



Arizona Water Sentinels

To see upcoming Water Sentinels opportunities, please visit <http://bit.ly/SCAZevents>. For more information, contact Jennifer Martin at jennifer.martin@sierraclub.org or (602) 254-8362.

Who are the Arizona Water Sentinels?

Water Sentinels are people of all ages and backgrounds who volunteer to do hands-on conservation work to protect Arizona's rivers and streams. Our mission is to protect, improve, and restore Arizona rivers and streams.

What do the Arizona Water Sentinels do?

Water Sentinels measure water quality parameters such as pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, and total dissolved solids concentrations in the Verde and San Pedro rivers. We collect water samples to determine concentrations of *E. coli* bacteria in the water. These data help decision-makers properly manage these amazing rivers. There is no prior training needed. We provide everything. You can be a Water Sentinel!

Water Sentinels conduct stream clean-ups and work to restore riparian areas. For example, Sentinels are working in the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area near downtown Phoenix to remove buffelgrass, an invasive grass which poses a wildfire danger and crowds out native plants in the Salt River riparian corridor, as well as other nonnative invasive plants. Every month, Water Sentinels pick up trash and litter and remove invasive nonnative plants in the restoration area. We also plant native trees, shrubs, and grasses to provide habitat for wildlife, including monarch butterflies and beavers, and to provide a respite area for city dwellers.

Why These Rivers?

The Verde River is one of the largest perennial rivers in the Southwest and has one of Arizona's most important riparian corridors, providing key habitat for many species, including threatened and endangered species. The Verde River offers a multitude of recreational opportunities and is



Sentinels remove trash and invasive species, and paint murals at the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area. Credit Jennifer Martin.



an important source of drinking water for the Phoenix metropolitan area. This river faces significant threats from excessive groundwater pumping to feed growth and development, and there are water quality concerns with certain stretches of the river. They include bacteria, excessive sediment, and elevated arsenic concentrations. Water Sentinels go to three sampling sites on the Verde River, plus seven on Spring



Creek (a tributary of the Verde) to monitor the river's water quality. We also monitor flow on the Upper Verde near its headwaters to track water quantity. We hope to gain enough data to have the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) designate a portion of the river as an Outstanding Arizona Water.

The San Pedro is one of the southwestern United States' last undammed rivers. Water Sentinels monitor water quality at eight sites within the San Pedro National Riparian Conservation Area near Sierra Vista and share that data with ADEQ. We're also monitoring groundwater levels in wells near the river. We share our depth to groundwater data with the Bureau of Land Management, the agency responsible for managing the National Riparian Conservation Area.

How can I get involved?

Sentinels monitor the Middle Verde River. Credit Jennifer Martin.

Join us! If you are interested in clean water or hands-on conservation work to protect rivers, streams, and watersheds, then the Water Sentinels program is for you! We have a

schedule of monitoring dates from May through October and our watershed restoration work is year-round.

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