifer below their feet.**



Next time you daydream about your favorite creek, think about what you can do to ensure that creek thrives for future generations. I invite you to join other River Run Network members at one of our upcoming workshops to remove *Arundo donax*, or install a rain garden to conserve and recharge more water. Join me and other community scientists in WMG's Flow365 and Binational Beaver Surveys this fall. Or simply walk along your nearest creek and pick up trash.

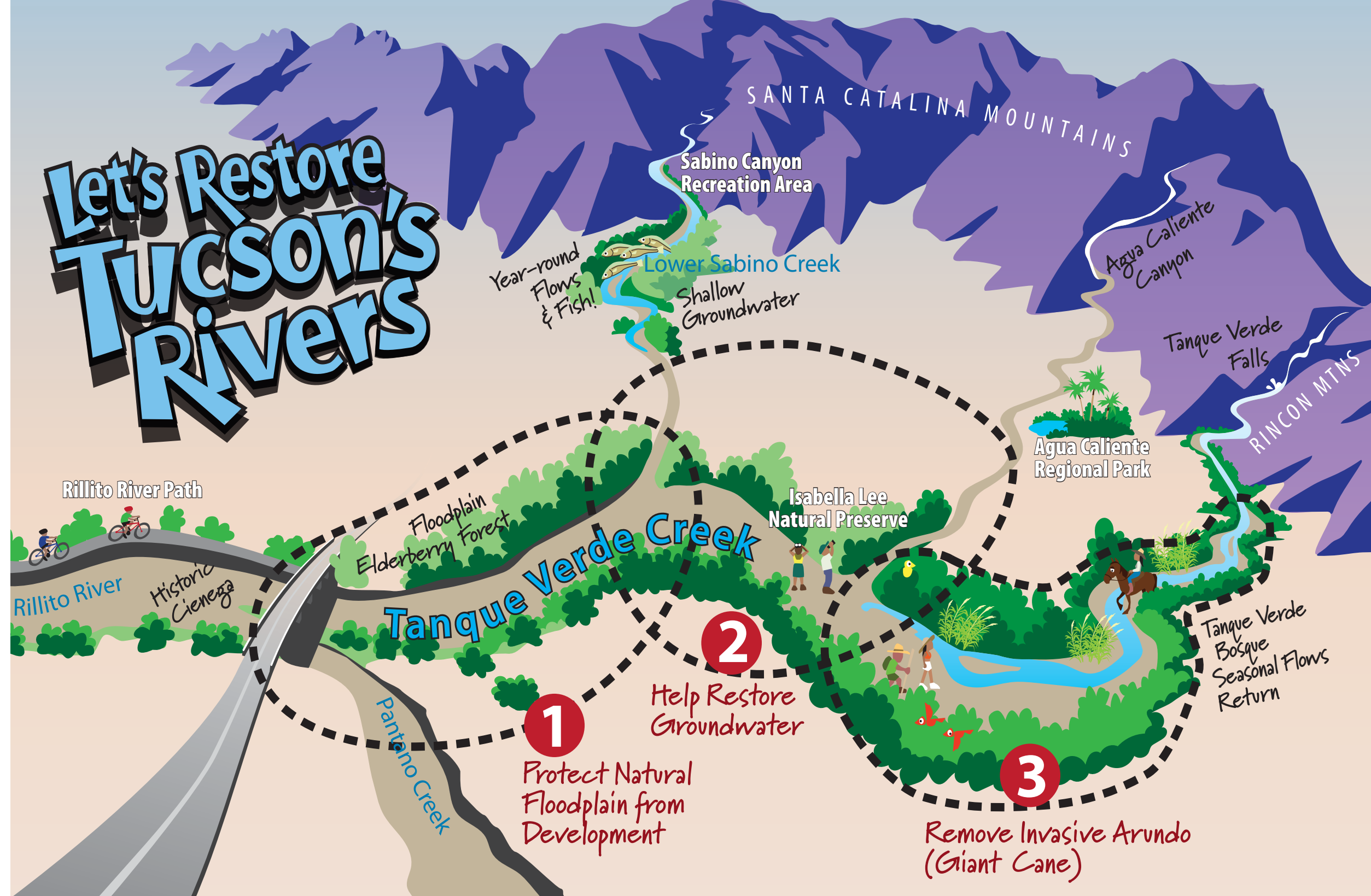
The creek will thank you!

Lisa Shipek, Executive Director



# Three Ways We Can All Work To Restore The Flow

## Tres Formas En Las Que Todos Podemos Trabajar Para Restaurar El Flujo



- 1 Protect the Natural Floodplain from Development.** Help advocate to the City and County to protect our floodplain and ensure new residential and commercial developments do not encroach on the river.
- 2 Help Restore Groundwater.** We can raise groundwater levels quickly in this shallow groundwater area if we reduce groundwater pumping and recharge more water through rain gardens and green infrastructure.
- 3 Remove Invasive Arundo.** Join WMG's effort to remove the invasive Arundo donax (giant cane) from the Tanque Verde Creek at one of our weekend workshops.

- 1 Proteger las Llanuras de Inundación Natural del Desarrollo.** Ayuda a abogar ante la ciudad y el condado para proteger nuestra llanura aluvial y garantizar que los nuevos desarrollos residenciales y comerciales no invadan el río.
- 2 Ayuda a Restaurar las Aguas Subterráneas.** Podemos elevar los niveles de las aguas subterráneas rápidamente en esta zona donde el manto acuífero se encuentra a poca profundidad si reducimos el bombeo y recargamos más agua a través de jardines de lluvia e infraestructura verde.
- 3 Eliminar la Planta Invasora Arundo.** Únete al esfuerzo de WMG para eliminar la invasora Arundo donax (caña gigante) de Tanque Verde Creek en uno de nuestros talleres de fin de semana.

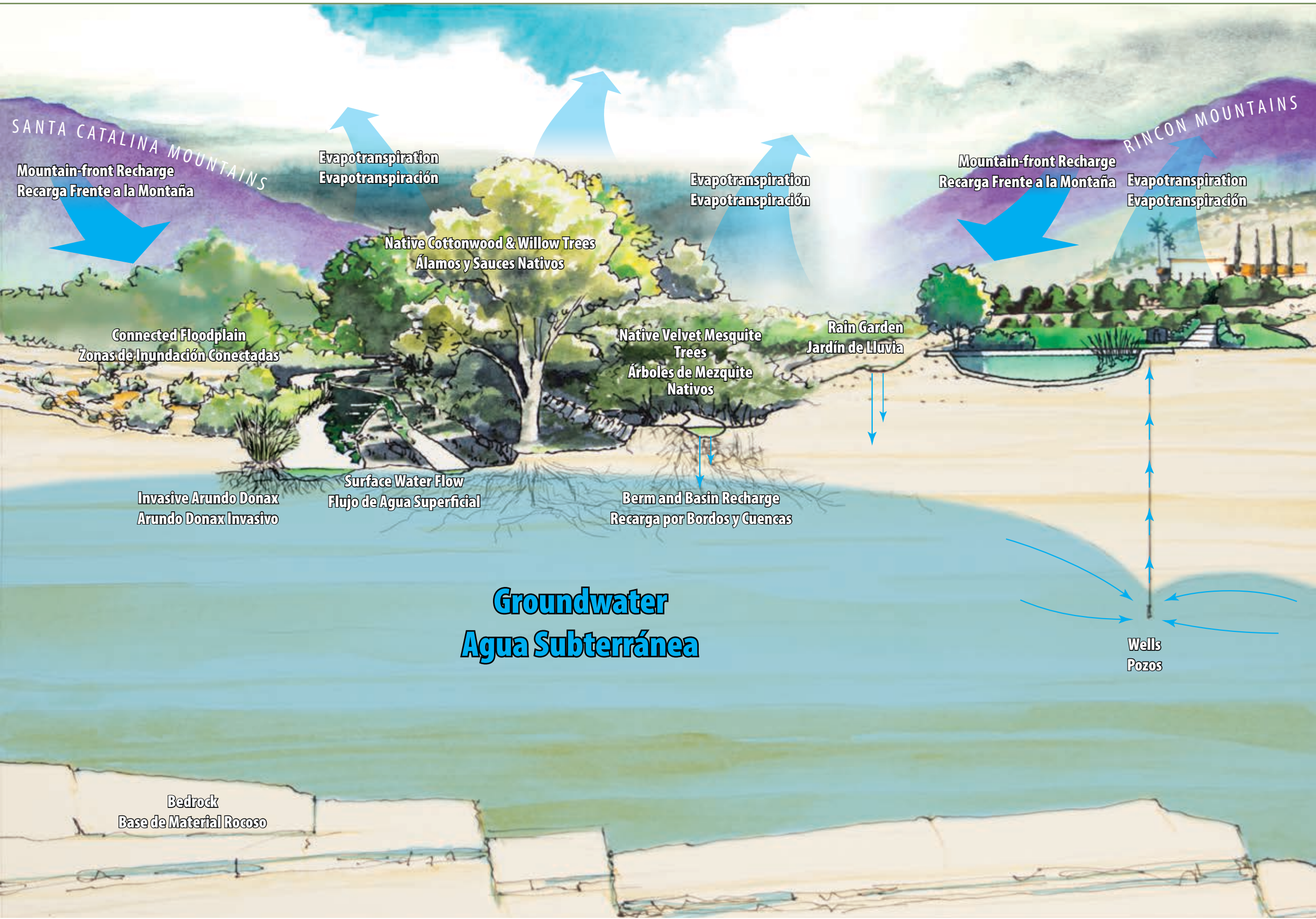


# Groundwater Supports Creek Flow in the Tanque Verde Bosque

The Tanque Verde Bosque in East Tucson is a shallow groundwater area, meaning there is groundwater flowing within 50 feet below the ground. The groundwater is in a small aquifer constrained by bedrock, which helps push the water towards the surface and allows for quick recharge and more surface flow. The creek is fed by rainfall and snowmelt that flows down the Catalina and Rincon Mountains, both on the surface and below ground, to recharge the aquifer. Local floodplains, berms, and basins in this area also sink rainwater into the ground. Water is lost from the creek system primarily through the pumping of local wells, which can dry out the creek. Plants also drink and transpire groundwater into the air — including substantial water lost through an invasive cane grass, *Arundo donax*.

## Las Aguas Subterráneas Apoyan el Flujo del Arroyo en el Bosque del Tanque Verde

El Bosque del Tanque Verde en el Este de Tucson es un área de agua subterránea poco profunda, lo que significa que se encuentra agua subterránea que fluye a menos de 15 metros por debajo del suelo. El agua subterránea se encuentra en un acuífero pequeño que está limitado por materia rocosa, lo que provoca que el agua salga a la superficie y permite una recarga rápida y un mayor flujo superficial. El arroyo se alimenta de la lluvia y el deshielo que fluye por las montañas Catalina y Rincón, tanto en la superficie como bajo tierra, para recargar el acuífero. Las zonas de inundaciones, los bordos y las cuencas en esta área también infiltran el agua de lluvia en el suelo. El agua del arroyo se va disminuyendo principalmente por el bombeo de los pozos locales, lo que puede secar el arroyo. Las plantas también beben y transpiran agua subterránea hacia el aire, incluida la gran cantidad de agua que se pierde a través del carrizo asiático invasivo, *Arundo donax*.





# The Tanque Verde Challenge Continues

## Help Us Remove Invasive Arundo and Restore the Flow!

Ready for some bonding out at the creek? Bring your service club or school, church, or sports group out to help remove Arundo while enjoying a morning along Tanque Verde Creek. Contact River Run Network Program Manager Lauren Monheim at [lmonheim@watershedmg.org](mailto:lmonheim@watershedmg.org) to set up a special event.

Join WMG's River Run Network in continuing our effort to completely remove invasive Arundo from Tanque Verde Creek!

Since winter 2021, we've been hosting volunteer work days to remove Arundo donax, a thirsty invasive plant that drinks up to 3-4 times as much water as native plants and crowds out native species. We're focusing this work in a middle stretch of Tanque Verde Creek, where Arundo is widespread, and where removing it helps replenish the flows that are just below the surface.

River Run Network (RRN) volunteers and WMG staff have already removed 36,000 pounds (or 18 tons) of Arundo from this stretch of the Tanque Verde. It's amazing to see the creek visually transformed — as the large Arundo stands are removed, the native cottonwoods, willows, and even Mexican elderberry trees have become more visible and have room to thrive.

Completely removing Arundo from Tanque Verde Creek is no small feat, so we're hosting weekly workshops this fall and next spring to continue a massive volunteer effort to reach our goal.

Sign up for upcoming Arundo removal workshops and other RRN events at: [Watershedmg.org/RRN](https://watershedmg.org/RRN).

Volunteer Sara Birtalan helps remove Arundo along Tanque Verde Creek at a WMG workday. Removing Arundo makes space for native desert vegetation and helps recharge groundwater levels in the creek.







Parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe Priest Claudio Murrieta (right) invited WMG's Cultural Ecologist Joaquin Murrieta (left) to teach a two-day rain garden workshop at his church in Cananea, Sonora, Mexico.

El Párroco de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Claudio Murrieta (derecha) invitó a Joaquin Murrieta, Ecologista Cultural de WMG (izquierda), a dar un taller de dos días sobre jardines de lluvia en su iglesia en Cananea, Sonora, México.

## Cultivating a Culture of Restoration in Cananea, Mexico

### Rain Garden Workshops Have a Ripple Effect

Cananea, a city of 40,000 near the U.S.-Mexico border in Sonora, Mexico, is one of the biggest water users in the binational San Pedro River Basin. Some local community leaders, like Father Claudio Murrieta of Cananea's Parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe, want to change that. This March, Father Claudio invited WMG to co-host a two-day rainwater harvesting workshop at his church, with the goal of cultivating a culture of restoration in the city that improves the health of the San Pedro Watershed. **"I visualize a Cananea that goes from complaining to being proactive and purposeful," says Father Claudio. "This campaign of rain gardens is giving us the opportunity to create a scenario of reconciliation with this territory, where we can reconnect with the land."**

On the first day of the workshop, Father Claudio and WMG's Cultural Ecologist Joaquin Murrieta taught 50 people about the principles of rainwater harvesting and the value of creating natural habitat in the city. They explained how rain gardens reduce flooding in city streets, sink rainwater into the ground, and provide a sense of cultural

## Cultivando una Cultura de Restauración en Cananea, México

### Los talleres de jardines de lluvia tienen un efecto dominó

Cananea, una ciudad de 40,000 habitantes cerca de la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México en Sonora, México, es uno de los mayores usuarios de agua en la cuenca binacional del Río San Pedro. Algunos líderes comunitarios locales, como el Padre Claudio Murrieta de la Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en Cananea, quieren cambiar eso. En marzo, el Padre Claudio invitó a WMG a copatrocinar un taller de cosecha de agua de lluvia de dos días en su iglesia, con el objetivo de cultivar una cultura de restauración en la ciudad que mejore la salud de la cuenca del Río San Pedro. **"Visualizo un Cananea que pase de la queja, a la proactividad, a la propuesta", dice el Padre Claudio. "Esta campaña de jardines de lluvia nos está dando la oportunidad de crear un escenario de reconciliación con este territorio, donde podemos reconectarnos con la tierra".**

El primer día del taller, el Padre Claudio y el Ecologista Cultural de WMG, Joaquín Murrieta, enseñaron a 50 personas los principios de la recolección de agua de lluvia y el valor de crear un hábitat natural en la ciudad. Explicaron cómo los



WMG staff Joaquin Murrieta, Christian Aguilar, and Luis Salgado (left to right) during the build day of a rain garden workshop at Ricardo Flores Magon Technical Middle School #9 in Cananea, Sonora, Mexico.

El personal de WMG, Joaquin Murrieta, Christian Aguilar, y Luis Salgado (de izquierda a derecha) en el taller de jardines de lluvia durante el segundo día construyendo el jardín en la Escuela Secundaria Técnica Ricardo Flores Magón #9 en Cananea, Sonora, México.

identity by incorporating regional native plants. The following day, 30 people returned to turn their new knowledge into action, creating a rain garden surrounding the Parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The rain garden will harvest 2,300 gallons of rainwater per year with a passive system consisting of regional shrubs, desert willows, palo verde trees, and fairydusters.

The workshop created a ripple effect. One participant was Gabriel Holguín, a teacher at the Ricardo Flores Magon Technical Middle School #9, who wanted to bring this inspiration back to his students and school grounds. "I had no idea what a rain garden was, until I heard Joaquin talking about it," Gabriel says. "I got really interested." Gabriel reached out to WMG about holding a workshop for his students, and in mid-May, Joaquin and fellow WMG staff members Luis Salgado and

jardines de lluvia reducen las inundaciones en las calles de la ciudad, hunden el agua de lluvia en el suelo y brindan un sentido de identidad cultural al incorporar plantas nativas de la región. Al día siguiente, 30 personas regresaron para poner en práctica sus nuevos conocimientos, creando un jardín de lluvia alrededor de la Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. El jardín de lluvia recolectará 2,300 galones (8,706 litros) de agua de lluvia por año con un sistema pasivo que consiste en arbustos regionales, mimbres, palos verdes y cosahuis.

El taller creó un efecto dominó. Uno de los participantes fue Gabriel Holguín, Profesor de la Escuela Secundaria Técnica #9 Ricardo Flores Magón, quien quiso llevar esta inspiración de vuelta a sus alumnos y recinto escolar. "No tenía idea de lo que era un jardín de lluvia, hasta que escuché a Joaquín hablar de eso", dice Gabriel.





Students at Ricardo Flores Magon Technical Middle School #9 build a rain garden for their school at a WMG workshop. The completed basins can collect up to 27,500 gallons of rainwater at once.

Christian Aguilar held another two-day rain garden workshop to teach the students how to design and build their own rain gardens. "Now, I am excited to see the rain at the school and to watch the first-year students take care of the garden until they graduate," Gabriel says.

13-year-old Valeria Garcia was one of the students who joined the build day, working together to design the rain garden and bring it to life with shovels, rakes, and wheelbarrows. "What I liked the most was that we all spent time together and worked as a team," Valeria says. "The school is going to look prettier, and the rain is not going to

go to waste." The students are ready for the rain so that they can see their design in action: instead of flooding the closest street, the rain will be guided to a series of basins that can collect up to 27,500 gallons of rainwater.

While there is still much to do, the culture of restoration is growing in Cananea, and the positive impact is spreading throughout the San Pedro River Basin.

Estudiantes de la Escuela Secundaria Técnica Ricardo Flores Magón #9 construyendo su jardín de lluvia para su escuela en el taller implementado por WMG. Las cuencas construidas pueden cosechar hasta 27,500 galones de agua de lluvia al instante.

"Me interesé mucho". Gabriel se acercó a WMG para realizar un taller para sus estudiantes y, a mediados de mayo, Joaquín y sus compañeros Luis Salgado y Christian Aguilar, miembros del personal de WMG, realizaron otro taller de dos días para enseñar a los estudiantes cómo diseñar y construir su propio jardín de lluvia. "Ahora, estoy emocionado de ver la lluvia en la escuela y ver a los estudiantes de primer año cuidar el jardín hasta que se gradúen", dice Gabriel.

Valeria García, de 13 años, fue una de las estudiantes que se unió al día práctico, donde todos se unieron para diseñar el jardín de lluvia y

darle vida con palas, rastrillos y carretillas. "Lo que más me gustó fue que convivimos todos juntos y trabajamos en equipo", dice Valeria. "La escuela se verá más bonita y la lluvia no se desperdiciará". Los estudiantes están listos para la lluvia para que puedan ver su diseño en acción: en lugar de inundar la calle más cercana, la lluvia será guiada a una serie de cuencas que pueden recolectar hasta 27,500 galones (125,000 litros) de agua de lluvia.

Si bien aún queda mucho por hacer, la cultura de la restauración está creciendo en Cananea y el impacto positivo se está extendiendo por toda la cuenca del Río San Pedro.





## Thank You River Run Network Members For Your Beaver Advocacy!

## ¡Gracias a los Miembros de La Red Del Río por Defender a los Castores!

At the Beaver Practitioners Workshop along Ciénega Creek, WMG brought together 25 partners from both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border to share knowledge and plan next steps to re-establish beavers in our desert waters.

En el Taller de Practicantes de los Castores en Ciénega Creek, WMG reunió a 25 socios de ambos lados de la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México para compartir conocimiento y planear los siguientes pasos para restablecer a los castores en nuestras aguas del desierto.



## This May, the Beaver Environmental Assessment (EA) for Las Ciénegas National Conservation Area was finally released!

The EA assesses how re-establishing beavers would impact Lower Ciénega Creek, and it shows that beavers would have incredible benefits by recharging groundwater, improving water quality, and creating climate resilience.

The release of the EA is a big milestone. We've been working to re-establish beavers in Ciénega Creek since 2019 through public education, advocacy, our Binational Beaver Survey, and our Beaver Practitioners Workshop. This spring, our River Run Network members wrote advocacy postcards calling for the Bureau of Land Management to release the Beaver EA and move this project forward, and the agency responded — releasing the EA the following month! WMG supporters also advocated in full force during the EA's public comment period, and spoke out at the June Arizona Game & Fish Commission meeting.

Ready for the next step? Join our Binational Beaver Survey this fall along the San Pedro River in Southern Arizona and Sonora, Mexico. This volunteer-powered survey is revealing where the San Pedro's beavers are located, how many there are, and how we can support them.

**To learn more and get involved, visit [watershedmg.org/beavers](https://watershedmg.org/beavers).**

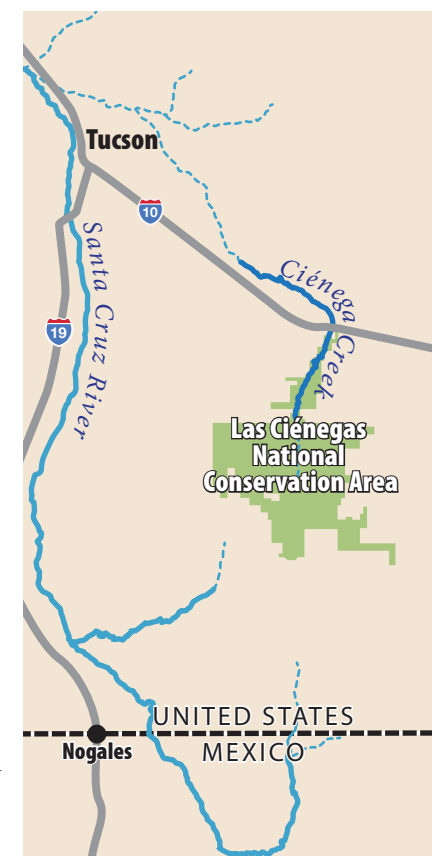
## ¡Este mayo, finalmente se publicó la Evaluación Ambiental (EA) de los castores para el Área de Conservación Nacional Las Ciénegas!

La EA evalúa cómo el restablecimiento de los castores afectaría a la parte baja de Ciénega Creek y muestra que los castores tendrían beneficios increíbles al recargar el manto acuífero, mejorar la calidad del agua y crear resiliencia climática.

El lanzamiento de la EA es un gran hito. Hemos estado trabajando para restablecer los castores en Ciénega Creek desde el 2019 a través de la educación pública, convocando al apoyo, por medio de nuestro Monitoreo Binacional del Castor y nuestro Taller de Practicantes de Castores. Esta primavera, los miembros de nuestra Red del Río escribieron postales de defensa pidiendo al Bureau of Land Management que publicara la EA de los castores y avanzara con este proyecto, y la agencia respondió: ¡lanzando la EA al siguiente mes! Los partidarios de WMG también abogaron con toda su fuerza durante el período de comentarios públicos de la EA y se pronunciaron en la reunión de junio de Arizona Game & Fish Commission.

¿Estás listo para el siguiente paso? Únete a nuestro Monitoreo Binacional del Castor este otoño a lo largo del Río San Pedro en el sur de Arizona y Sonora, México. Este monitoreo impulsado por voluntarios está revelando dónde se encuentran los castores del Río San Pedro, cuántos hay y cómo podemos apoyarlos.

**Para obtener más información y participar, visita [watershedmg.org/beavers](https://watershedmg.org/beavers).**







WMG's Living Lab Program Coordinator Jonah Ivy describes the native trees and shrubs available for participants to take home at a Build Your Own Basin Workshop in Tempe.

## Phoenix Valley Gets A Water Break with BYOB and Hydrate Classes

**What does a muffin pan have to do with rain gardens? Surprisingly, it's an extremely useful visual of how basins absorb rainwater!** At a Build Your Own Basin workshop at Four Peaks Brewing in Tempe, WMG staff member Charlie Alcorn holds a grey muffin pan upside down at a slight angle and pours water on top of it. The water floods over, landing on the ground. Then Charlie turns the tin right side up and pours the water again, and the 25 participants watch the water spread into each muffin opening. "This is what rain

basins can do for our watershed," Charlie tells the audience. "Collect and sink rainwater, reduce flooding, and recharge groundwater."

WMG brought our popular Build Your Own Basin program to the Phoenix Valley with workshops in December 2021 and May 2022, equipping over one hundred Phoenix Valley residents with the knowledge and tools to build rain basins. After a free hour-and-a-half workshop, participants could take home a native tree, shrub, and wood mulch to build their own basin at their own home or community space. In our six-month

follow-up survey, 100% of participants from the December workshop said their native shrubs are still thriving!

As one of the fastest growing parts of the country, the Greater Phoenix area is developing quickly — meaning less cooling vegetation, and more pavement in the city and suburbs. This trend is making an already hot city even hotter, and climate change and dwindling water supplies make it especially important to shift to a more sustainable and hydro-local relationship with nature here. Building rain basins and spreading the culture of green infrastructure are powerful ways that community members can be part of the solution, while also reducing heat and flooding, recharging groundwater, providing pollinator habitat, and more.

Katie Stephens-Rich, who lives in Phoenix and attended WMG's Build Your Own Basin workshop with her husband Jeffry, shares, "Jeffry and I care deeply about sustainability and the environment, especially given our global climate crisis and how that affects us in the desert. We enjoyed participating in the Build Your Own Basin Workshop because it's an opportunity to make small changes in our yard to help conserve water."

Katie and Jeffry also attended a WMG Hydrate series course in Fountain Hills last year. "We loved Watershed Management's learning series in Fountain Hills, where we had the opportunity to learn more about plant species that are native to Arizona. This helped us pick and choose which plants to buy at our local nursery."

WMG is also teaching the Hydrate classes series this summer, this time in Surprise, Arizona, at Surprise's new Water Education Center. The series guides participants through designing passive or active water harvesting systems for their



A BYOB participant picks out a native shrub to plant at home at the end of the workshop.

*"Jeffry and I care deeply about sustainability and the environment, especially given our global climate crisis and how that affects us in the desert. We enjoyed participating in the Build Your Own Basin Workshop because it's an opportunity to make small changes in our yard to help conserve water." – Katie Stephens-Rich*

homes, with free courses on selecting native plants, making the most of greywater, and installing rain tanks — just in time to make the most of the summer monsoon rains.

**Interested in upcoming opportunities to get involved with WMG in the Phoenix area? Sign up for our Valley Action Bulletin e-newsletter at [watershedmg.org/get-involved](https://watershedmg.org/get-involved).**





WMG installed a composting toilet system at Blue Moon Community Garden below the Tucson House apartments, which makes gardening more accessible for older residents and helps fertilize garden plants.

## Composting Toilet Relieves Gardeners and Desert Water Supplies at Blue Moon Community Garden

Traditional toilets are the biggest water users in a typical home or organization space — and shifting how we use them is one of the most impactful solutions we can take to conserve water. WMG worked with the non-profit Community Gardens of Tucson to plan, permit, and install a composting toilet at their Blue Moon site, making the garden more accessible and providing an important educational resource.

Community Gardens of Tucson (CGT) supports 18 gardens with over 300 community gardeners in diverse neighborhoods across Tucson. One such garden is their Blue Moon site: located adjacent to Tucson House Apartments, an affordable housing community with many elderly residents, the garden has become an important outlet and gathering space for the apartments. So when CGT was looking to make infrastructure improvements for the Blue Moon Garden in spring 2021, they knew

they wanted to make the space work better for this community.

“To use the restroom while gardening, the Tucson House residents would have to make the trip all the way back up to their facility, which for a lot of the older residents can take quite a while,” says Scott Feierabend, CGT’s Board Treasurer. “We were looking for a way to do something ecologically sustainable and smart, but at the same time servicing this need for that demographic.”

Since the Blue Moon Garden is owned by the City of Tucson, CGT first needed approval from city staff — and they were skeptical. But Scott invited these staff members to take a guided tour of WMG’s Living Lab with him, where they got to see WMG’s custom, site-built composting toilets. These options cost less than commercial varieties and are designed to safely provide compost for gardens. After seeing these successful examples and getting the chance to review

maintenance concerns with WMG staff, the city gave the green light on the project.

WMG’s Program Manager & Educator Charlie Alcorn then helped CGT through the rest of the process: helping them decide where to install the barrel kit-based composting toilet at the Blue Moon Garden, ensuring that the pathway leading up to it was wide and smooth enough for wheelchair access, and preparing and submitting the permit. In 2016, WMG played a key role in getting commercial composting toilet systems permitted in Arizona — and we support people through the application process to ensure that more systems like this can get installed. “WMG knowing how to navigate the permitting process allows organizations like ours that don’t have that kind of bandwidth or knowledge to make something like this a reality,” Scott says.

This April, WMG completed the toilet installation and hosted an educational

workshop for the community, explaining how to use and maintain composting toilets and safely create compost for the garden’s fruit trees. WMG also provided bilingual signage, which explains the steps of how to use the toilet in English and Spanish, to post inside the restroom. In May, CGT held their first event at the Blue Moon Garden since the composting toilet was installed. The staff was pleased to share that the toilet was accepted, used, and worked smoothly for their 20-30 guests!

“This project has inspired a lot of excitement about where composting toilets can work, and to install them at some of our other gardens,” Scott shares. “It’s the right thing to do, and it was a great collaboration with WMG. We’d love to do it again in the not-too-distant future.”

**Interested in bringing a composting toilet to your home or community space? Visit [Watershedmg.org/CTKit](https://watershedmg.org/CTKit).**



Sasha Timpson, the Garden Operations Manager and Site Coordinator for Tucson Community Gardens, at the completed composting toilet designed by WMG.

*“To use the restroom while gardening, the Tucson House residents would have to make the trip all the way back up to their facility, which for a lot of the older residents can take quite a while,” says Scott Feierabend, CGT’s Board Treasurer. “We were looking for a way to do something ecologically sustainable and smart, but at the same time servicing this need for that demographic.”*



# All Year Round, Monthly Donors Restore The Flow!

Here are some of the superstar monthly donors who make WMG's work possible!  
To help provide consistent support for our work, please join Flow, our monthly giving program, at [watershedmg.org/flow](https://watershedmg.org/flow).



## Emily Ricketts

Emily is a long-time WMG supporter who has been a regular volunteer with the Green Living Co-op, and has recently enjoyed our Build Your Own Basin and Hydrate Series classes.

**"I thought, 'well I can't make a big sustaining gift all at once, but I can give a little bit every month to an organization that I believe in and where I trust that the money will be used for a good purpose.' Funding helps maintain and sustain Watershed Management Group's classes, so as long as I can do something to help them out, I will."**

## Jonah Ivy

As the Living Lab Program Coordinator, Jonah's infectious positive energy fuels so much of our work. His many responsibilities include fundraising, hosting events at the Living Lab, and expanding WMG's community outreach.

**"I feel purposeful as a monthly donor. I love how WMG addresses the water crisis from a number of angles, and I truly believe our work is changing Tucson, physically and culturally. As the primary person who processes monthly donations, I know we can't always rely on grants or major gifts. Having a consistent budget we can count on gets our programs off the ground and lets us plan well into the future."**



## April Lewis

On top of being a monthly donor, April is a committed weekly volunteer at our Welcome Center: greeting visitors, cleaning the Living Lab grounds, preparing crafts for Family Saturdays, and more!

**"It's nice to have a local group, where when you give money you can see where it's going. There's also so much happening here – I have three classes I'm taking with Watershed on my calendar this summer, and then my friend Joan and I went on a creek walk a couple Fridays ago. I don't know of any other organization that I've been involved with where I really feel like I'm learning about my local environment and what I can do to help."**



## Ellen Sidor, Local Artist

Ellen Sidor is a Tucson-based stone artist and generous monthly donor who has called Southern Arizona home since 1999.

**"I support Watershed Management because it offers a real solution to diminishing water supplies in the Southwest. After touring the Living Lab, my brother-in-law and I tore up and recycled the artificial turf in my yard and created a series of connected basins, which beautifully collected most of the monsoon water that fell on our yard last summer."**



# Help WMG Build the Learning Center To Expand Hydro-Local Education

Docent Brenda Hughey and intern Angelica Rascon greet visitors to the Living Lab at WMG's Beavers & Brews/Castoriando con Chelas event this April.



In the decade since our Dodge Blvd. property was donated to us in 2012, Watershed Management Group donors and volunteers have transformed it from a residential house into what it is today: a community hub and leading demonstration site of watershed resilience. Our Living Lab now has extensive rain gardens, a native food forest, a 10,000 gallon underground cistern, art exhibits about Tucson's history of flowing creeks and rivers, a kids' play area, and so much more to offer our community. To complete our vision, we are now in the final stages of planning a new, multi-purpose classroom on our site called The Learning Center, and we need your help to cross the finish line.

In a time of increasing shortages on the Colorado River, as well as drought and climate change, the Living Lab's role is more important than ever. Visitors get the first-hand experience of seeing practical, low-cost ways to live hydro-local — learning how to use local rainwater, greywater, and stormwater to meet the majority of water needs for both indoor and outdoor uses.

The new Learning Center is essential infrastructure to ensure that we can engage and teach more students, families, green professionals, and decision-makers about hydro-local living. The Center will include a large multi-purpose indoor space with technology that will support in-person and hybrid educational activities. To practice what we preach, the building will also feature solar energy, a composting toilet, rainwater harvesting, greywater plumbing, and passive solar design.

Our building and development plans are being reviewed by the City of Tucson, and our general contractor is ready to start construction this fall. However, due to rising costs for materials and resource shortages, we're in need of more generous support to bring our dream for the Learning Center to life.

## Plan Your Gift Today

Please consider making a gift today to build hydro-local learning and water resilience for the desert in the decades ahead. We accept all types of gifts, including gifts via checks, stocks, or IRA contributions. Just make your gift payable to "Watershed Management Group" and include a designation with your gift to support the "Learning Center capital campaign." For questions or to set up a tour, please contact WMG's Executive Director, Lisa Shipek, at [lisa@watershedmg.org](mailto:lisa@watershedmg.org) or 520-396-3266 x2. Thank you!

To learn more and donate, visit

[Watershedmg.org/LearningCenter](https://watershedmg.org/LearningCenter)








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*Watershed Management Group acknowledges that we live, learn, work, and engage with community on the ancestral lands of the Hohokam, Sobaipuri, and Apache people and those of the Pascua Yaqui and Tohono O'odham, whose relationship with this land continues to this day. We acknowledge that water in the Sonoran Desert is of great spiritual, physical, and ecological significance to be protected, cherished, and celebrated.*

*Watershed Management Group reconoce que vivimos, aprendemos, trabajamos, y nos relacionamos con la comunidad en las tierras ancestrales de los pueblos Hohokam, Sobaipuri, Apache, y también de Pascua Yaqui y Tohono O'odham, cuya relación con esta tierra continúa hasta el presente. Reconocemos que el agua en el Desierto Sonorense tiene una gran importancia espiritual, física, y ecológica para ser protegida, apreciada, y celebrada.*