

A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT REQUIRES A HEALTHY DEMOCRACY

CANYON ECHO

<http://sierraclub.org/arizona>

Grand Canyon Chapter

Spring 2024

A ROBUST DEMOCRACY IS ESSENTIAL FOR A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT



Graphic by Ana Gorla

It is no coincidence that countries and portions of countries, including here in the United States, where democracy is under fire and not functioning, are also places where there are huge issues with air and water

quality. When people don't have a voice, the environment, the climate, and people's health suffers. That is why Sierra Club's work at the Arizona Legislature has long included actions to protect voting rights and the right to initiative and referendum.

Over the years, Arizona has enacted important positive changes that have made it easier for people to vote, including the Permanent Early Voting List and no excuses early voting meaning you can vote early just because you want to do so. Additional opportunities for early voting via the mail or at voting centers were added. What has been the result? More people voting! With more people voting, more people are elected who are concerned about environmental protection and there is more accountability with the ones who do not. There is now a serious effort to curb unfettered groundwater pumping and irresponsible development.

Without the citizen initiative process, we would never have had the Heritage Fund to

help fund programs for nongame wildlife and provide funding for parks, trails, and cultural resource protection. Without the citizen initiative process, there would not have been an increase in the minimum wage or limits on activities by industrial agriculture or even banning cockfighting everywhere and leghold traps on public lands. Direct democracy has made an important difference in Arizona.

Unfortunately, due to conspiracy theories around the 2020 and 2022 elections, the Arizona Legislature has sought to put more limits on early voting. There is no longer a Permanent Early Voting List and this year at the Capitol, there have been numerous attempts to get rid of voting centers and also no excuses early voting, meaning you would have to meet certain conditions to vote early. Curbing early voting disproportionately affects people who work long hours, students, and people in rural areas, especially Indigenous communities. Likewise, eliminating voting centers affects those same populations more.

by Sandy Bahr

contd. p9

EPA TAKES LONG-AWAITED STEP TO STRENGTHEN SOOT STANDARD, PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH



New Soot Rule Standards Announcement Day by USEPA. Photo by Ana Gorla

contd. p3

Explore, enjoy, & protect the planet



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One vacant at large seat		At Large		
Group rep Flagstaff vacant				
Lynn DeMuth	Compliance Officer	Non-Voting		
Dale Volz	Elections	Non-Voting		

At-large members of the Ex Com are elected by the members statewide.
Group representatives are elected in their group geographic area.
Other positions are appointed by the Ex Com.



BIPOCC: Black Indigenous
People of Color Committee
(volunteer opportunity)
CCL: Council of Club Leaders

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Happenings around AZ

Five groups make up the Grand Canyon Chapter. All events and meetings listed below are open to those interested in learning more about Sierra Club. You can find out more at <http://www.sierraclub.org/arizona>. Schedules are subject to change.

Saguaro Group (North Maricopa County)

<http://sierraclub.org/arizona/saguaro>

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Vice-Chair:			
Secretary/Programs:	Sally Howland	602-663-2889	sally_howland@yahoo.com
Social Media:			
Membership:	Sue Barsky		

Palo Verde Group (Phoenix)

<http://sierraclub.org/arizona/palo-verde>

Chair:	Natalia de la Torre		nadelato98@gmail.com
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Treasurer:	Jerry Nelson	602-550-0282	peakbagger2@gmail.com
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Ex-Com (At-Large):	Lorena Hernandez		

Palo Verde Group executive committee meetings are the **second Thursday of each month** and **programs are the fourth Thursday of each month**.

Flagstaff-Northern AZ Group

<http://sierraclub.org/arizona/plateau>

Currently under reorganization

Yavapai Group (Prescott)

<http://sierraclub.org/arizona/yavapai>

Chair	Gary Beverly	928-308-1003	gbverde99@gmail.com
Vice-Chair	Steve Cook	575-418-9027	scook@projectworldview.org
Conservation Chair	Russ Pilcher		rp1020@sbcglobal.net
Secretary	Jenny Cobb	928-925-1320	cobbsrun@msn.com
Group Rep to Chapter ExComm	Jenny Cobb	928-925-1320	cobbsrun@msn.com
Outings	Stan Bindell	928-636-3903	
Newsletter	Gary Beverly	928-308-1003	gbverde99@gmail.com

Yavapai group programs & Executive Committee meetings are held on the **first Monday of the month**.

Nopales Group (Tucson)

Chair	Anakarina Rodriguez		akrod520@gmail.com
Vice-Chair	Linda Robles		lindarobles39@gmail.com
Secretary/Note taker	Vacant		
Conservation Chair	Cyndi Tuell		cctuell@gmail.com
Group Rep./ Outings Chair	Anakarina Rodriguez		akrod520@gmail.com
At-Large Member	Rebecca Hinton		rahinton@hotmail.com

Nopales group executive committee and program meetings are held every **fourth Wednesday of the month**.

Chapter Announcements

Wildlife Activist Group Virtual Meetings APR 8, MAY 13, JUN 10 (MON) 6pm
Interested in making a difference for wildlife? Want to help protect habitat, gather important research data on wildlife, or watchdog the Arizona Game and Fish Commission? Please consider joining our Wildlife Activist Group. For more information, please contact sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org.

Renewable Energy & Climate Action Team Virtual Meetings APR 23, MAY 28, JUN 25 (TUE) 6:30pm
Discussions and programs encompass renewable energy and energy efficiency campaigns nationally and locally. Everyone is invited to participate, no matter how much or how little you know about energy issues. For more information, please contact sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org.

Arizona Sierra Club Conservation Virtual Meetings APR 4, MAY 2, JUN 6 (THU) 6:30pm. This is the monthly conservation meeting of the Arizona (Grand Canyon) Chapter and Palo Verde Group (Phoenix area), where we discuss a broad range of environmental issues. Come learn more about issues or bring an issue you care about and share what you know. For more information, contact Don Steuter at dsteuter@hotmail.com.

Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter Conservation and Executive Committee APR 28 (SUN). For details and more information, contact Don Steuter at dsteuter@hotmail.com (conservation) and Cyndi Tuell at cctuell@hotmail.com (Executive Committee).

contd. p1: EPA Soot Standard...

The EPA released updated National Ambient Air Quality Standards for **particulate matter** (PM_{2.5}) to curb a deadly air pollutant that significantly harms public health, causing premature death and decreased lung function, and that is **responsible** for over 100,000 deaths in the United States every year.

EPA's final air quality standards for PM_{2.5}, also known as soot, lower the annual standards from 12 mcg/m³ to 9 mcg/m³, and will **prevent** up to 4,200 premature deaths and 270,000 lost workdays per year while bringing as much as \$43 billion in net health benefits in 2032, when the standards are in full effect.

While most of the soot in Arizona is associated with cars and trucks, coal plant pollution **contributes to ambient soot levels**, and some of the most dangerous and deadly plants, like the **Springerville** and **Coronado** coal plants, emit millions of tons of CO₂ pollution that harm the health of Arizonans and worsen the climate crisis.

"Communities of color are exposed to higher concentrations of soot pollution, and at Chispa, AZ, we have been calling on the EPA to do more for our communities since we are at the forefront of the climate crisis," said **Chispa Arizona Organizing Director DJ Portugal**. "With Latinx children being 40% more likely to die from asthma and other respiratory illnesses, we are glad the EPA finally took this important action that will be of great benefit to the health of our communities".

"Soot pollution causes harmful impacts to our health, whether generated by diesel engines or burning coal or gas, and is especially harmful to those most vulnerable—young children, the elderly, and those with other underlying health issues," said **Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter Director Sandy Bahr**. "EPA's updated National Ambient Air Quality Standards for particulate matter are a long-overdue step that will protect communities, including mine, by curbing the most dangerous and deadly effects of toxic soot pollution like cancer, asthma, and heart disease," she said.

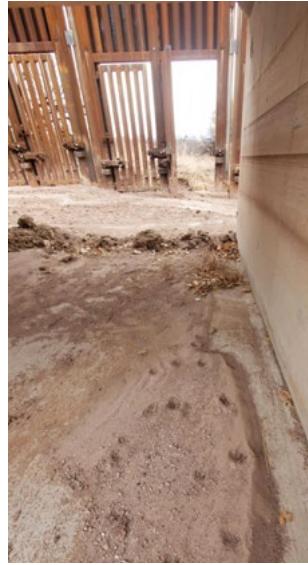


Borderlands Large and Small Wildlife Openings Provide Some Needed Connectivity for Animals

• Erick Meza



The recent news of new jaguar sightings in southern Arizona has generated a lot of conversations about the potential comeback of this emblematic and extremely rare species of the southern Arizona borderlands. The biggest barrier for this species to recover besides illegal hunting and habitat loss is an actual physical barrier, the presence of the border wall. It is no coincidence that the sightings of jaguars have happened in an area



Storm gate open after settlement agreement in wildlife priority area.
Photo by Erick Meza

that remains unwallled as they come from Mexico. This is the same area where former Governor Doug Ducey installed his shipping containers.

Erick Meza, the coordinator of the Sierra Club Borderlands program said, “Wildlife in the borderlands just need an opportunity to move and connect to thrive, but we continue to deny it with the construction of more barriers, increased militarization, and the pushing of asylum seekers to remote areas of the desert.”

Sierra Club has been advocating for wildlife openings in areas where walls were constructed

and for storm gates to be opened all year long to provide movement of water as well as for wildlife corridors. We have gotten storm gates opened permanently in a few important priority areas thanks to a hard-fought settlement agreement with the federal government relating to unlawful expenditures of federal dollars. There will be dozens of small wildlife openings—some of them are already in place and we will continue to advocate for more.

The small wildlife openings are not the only solution to improving the movement of species in these large territories but a combination of many more large wildlife openings are needed, plus no more wall construction in critical wildlife habitat, more habitat restoration, immigration centers to process asylum seekers at ports of entry, and meaningful collaborations with countries where

people are fleeing climate change, violence, and lack of economic opportunities.

Erick Meza is the Borderlands Program Coordinator for the Sierra Club’s Grand Canyon Chapter



Example of a small wildlife passage at the wall. Photo by Erick Meza

GROUPS, SCIENTISTS URGE ARIZONA GOVERNOR TO CLOSE URANIUM MINE IN NEWLY DESIGNATED BAAJ NWAAVJO I’TAH KUKVENI-ANCESTRAL FOOTPRINTS OF THE GRAND CANYON NATIONAL MONUMENT



Pinyon Plain Mine Photo by Ed Moss/ Graphic by Ana Gorla

Echoing pleas from the **Havasupai Tribe, Navajo Nation**, and other Tribes, scientists and Indigenous, faith, recreation, and conservation organizations **called** on Arizona Gov. Katie Hobbs to close the Pinyon Plain uranium mine, which is located in the country’s **newest national monument** near Grand Canyon. Closing the mine will safeguard Tribal cultural heritage and prevent permanent damage to Grand Canyon’s aquifers and springs.

The groups called on Gov. Hobbs to use her authority to rescind permits issued by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and instead

issue new permits for closing and cleaning up the mine, also known as Canyon mine.

“This dangerous uranium mine should never have been approved, and we need Gov. Hobbs to fix this terrible mistake,” said Taylor McKinnon, Southwest Director for the Center for Biological Diversity. “The mining industry and regulators can’t ensure that uranium mining won’t permanently damage Grand Canyon’s aquifers and springs. The governor needs to intervene before more irretrievable damage is done.”

“The Pinyon Plain uranium mine threatens the waters that feed Grand Canyon, one of the seven natural wonders of the world,” said Sandy Bahr, director for Sierra Club’s Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter. “Once the mine contaminates the groundwater, there is no way to clean it up, so the best way to protect Grand Canyon

and the people who depend on its waters is to move forward with closure of this mine, a mine that should have never been permitted.”

The mine sits beneath Red Butte, or *Wii’i Gdwiisa* in Havasupai, a sacred site for the Havasupai and other Tribes who have opposed mining in the area for generations. Although President Biden’s national monument designation permanently bans new mining claims and development inside the monument, it exempts preexisting claims with valid existing rights like the Pinyon Plain uranium mine.

Uranium mining threatens to further deplete and pollute aquifers that communities depend on and that feed Grand Canyon’s biologically critical springs and creeks. The Pinyon Plain mine also operates under an outdated Forest Service record of decision from 1986 that the agency has refused to update. As early as 1986, some state officials

warned that mining could pierce and drain shallow aquifers into the mine and contaminate the regional groundwater that feeds seeps and springs in Grand Canyon.

“ADEQ issued permits to Pinyon Plain mine relying on analyses that employed faulty scientific representations already refuted when the mine pierced a shallow aquifer,” said Kelly Burke, executive director of Wild Arizona. “Gov. Hobbs has the purpose and the authority to act now before extraction of ore unleashes a forever expanding environmental, economic, and health disaster for the people, wildlife, and waters of the Grand Canyon.” Uranium mining has a long history of contaminating land and water, and sickening people in the region, including on the nearby **Navajo Nation**, where hundreds of abandoned uranium mines still await cleanup.

Student Contributors:

Environmental Day at the Capitol!

• by Brianna Morales Figueroa 


On January 25, 2024, I explored Environmental day with Earth Club this year for the third time. This year was my favorite Environmental Day considering the perfect weather that day as well as the amazing speakers who contributed their ideas on the water issues that Arizona is facing. I was very honored to be able to represent Westwood High Earth Club this year as a fellow speaker alongside my friends Jayden and Heidi. This made Environmental Day even more special because I got to branch out my opinions and speak on my behalf of the current issues going on with our water. Apart from that I also learned so much about our water policies and the connection with the rivers which are Arizona’s water sources. The highlight of the day for me was listening to the many educational speeches, especially seeing so many young people like me who also want to advocate for what they want to see in the future of our community. I hope to see many more young people participate in Environmental Day and learn about the ongoing actions that will help lead our community into the right path. Thank you!

Brianna Morales Figueroa is a member of the Westwood High School Earth Club



Environmental Day participants, including from the Westwood High School Earth Club, speak to the group, meet with legislators such as Senator Mitzi Epstein and Senator Brian Fernandez, and do outreach at tables. Photos by Chais Gentner and Mark Coryell

Getting to Know Arizona Wildlife: Meet the Sonoran Tiger Salamander

• by Alexandra White 

If you live on the Arizona-Mexico border, you have a chance of seeing an adorable, loveable reptile known as the Sonoran tiger salamander. Sonoran tiger salamanders are black with big yellow spots. They have tiny yellow eyes with large black irises in the middle and they have wide snouts. They are 3.0 to 6.5 inches long and weigh 60 to 100 grams. They can live to be fourteen years of age.

In order to breed (from January to May), Sonoran tiger salamanders need temporary pools of water to lay the eggs. It can take one to two days for a Sonoran tiger salamander female to lay 200 to 2,000 eggs. The eggs then hatch in two to four weeks. Younger salamanders have the ability to become terrestrial adults in less than two months. If they become terrestrial, they will move 250 meters to 2 kilometers from their pond, where they dig burrows up to two feet deep. If their habitat has permanent water, they can become branchiate adults instead and stay in water for the

rest of their lives.

Little salamanders eat zooplankton. As they grow up, they eat animals similar to zooplankton, but bigger, as well as their eggs of other amphibians, larvae, and insects.

Sonoran tiger salamanders are endangered because of habitat loss. The weather causes floods that wipe out their water homes. Humans build cities and houses on top of the Sonoran tiger salamanders’ living areas as well. Floods, droughts, buildings, and roads have destroyed the places where Sonoran tiger salamanders live, which is why they are now endangered. We need to protect them because they are vital for the Earth. They eat pests that destroy crops. They also recycle nutrients back into the soil, making the world healthier for other animals, plants, and humans.

We must keep these cute animals alive to make the world a better place for everything. That includes you.

Alexandra White is 13 years old, lives in Buckeye, AZ, and is part of Sierra Club’s Wildlife Activist Group



Tiger Salamander. Photo courtesy of USFWS

Online Media Links



Chapter | AZ Water Sentinels | Borderlands Campaign
Grand Canyon Campaign | Flagstaff/N AZ Group
Yavapai Group | Saguaro Group



Chapter | Borderlands Campaign
Grand Canyon Campaign



Chapter | Palo Verde Group



Chapter | Borderlands Campaign
Grand Canyon Campaign | AZ Energy

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Grand Canyon Protection Campaign email updates are sent once every other month



Borderlands email updates are sent every month



Wildlife email updates are sent once every other month



Arizona Water Sentinels email updates are sent once every other month



Energy email updates are sent once every other month



Legislative updates are sent weekly during the legislative season



SAFE HIKING AND KNOWING YOUR LIMITS

•by Chelsea McHale



Arizona native and a fit and avid hiker. This time, he veered off the trail, climbed without the proper safety gear and fell 50 feet. Clint had not passed instantaneously from the fall. He was very much alert. However, due to his location from going off trail, it took rescue crews much longer to get to him, and he sadly passed away en route to the hospital.

Clint's death was not heat related, but his first mistake was his decision to trail blaze instead of staying on the marked trail. He pushed himself past his limits that day, and it cost him his life. We as humans are not invincible or immune to injuries/fatalities, but we can ensure we prepare and hike smart and safely. A sign with his picture and story was placed on Camelback in 2014 to be used as a safety sign and warning to other hikers.

Hikers love to challenge themselves because we're told the view at the top will be worth it and to just keep going. However, it won't be worth it if you can't reach it there and back safely. Your stop is your top. We wouldn't hike ill prepared in an Alaskan blizzard and for Arizona, our blizzard is our heat.

Remember to bring plenty of water for the entirety of your hike. Once you are halfway done with your water, turn back around. During our high temps, many will hike early in the morning. It's important to be hydrated prior to your hike because we wake up dehydrated after going several hours without water while sleeping.

Ensuring you're properly prepared can help make it your best hike. Ask yourself, did I check the weather and see any active heat warnings? Do I have enough water to complete my



Arizona is known for its stunning canyons, rugged mountains, and boundless deserts. The Grand Canyon state attracts diverse individuals throughout the world.

Witnessing breathtaking landscapes and exploring the great outdoors can make for a beautiful adventure. Nature can benefit us in many ways physically, mentally, and spiritually. Just as it is breathtaking, it can also be treacherous when you are not prepared.

In May of 2011, a 25-year-old male named Clint McHale went out on a hike to Camelback Mountain, Echo Canyon. The mountain has two difficult trails that ascend 1,420 feet to a summit resembling the hump of a camel's back and provides a 360-degree view in the heart of Phoenix. It was a mountain Clint hiked twice a week. He was an

hike round trip? Am I wearing hiking shoes to help grip the rough terrain to support my feet and ankles? Do I have a hat and sunscreen? If hiking solo, ask, did I bring a charged cell phone and tell someone where I'm hiking and when I plan to return?

Perhaps in the middle of your hike you start to feel unwell and are dizzy, nauseous, and running low on water. Many hikers may mistake this as the need to push through it. However, these symptoms may be your body starting to shut down, leading to heat stroke.

We want everyone to enjoy our beautiful Arizona mountains, but we also want you to be safe. If today is not the day for you to finish your hike, that's okay. You can come back another time and try it again when you're better prepared. The mountain will still be here and so will you. Please listen to your body and know when it's time to turn back around so you can come home safely to your loved ones.

Chelsea McHale is Clint's sister

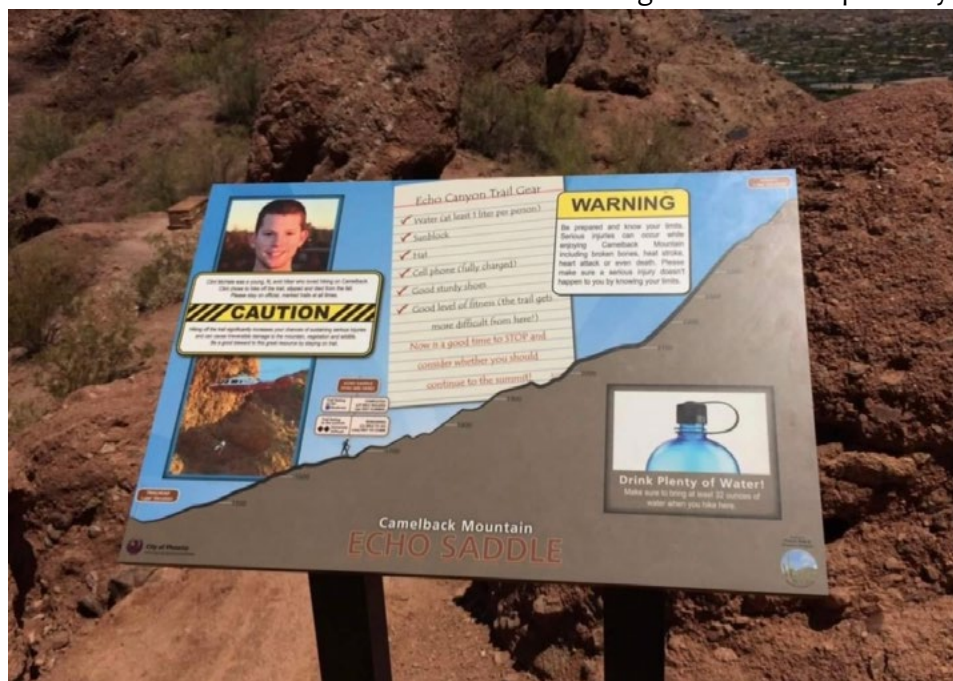
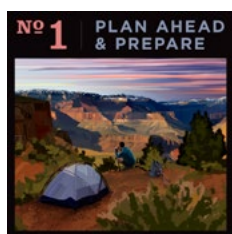



Photo Attribution: Chelsea McHale with the signs about her brother to encourage people to be safe when hiking. She hopes her story, her brother's story, will help save lives! Photos courtesy of Chelsea McHale



Sierra Club's Southern Arizona Group Gets a Fresh Start with a Focus on Equity as Well as the Environment

by Cyndi Tuell 

Sierra Club's southern Arizona group based in Tucson has made a fresh start with a new name. Started as the Rincon Group more than four decades ago, it reorganized as the Nopales Group in 2023, and is now led by a group of new leaders, including chair Anakarina Rodriguez.

"We are excited to start this new era for the local Sierra Club group and look forward to engaging with the southern Arizona community to protect our environment and ensure everyone in our community feels represented," said Rodriguez. "The new group is working to implement the Grand Canyon Chapter's Equity Trail Map, a guide to ensuring the work of the Sierra Club is focused on equity and inclusion, and creates a welcoming space for a wide variety of people."

"This new group has already begun to focus on issues that have long needed attention, including addressing the often-ignored issue of PFAS contamination of our water supply," said Linda Robles, the group's vice chair. "The group will also continue the work of the

previous group including a focus on protecting publicly managed lands and ensuring access to those lands is enjoyed by everyone."

"We are hosting and co-hosting outings and programs and we will continue to support the work of the Grand Canyon Chapter's Borderlands Program, led by Erick Meza," said Rebecca Hinton, the new group's program chair. "We hope that Sierra Club members in southern Arizona will join us for these programs."

The Nopales Group meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month via Zoom, or in person at 6:30pm. The executive committee elected in January 2024 includes Anakarina Rodriguez as chair, Linda Robles as vice chair, Rebecca Hinton as program chair, and Vanessa Gallego as membership chair, with at-large members Nick Arnold and Cyndi Tuell. You can find more information about the Nopales Group on the group's social media sites. They are in the process of updating their website.



Cyndi is Chapter Chair of the Grand Canyon Chapter of the Sierra Club

WELCOME

Miché Lozano

Please join us in welcoming Miché Lozano (they/them) to our Grand Canyon Chapter team. Miché is our new Program and Communications Assistant and is providing administrative and communications support for our priority campaigns and programs. They are doing organizing to recruit more volunteers for tabling and outreach and are also working on our email communications, including our opt-in lists for priority campaigns—climate and clean energy, borderlands, Grand Canyon, water, and wildlife—plus our monthly broadcast messages that go to a larger list. They are also learning the process for putting together our quarterly newsletter, the Canyon Echo. Miché is a long-time outdoor ambassador for Latino Outdoors and also worked previously for the National Parks Conservation Association. They have experience with administrative and communications work and are a great asset to our team. Welcome Miché! We are so glad you are part of our Sierra Club team.



Miché Lozano Sierra Club. Photo by Rory Bergstrom



Beyond the Slab

— CELEBRATING OVER 30 YEARS OF PUBLISHED ECO-AWARENESS !

By Greg Pentkowski


2024 IS A CRITICAL YEAR FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND OUR DEMOCRACY. THE PINYON PLAIN URANIUM MINE THREATENS CONTAMINATING THE GRAND CANYON WATERSHED...



NOW MORE THAN EVER WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO PROTECT THE EARTH AND VOLUNTEER TO PHONE BANK, CANVASS AND REGISTER VOTERS. LOBBY YOUR LEGISLATORS AND DONATE TO A CAUSE OR CANDIDATE THAT SUPPORTS DEMOCRACY !

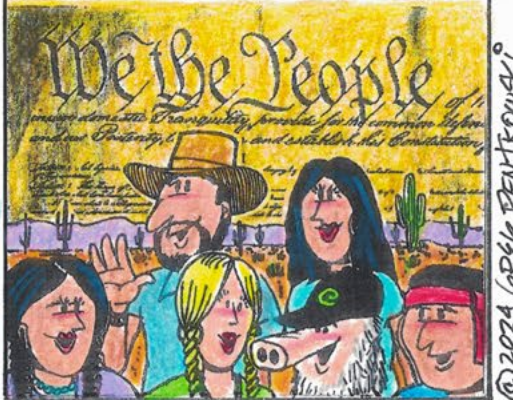


WE HONOR THOSE WHO FOUGHT, BLED AND DIED TAKING AN OATH TO "...SUPPORT AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES AGAINST ALL ENEMIES, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC;..."



WE ALSO HONOR THAT OATH BY WORKING HARD IN ELECTION 2024 TO PROTECT OUR VOTING RIGHTS. OUR DEMOCRACY, EARTH AND LIVES DEPEND ON IT !

We the People



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Recent Events

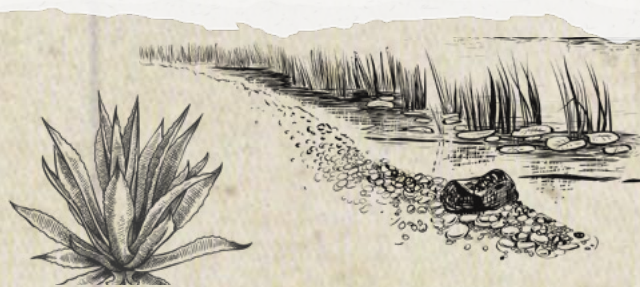


From the top left: more Environmental Day at the Capitol participants.

Center photo: Volunteers doing their part to clean up the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service.

Upper right and lower left: Participants and leaders enjoy Public Lands Trivia Night. Special thanks to Wilderness Brewing Company for hosting us for this event.

Lower right: Wild at Heart participates in Environmental Day and helps people learn about hawks and other raptors.



from p1: Environment & Democracy

Legislators have already made ballot measures more difficult and are also seeking to further limit them, so the people have less opportunity to hold them in check and go directly to the ballot if the legislature ignores important issues. There have even been numerous bills introduced to limit opportunities to establish active management areas

and irrigation non-expansion areas where there are at least some limits relative to groundwater pumping.

Sierra Club is part of the Voting Rights Coalition, a large coalition of organizations that is working hard to protect democracy. We speak up and encourage our members and supporters to do the same. Our air, our water, our health, our climate,

and especially future generations are counting on us to keep intact democratic processes that allow for maximum participation, including by people—predominantly people of color and those with lower incomes—who have generally been disenfranchised and have also suffered the worst of environmental degradation.

To learn more and get involved in our legislative work, contact Sandy Bahr at sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org.

Sandy Bahr is the director of the Grand Canyon Chapter

Cast of Characters

Vanessa Gallego, Awesome Activist!



justice group leading bicycle rides in the barrios of Tucson.

What are your hobbies or interests?

One of my favorite hobbies is antique collecting, especially metal items! I love sorting through recyclables at work and finding unique items to repurpose, reuse, or sell. Some of the coolest things are the vintage silver-plated items such as forks, spoons, and serving sets. I like to tell people I live in luxury every day with a silver spoon in my purse or pocket to use instead of disposable plastic utensils.

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

We are so lucky to be surrounded by the beautiful outdoors. You can find me biking on the loop or around the west or south side of Tucson with FUGA on our monthly rides. There is no better high for me than riding in community and taking up space! I take walks too, but love hikes in our desert, especially on the accessible trails on the west side! My favorite is the Lorraine Lee trail.

What is your favorite place in Arizona?

I would love to say Grand Canyon but I have never been! Joining the Sierra Club, I wanted to make it my mission to visit more of Arizona and bring others along. I know there are many people who can relate. For now I will say Tucson, my home nestled near Saguaro National Park West,

especially when the sun sets.

What made you want to volunteer with Sierra Club?

I first learned about the Sierra Club in 2003 because of the work of Sandy Bahr. I knew one day I would volunteer, so when the opportunity came to help build the newly formed Nopales Group, I joined! Taking space is important for the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color Committee) community, and the Grand Canyon Chapter Equity Trail Map is a document that demonstrates transformation I can support and help foster here locally. The Nopales group has diverse representation, bringing a wide range of issues to work on and I am excited to share space and uplift work in Southern Arizona.

What do you like most about advocating for environmental protection and climate justice?

I enjoy advocating for the intersections of people and places. I like to help people see how we are part of the place we live and how that shapes who we are.

What are the biggest challenges to this work in Arizona?

The challenge we face in Arizona continues to be fighting corporations and special interest groups who seek to use more than their fair share of water, pollute our air and water, destroy cultural resources, and leave a despoiled Arizona for our kids and their kids. We need to

resist and persist to ensure healthy communities and a healthy future. [Editors Note: Resist and persist. What a great motto for Sierra Club!]

What accomplishment are you most proud of and why?

I am proud that I was part of the creation of the Climate Action Plan, Tucson Resilient Together, one of the most ambitious living documents to help future generations continue to live in the desert.

If you could change one policy in our state, what would it be?

Arizona should fund fare-free transit as a true public good that facilitates the access and mobility of its people. As our temperatures rise the most vulnerable are at risk. Public transit is a lifeline to cooling centers and medical centers. There is a disparity when it comes to fares for impoverished communities. Fare-free transit removes barriers, particularly for students and elders, to education, resources and jobs.

Investing in fare free has the potential to attract industry and jobs and bring tourism while assisting in climate action goals of reducing greenhouse gases with electrifying fleets such as our Mayor Regina Romero has done in Tucson.

What one word do you think describes you best?

Active!

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am Vanessa Gallego, pronouns she/her/ella. I was born on the lands of the Tohono O'odham and Pascua Yaqui people, Tucson, to Marco and Olga Gallego. I am a sustainability and mobility advocate and a second generation scrap metal recycler, and have worked for our family's small business, Recyco Inc., since 1995. I now serve as Chief Operating Officer. I serve my community as a Ward 1 commissioner on Climate, Energy and Sustainability for the City of Tucson, Climate Action Advisory Council for Mayor Regina Romero, and I am Program Manager of FUGA—Families United Gaining Accessibility | Familias Unidas Ganando Accesibilidad, a mobility



Support Your Local Sierra Club

When you make a donation to the Grand Canyon Chapter, you support Sierra Club's work in your own backyard. You allow us to continue our efforts to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities, to curb global climate change, and to promote the enjoyment of nature. If you haven't already, please also consider signing up to become a monthly, recurring donor to support local Chapter efforts!

Contributions to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible; they support the Sierra Club's citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Donate online at: <http://www.sierraclub.org/arizona/donate>
or by mail to:

Sierra Club – Grand Canyon Chapter
514 W. Roosevelt St.
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Thank you!

Donors through 3/15/2024

Monthly Donors

Fannie Allen	David Bowman	Rebecca Smith Gross	Ms Rosemary Kist	Janice E. Myers	Nyssana Reyes	Tiffany Sprague	Tom Wright
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	Sarah W Gordon	Laura Key	Elena Moshinsky	Mrs Lisa Reyes	Abby Spotskey	Robert Wist	

Hitched to Everything Else in the Universe (\$1-49)

Kathleen Abernathy	Marlena Day	Pamela W Hyde	Stuart Moody	Jan Schwartz	Charles Steak &	Frances S Walker
David Ashby	Nathan Fidel	Curtis Kinsey	Lisa Royer Nicholson	Claire Spring	John Woodland Steak	Bob White
Peter & Barbara	Ronald Fish	Dr Carole Klopatek	Floy & Lewis Parkhill	R Spurlock &	Halina Szyposzynski	Sandra Whitley
Burkholder	Dan Francis	Elizabeth Loehr	Jeff Peltz	D Miller Spurlock	Ruth Tilman	Carol R Wilson
Darlene Chavez	Dominick Grillas	Russell Lowes	Guadalupe Rodriguez	Martha Stampfer	Susan K Valdivia	

PAC Donors

Jan Buckwalter
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Keep Close to Nature's Heart (\$50-99)

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David Ashby	Pamela W Hyde	Guadalupe Rodriguez	Ruth Tilman
Peter & Barbara	Curtis Kinsey	Jan Schwartz	Susan K Valdivia
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Darlene Chavez	Elizabeth Loehr	R Spurlock &	Bob White
Marlena Day	Russell Lowes	D Miller Spurlock	Sandra Whitley
Nathan Fidel	Stuart Moody	Martha Stampfer	Carol R Wilson
Ronald Fish	Lisa Royer Nicholson	Charles Steak &	
Dan Francis	Floy & Lewis Parkhill	John Woodland Steak	

The Grand Canyon Chapter is also thankful for the generous support from those who chose to remain anonymous.

Hiking Guidelines

The Sierra Club is a nationwide organization with active local outings for members and non-members. Please join us as we make friends and explore life-enriching interests. Simply find an outing by date and contact the leader for directions, reservations, time, and additional information. RESTRICTIONS: NO FIREARMS, RADIOS, OR PETS (unless noted otherwise). Outings are by reservation. Call early (group limit 20)

Each hike is rated for degree of difficulty and risk by the leader.

"A" >16 miles or >3,000 ft. elevation change (EC)

"B" 8-16 miles and 1,500-3,000 ft. EC RT Round Trip

"C" 3-8 miles and 500-1,500 ft. EC OW One Way

"D" <3 miles and 500 ft. EC

The trip leader has absolute authority to question trip participants as to their equipment, conditioning, and experience before and during the trip. All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the liability waiver before you choose to participate in an outing, please go to <http://content.sierraclub.org/outings/local-outdoors/resources> or contact the National Outings Dept. at 415-977-5528 for a printed version. Sierra Club liability covers leaders only. Each person is responsible for his/her own first aid equipment. If you are injured, notify the leader immediately. If you leave the trip, with or without the leader's permission, you are considered to be on your own until you rejoin the group. Hikers are encouraged to carpool and share the driver's fuel expense. Donations are accepted from all participants at \$1 (member) and \$3 (nonmember). Money is collected by the leader and deposited with the group treasurer. For more information, contact the Sierra Club Grand Canyon office at 602-253-8633. Hikes and outings are also listed online at <https://www.sierraclub.org/arizona/events-activities>.

CST 208 776 640.

Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

Make the Mountains Glad (\$100-499)

Paula A Aboud	Mr Mark Ferguson	Gray Larkum	Kathy Roediger
Jean M Ajamie	Leah Frankel	Michelle Lund	Brit Rosso
Sharon Allen	Charles & Mary Graf	David Lutz	Patricia Sills-Trausch
Gary & Molly Beverly	V L Greenfield	Jhane E Mareello	Roz Switzer
David M Bixby	Janet Grossman	Patricia Mariella	Tom Timmer
Nick Brown	Darlene D Hagan	Ken McGinty	Douglas W Trinder
Carolyn Burns	Alissa Harvey	Erick Meza	Jose Urdaneta
Robert D Cable, Jr Cable	Paul Hoyt	Joy Mockbee	Bruce J Villere
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The Morning Stars Sing Together (\$500+)

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Patricia Baynham
Eric Coons
A Hamrick & R Bednarski
Betty A Jutzi
Riester Conservation
Foundation
Robert W. Sanderson
Edward Senz
Elizabeth Stewart

Explore and Enjoy Arizona



Seven Springs. Photo by Tommy DeBardleben
<http://www.birderfrommaricopa.com/>

APR 6 (SAT) "D" Seven Springs Hike. A Saguaro Group-sponsored social hike and tailgate potluck lunch. The trail is fairly easy and we will hike about 3 miles. This peaceful and beautiful area 12 miles north of the town of Cave Creek is perfect for socializing and relaxing with others. Seven Springs is a popular bird viewing area so bring binoculars if desired. Please bring food to share at a light lunch after the

hike. Contact your leader, Sally Howland, sally_howland@yazz.com, for meeting details and to sign up.

APR 13 (SAT) "D" Time TBA. EASY Granite Dells Area Day Hike (3.84 miles RT, minimum EC). Begin this hike on the new "Hobbit" Trail in a riparian area with a downhill descent to a wooded area transitioning to grasslands with scenic views of the Granite Dells and Glassford Hill. Ancients once lived along the way. We will connect next with the with the Peavine, Elisabeth, Boblett, and Iron King trails. For reservations and more information contact Outings leader Jenny Cobb, cobbsrun@msn.com 928-925-1320. <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002llgPAAW>



Granite Dells. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia

APRIL 14 (SUN) "C" Sheep Bridge Day Hike (4 miles RT, 200' EC). We will be visiting the historic Verde River Sheep Bridge on the Cave Creek Ranger District of Tonto National Forest. We will follow Verde River Trail # 11 upstream into the Wild & Scenic River corridor on the Verde River. There are a number of interesting wilderness values that can be seen on this outing. While the



Sheep Bridge. Photo by Andrew Horne

hike itself is easy, I will need 4WD vehicles to access the trailhead as we will be fording the Verde River below Horseshoe Dam. The crossing of Deadman Creek can also be a little rough. On the drive in we will stop and see a really nice crested Saguaro. The leader will talk about the history of the Verde River Sheep Bridge as well as the Mazatzal Wilderness Area and the Wild & Scenic Verde River. For reservations, meeting time and place, contact your leader, Jim Vaaler, at jimvaaler@msn.com or you may call Jim at 602-553-8208. For those who want to, we will stop for dinner on the way back.

APR 20 (SAT) "A" Tonto National Forest Photo Point Event Become a volunteer for the Friends of the Tonto National Forest, a volunteer group which sponsors various projects supporting the Tonto Forest. One such effort is the riparian photo point project that has collected repeated photographs along various Arizona waterways for over 40 years. The photos are used to compare changes at specific locations over time. On this outing you will assist the Saguaro Group as we photograph various locations along the road to Seven Springs. Some short bushwhacking walks on uneven terrain will be required. Bring a camera or smartphone if you have one, and water, a hat, and appropriate dress. Contact your leader Sally Howland, sally_howland@yahoo.com, for meeting details and to sign up.

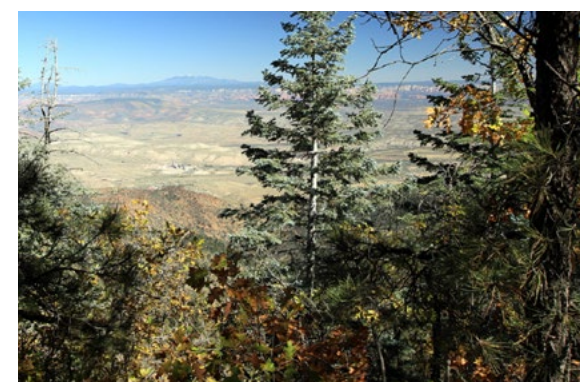


Turley Trailhead. Photo by M E Whiteman courtesy of HikeArizona.com

MAY 11, 2024 (SAT) "D" Time TBA. EASY Turley Trail Day Hike (< 4 miles RT, EC <200ft) The trail on the east side of Prescott starts at an old corral and goes a mile where it joins the Prescott Circle Trail in the shadow of

"P" Mountain (Badger Mountain). Climb a short distance on the Circle Trail for photo ops of the "P," or continue straight above Government Canyon until we want to turn around. The scenic trail contours the mountain with many short, steep climbs and descents. Great views of Prescott and surrounding mountains. For reservations and more information contact Outings leaders Jenny Cobb, cobbsrun@msn.com 928-925-1320. <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002llgjAAG>

JUNE 22 (SAT) "D" Time TBA. EASY hike on Allen Springs Road (Mingus Mountain) (< 4 miles, Minimum EC). We will drive down Allen Springs Road and park in one of the large areas. Hike towards the Verde Valley View and turn around. Great Mingus Mountain views in the Ponderosa Pine forest. Option: One of the leaders would be happy to hike a short distance off Allen Springs Road on Black Canyon Trail 114 and back. Hike subject to weather conditions. For reservations and more information contact Outings leaders Jenny Cobb, cobbsrun@msn.com 928-925-1320. <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002llgeAAG>



Mingus Mountain Outlook. Photo by Joe Bartels

