

## Attachment 1

### HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF VERDE RIVER BASIN PARTNERSHIP

The President signed Public Law No. 109-110 into law in November 2005. By January 2006 the Interim Planning Committee was formed and a meeting was held to develop the organizational structure of the Partnership. From beginning to present, the Partnership sought broad-based representation with a collaborative and transparent process. Early on, the Prescott area communities indicated that, for a number of reasons, they would not join the Partnership and still have not done so. Nevertheless, during 2006, the Partnership formed its committees, developed its bylaws (attachment 5), and developed its initial scope of work with the USGS. The present scope of work (attachment 4) was developed with the USGS this year (2009) to build upon work that has been completed by the USGS in cooperation with the Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee since 2006. The revised plan is more strongly directed to providing an enhanced ground-water model for the upper and middle Verde watersheds that will serve as a useful predictive tool for the guidance of water-management decisions. It promises a major advance in understanding the potential as well as the limitations of the Verde River Basin water resources.

An important accomplishment of the Partnership was the initiation of the Verde River Ecological Flows Study in mid-2006 by the Habitat Subcommittee of the Partnership's Technical Advisory Group. This effort was a direct response to Title II's requirement for "an analysis of the potential long-term consequences of various water use scenarios on groundwater levels and Verde River flows", and it developed into collaboration among the Arizona Water Institute, The Nature Conservancy, and the Partnership. The initial work, funded by the Arizona Water Institute, was compilation of comprehensive literature summaries and preparation of background reports. These provided the basis for presentations and discussion at a workshop held in May 2007 and supported by contributions to The Nature Conservancy's Laurie Wirt Memorial Fund. The workshop was attended by 35 scientists from 16 agencies, universities, and organizations. These experts in river hydrology, geomorphology, and a range of life sciences pooled their knowledge to produce a set of flow-ecology response models for the Verde River, which describe the relationships between hydrologic variability and ecological response. These models are a set of hypotheses predicting how a reduction of flow would affect specific species of plants or animals. In addition, workshop participants identified major gaps in the available information and outlined a research agenda. A published report—Ecological Implications of Verde River Flows—of the workshop and an executive summary can be downloaded from <http://azconservation.org>. Work supported by the Arizona Water Institute continued through 2008 with the goal of refining and quantifying the relationships between hydrologic variability and ecological response, but it was terminated owing to State funding limitations. Additional work is now planned by The Nature Conservancy in cooperation with the USGS.