

For Immediate Release

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Arizonans Tell State Legislators

Conserve Arizona - Water, Wildlife, & Wildlands

Environmental Day at the Capitol

Phoenix, AZ – Today, more than 140 people from 24 legislative districts and 21 organizations participated in Environmental Day at the Arizona State Capitol. The day's theme was ***Conserve Arizona – Water, Wildlife, & Wildlands***.

“It is great to see so many people here at the Capitol speaking directly to their legislators about environmental protection; letting them know that Arizonans want wolves recovered; our rivers flowing; state parks funded, protected, and open; and strong investments in clean renewable energy and energy efficiency programs,” said Sandy Bahr, Chapter Director of the Sierra Club’s Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter. “Many legislators are out of step with their constituents on these important issues as Arizonans repeatedly and consistently express strong support for Conserving Arizona.”

Volunteer advocates asked legislators to oppose bills that would weaken protections for critically endangered Mexican wolves in Arizona; to support reinstating the State Parks Heritage Fund for parks, historic preservation, and natural areas and to adequately fund our State Parks System; to oppose bills that prohibit local communities from implementing efficient and green building codes and that weaken renewable energy programs.

"It's not always clear from their actions that our legislature represents an Arizona public that is proud of our open spaces and parks, that people of all political persuasions support wildlife, clean air, clean water, and safe food for all residents, said Kevin Dahl, Arizona Program Manager for National Parks Conservation Association. “We want them to start acting like these things matter, because they do.”

"The Arizona Ecumenical Council Earth Care Commission feels strongly that environmental issues are moral issues and that faith communities need to work alongside secular organizations, speaking directly to our elected representatives about caring for the resources that sustain us all," said Sarah King with the Arizona Ecumenical Council Earth Care Commission.

In addition to meeting with their own legislators, participants heard from the Honorable Doug Von Gausig, Mayor of Clarkdale, who spoke about “Why do I care about the Verde River?” Several legislators also joined participants for other portions of the day.

Groups that participated are listed on the next page.

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Groups Participating in Environmental Day at the Capitol included the following:

Animal Defense League of Arizona

Arizona Ecumenical Council Earth Care Commission

Arizona Forward

Arizona Heritage Alliance

Arizona Interfaith Power and Light

Arizona League of Conservation Voters

Arizona Parks and Recreation Association

Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection

Environment Arizona

Friends of the Haughtelin and Bard Lakes

Friends of Ironwood Forest National Monument

Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project

Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Maricopa Audubon Society

National Parks Conservation Association

Physicians for Social Responsibility

Rogue Green

Sierra Club - Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter

Sky Island Alliance

Sky Islands High School

Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET)

Yuma Audubon Society