

Canyon Echo

CHALLENGES

ACTIONS

OPPORTUNITIES



AZ YOUTH CLIMATE COALITION AT ENVIRONMENTAL DAY
Photo by Shaela Patel



VOLUNTEERS & STAFF AT ART NIGHT PRIOR TO APS PROTEST.
Photo by Sandy Bahr



SIERRA CLUB AND PARTNERS PROTEST APS RATE HIKE.
Photo by Sandy Bahr



CLEAN UP CREW IN FLAGSTAFF AT THE RIO DE FLAG.
Photo by Mattea Goetz



HONK AND WAVE CLIMATE SUMMER.
Photo by Jazmin Moreno



SIERRA CLUB VOLUNTEER LARISSA HELPS SPREAD THE WORD.
Photo by Sandy Bahr

2026–A Year of Challenges, Actions, and Opportunities

by Sandy Bahr 

We kicked the year off with significant actions at the Arizona Legislature, fighting the plethora of harmful legislation and doing so successfully. Early in the year, we made a concerted effort to keep climate action front and center with a series of events at First Friday Art Walks, and Honk and Wave accountability actions. Plus we awarded a gold medal in pollution for Representative Juan Ciscomani, met with members of Congress and their staff, and co-hosted roundtable discussions. In partnership with many other climate justice organizations, we organized around both the Arizona Public Service (APS) and Tucson Electric Power (TEP) rate cases, helping to turn out strong public comment against both, plus engaging in fighting the repeal of the Renewable Energy Standard and Energy Efficiency Standard.

For public lands, we hosted and co-hosted three public hearings for commenting against the repeal of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule and are right now continuing to push back hard on this repeal. Our work to support national monuments both inside and outside Arizona has been strong too. We led outings/hikes to the monuments, organized rallies, and hosted information sessions on the values of the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni–Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument and Ironwood Forest National Monument.

Our work on water has included seeking to hold data centers and chip manufacturers accountable for both water use and water pollution, including PFAs contamination, plus we had a strong season of water quality monitoring on the Verde, San Pedro, and for the first time this year, the Agua Fria. We had a big win this year when the Arizona Department of Environmental

Quality finalized the designation of the Upper Verde River as an Outstanding Arizona Water (OAW).

Work in the borderlands is always challenging, but under this administration it has been especially so. The Department of Homeland Security is bulldozing along the border to build a double wall. This will destroy sacred sites, natural areas, springs, and more. They have also been using concertina wire to discourage movement, but this is a deadly tactic that also harms wildlife. Despite all that, we have been in solidarity with Indigenous and human rights activists to push back and seek to halt the destruction.

We continue our work to support saving Oak Flat and have litigation in progress on that, plus we have and continue to support stopping or mitigating numerous other mining projects, including Pinyon Plain uranium mine, Copper World, South32 Hermosa Mine, and others. Currently, we are evaluating yet another proposed land exchange that would give the mining company about five times as much land as the public would get.

In addition to all of this, we have commented on numerous gas plants, some data centers, air permits and the proposed weakening of protections for air and water. While all of this is a bit daunting, now is no time to give up. We need to keep working hard to protect this place we call home and ensure that future generations of people, plants, and animals find this to be a habitable place.

Read more about our work in this issue. Interested in helping with these and other issues? Check out our website and online calendar for upcoming events and actions.

Sandy Bahr is director of the Grand Canyon Chapter



Protest sign. Photo by Sandy Bahr



Group Learning about committee testimony with Rep. Sandoval



Water Sentinels testing Photo by Arya Annamalai

Grand Canyon Chapter Staff

Chapter Director Sandy Bahr

602-253-8633 sandy.bahresierraclub.org

Border Program Coordinator

Erick Meza erick.meza@sierraclub.org

Energy and Public Lands Coordinator Ana Gorla

ana.gorla@sierraclub.org

Grand Canyon Conservation Program Manager

Vacant

Program and Communications Assistant

Miché Lozano

602-253-9140 miche.lozano@sierraclub.org

Water Sentinels Program Manager

Jennifer Martin-McLeod 602-254-8362

jennifer.martin@sierraclub.org

Chapter Outings Senior Program Coordinator (National)

Sergio Avila sergio.avila@sierraclub.org

Grand Canyon Chapter Executive Committee

Stephanie Vázquez Salas, Chapter Chair and PAC

Treasurer, stephanie.vazquez03@gmail.com

Gary Beverly, Vice Chair, gbverde99@gmail.com

Nick Arnold, Political Chair At-Large

econarnold@gmail.com

Vanessa Gallego, Member At-Large,

gallego.vanessa@gmail.com

Salil Deshpande, Member At-Large,

atxsal@gmail.com

Anna Mohr-Almeida, Member At-Large

mmlkm02@gmail.com

Natalia de la Torre, Member At-Large

nataliaastrid@gmail.com

Jo Sylvester, Saguaro Group Rep

stitchinjo@yahoo.com

Jenny Cobb, Outings Chair and Yavapai Group Rep

cobbsrun@msn.com

Don Steuter, Conservation Chair and Palo Verde

Group Rep dsteuter@hotmail.com

Anakarina Rodriguez, Nopales Group Rep,

akrod520@gmail.com

Michelle Lund, Treasurer Non-Voting

Jerry Nelson, Assistant Treasurer Non-Voting

Lynn DeMuth, Compliance Officer Non-Voting

Dale Volz, Elections Non-Voting

Cary Meister, Wildlife Activist Group Chair, Non-Voting

Horst Schmidt, Climate and Clean Energy Team Chair,

Non-Voting

Dedicated Volunteers

Layout & Graphics Editor:

Toni Malcolm

Copy Editor: Kurt Florman

Publications Chair: Vacant

Publications Committee:

Sandy Bahr, Stan Bindell, Gary Beverly, Ana Gorla, Kurt Florman, Chris Gehlker, Miché Lozano, Toni Malcolm, Brian Mostoller, Jerry Nelson

Subscriptions: Annual dues to Sierra Club are \$39 (including \$1 for Canyon Echo). Subscription rate for non-members is \$10. Send check payable to Sierra Club-Canyon Echo, 514 W. Roosevelt St., Phoenix, AZ 85003.

Advertising: Advertising is sold on a first-come, space-available basis. The editor reserves the right to refuse any advertisements, and inclusion of advertisements does not imply endorsement by Sierra Club. All interactions between advertisers and consumers are solely the responsibilities of those parties.

Submissions: Send digital media to the communications assistant. Send printed copies to: Canyon Echo, 514 W. Roosevelt St., Phoenix, AZ 85003, (include a self-addressed stamped envelope for return of hard copies). Indicate copyright or Creative Commons preference. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Writer's guidelines can be obtained by contacting the communications assistant. All rights to publication of articles in this issue are reserved. The deadline is the first day of the month preceding the issue. Opinions expressed in Canyon Echo are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of Sierra Club.

Canyon Echo © 2026. Canyon Echo (ISSN 0164-7024) is published quarterly for Sierra Club members by:
Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter,
514 W. Roosevelt St., Phoenix, AZ 85003.
Phone: 602-253-8633.

Fighting Back in a Time of Climate Denial and Rollbacks

by Ana Gorla 

Gas plants are taking over and climate deniers are running rampant in Arizona this year. The Trump administration has inspired Republicans in committees, boards, utility companies, and corporations to follow its lead and ramp up burning of fossil fuels, plus weaken or eliminate environmental and public health protections. It's also making our moderate climate-friendly leaders reconsider how vocal they want to be about calling out climate injustices, issues, and taking action against these environmental attacks they are engaged in, or "climate hushing."



Show us your Climate stripes event. Photo by Justin Bahr

The combination of lack of action and rollbacks, plus lack of accountability has resulted in Arizonans facing increasing numbers of gas plants and gas plant expansions, data centers rolling into neighborhoods and natural areas, higher electric bills, and rising air pollution with record-breaking extreme weather. But not all hope is lost; our communities aren't going down without a fight. Together, we have shown up in record-breaking numbers at the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) meetings to call out the hypocrisy of our commissioners siding with utilities on unfair rate hikes, abandoning their promises of cleaner energy and lower carbon emissions, repealing clean energy standards, and acting contrary to their constitutional mandate to ensure just and reasonable utility rates to protect the people of Arizona. This work hasn't stopped at the state level. In response to federal attacks on climate, like the historic rollbacks at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), we've been keeping Arizonans informed and pushing back.



Show us your Climate stripes event. Photo by Erick Meza

We've joined nationwide No Kings rallies to bring climate into the conversation, met with congressional leaders, and used local art walks to show the faces of the people attacking our climate. We've also been uplifting the leaders who are being strong for our communities and not afraid to push back on the hushing of climate change.

As people feel despair and alone in the fight for clean energy and a healthy environment, we've been working with our amazing partners to reach our communities and let them know that the fight is not over. Every comment and action, big or small, is part of the momentum we're creating to let this administration know that we will not give up, that our communities deserve better, and that we will meet them every time they try to deny us the right to clean air, affordable and sustainable energy, and thriving communities.

Ana is the Energy and Public Lands Coordinator of the Grand Canyon Chapter

Want to get involved? Join our next Climate and Energy Action Team meeting on October 27th at 6:30 PM.

People Against Polluters Rally

by Mattea Goetz 



People Against Polluters. Photo by Sandy Bahr

They gave us space to come together, make art, share food, and build upon our relationships.

The rally itself was incredibly powerful, but what I remember most about that day was how beautiful and meaningful it was to all be together, as well as to see so many new faces. Since Energy Fuels began mining at Pinyon Plain, and the Navajo Nation reached agreement around hauling the ore through their communities, many of us have felt unsure of what to do and where to turn. To be together in one place, hear each other's stories, connect in person, hug, and share time together, was exactly the medicine we needed to restore our energies and continue in defense of these lands. The work continues!

Organizers of the Rally.

Mattea is the former Grand Canyon Program Manager for Sierra Club

We had another incredibly powerful year of organizing in Northern Arizona in 2026. One particularly powerful event was the People Against Polluters Rally and Walk, which I co-organized alongside individuals from ten other local organizations and independent organizers. The intention of this event was to continue to call for the closure of Pinyon Plain Uranium Mine and show support for current protections in the region. Over 100 people came out to join us in Flagstaff, including relatives and community members from all directions—Havasupai, White Mesa, Phoenix, Tuba City, and beyond.

In many ways, this event was about us—an opportunity for us to share space, see old friends, and stoke the fire in our bellies around anti-uranium work, reminding each of us we are not alone. We had organizations tabling, an art table to make juniper berry jewelry, and food and drinks provided by community members and businesses. We also heard from incredible speakers about the many different ways extractive industries and polluters are impacting communities across Northern Arizona, as well as about the incredible work communities and organizations are doing across the region. At the end, we took to the streets and walked through downtown Flagstaff together.

In the weeks leading up to the event, we hosted a number of gatherings to prepare, including an art build with Wingbeat88, where we made signs and banners. These events were just as important as the rally itself.



Mattea Goetz, the Grand Canyon Program Manager for Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter has left Arizona for new adventures in the Northwest. As they begin a new chapter -- exploring work with ethnobotany and digging into learning and building in their new home -- we want to thank them and wish them well. While working with our chapter, Mattea helped to build and deepen relationships with Indigenous activists and coalitions in the greater Grand Canyon region, started a podcast to highlight the harm from the Snowbowl Ski Resort and uranium mining, and to highlight the values of the Baaj Nwaavjo l'tah Kukveni-Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument. Mattea organized art nights where people were able to express their activism through banner-making, block printing, and painting. They also co-hosted some creative writing workshops associated with exploring the land. On top of that, Mattea helped to lead or co-lead numerous outings to spotlight the values of the lands, people, wildlife, and more in northern Arizona. Thank you, Mattea, for all that you brought to our communities.

Our Work Along the Borderlands

by Erick Meza 



San Rafael Valley, Secondary wall project. Photo by Erick Meza

The Arizona borderlands region continues to be under assault and the borderlands program is working tirelessly to minimize the impact to the fragile environment. Some of the last remaining wildlife corridors are being terribly impacted by the construction of primary and secondary border walls in some of the most remote areas at the border.

When the crossings of humans are at all time lows at the border this administration insists on creating double barriers calling it a "smart wall" but communities are speaking out.

Grassroots organizing is happening at all different fronts in the borderlands region; some of the most iconic places and precious public lands are being targeted.

Places like the historic town of Lochiel in the San Rafael valley, the Buenos Aires Wildlife Refuge, Organ Pipe National Monument, Pajarito Mountains, San Bernardino Wildlife Refuge, and most recently the Tohono O'odham Nation are now part of the list

of places that will be changed forever if we don't do something about it.

We will continue to support frontline communities during these hard times. We will monitor and expose all the destruction of our precious public lands by this administration and we will hold contractors accountable for their reckless actions.

The borderlands are not a sacrifice zone. And we will continue to fight for the landscapes, communities, and species that call this region home.

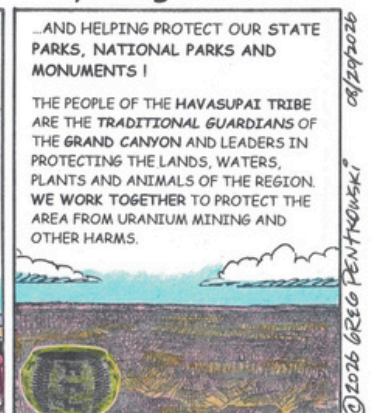
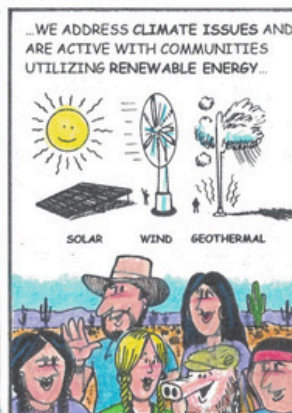


First time ever a tree sit, stopped border wall construction in Lochiel. Photo by Erick Meza

Erick is the Borderlands Coordinator for the Grand Canyon Chapter

Beyond the Slab -- CELEBRATING OVER 30 YEARS OF PUBLISHED ECO-AWARENESS !

By Greg Pentkowski



Canyon etching courtesy: J. W. Powell expedition 1869-1872

Arizona Water Sentinels: Another Season of Monitoring

by Anya Annamalai 



Verde Water Monitoring. Photo by Anya Annamalai



Anya at an environmental exhibition. Photo by Mary Price



Are you thinking about making an estate plan?
The Grand Canyon Chapter is happy to offer Giving Docs, a simple, secure way to create your will and other estate planning documents online. It's free for Sierra Club supporters—and it only takes a few minutes to create an account and get started.

You can even use Giving Docs to create your Sierra Club legacy by naming Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter as a beneficiary of your plans. This is completely optional. A gift of any size is greatly appreciated!

To learn more about planned giving or to become a member of the Rachel Carson Society, please get in touch! We're happy to help.



Scan the QR code or
get in touch to learn more

julia.curtis@sierraclub.org
(800) 932-4270
myplan.sierraclub.org

 **2026 Annual
Member, Volunteer,
& Partner
Recognition**

**FALL
PICNIC**

**Nov 15th, 2026
11AM - 2PM**

- Awards Ceremony
- Volunteer Recognition
- Food & Beverages



For Questions: 602-253-8633
grand.canyon.chapter@sierraclub.org



Pedro rivers while advocating for a new water-sampling program along the Agua Fria River. Knowledge gained through fieldwork helped provide a foundation for expanding community-based monitoring to another Arizona watershed. This demonstrates how conservation work can inform advocacy and contribute to broader environmental efforts.

My experiences with outreach and tabling have further shown me the value of communicating that firsthand knowledge with others. Conversations about water conservation and ecosystem protection become more meaningful when informed by both research and direct experience.

The relationship between volunteerism and advocacy can cultivate a more informed and engaged community of environmental advocates. Hands-on conservation creates a tangible connection to the ecosystems we seek to protect, while public engagement allows that knowledge to extend beyond the field.

People do not simply protect what they know about. They protect what they have taken the time to understand and experience personally.

Anya is a student volunteer with the Arizona Water Sentinels



Canyon Echo encourages contributors to use Creative Commons licensing



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 543 Howard Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, California 94105.

All other contributions, including photos, cartoon, and written work, fall under standard copyright restrictions.

Upper Verde River Gains Greater Protection Outstanding Arizona Water Designation Finalized

by Sandy Bahr 



Upper Verde River. Photo by Gary Beverly

This fall, the Governor's Regulatory Review Council and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) gave final approval to a rule to establish the Upper Verde River as an Outstanding Arizona Water (OAW) member. The Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter had nominated the portion of the Verde extending from the headwaters near Paulden to the confluence with Sycamore Creek, as well as the lower four miles of Sycamore Creek, for consideration by the ADEQ. Grand Canyon Chapter had first proposed it back in 2012.

"Designation of the Upper Verde River as an Outstanding Arizona Water will do a lot for the river and the communities that depend on it," said **Jennifer Martin-McLeod, Water Sentinels Program Manager for the Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter**. "This designation provides an important layer of protection for the water quality of the river. We appreciate the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality for recognizing the importance of the Upper Verde by establishing this special designation."

The nomination described the potential benefits of designation: "Recognizing the outstanding qualities of the proposed Upper Verde Outstanding Arizona Water will provide for protection and maintenance of current water quality conditions, thus protecting the exceptional tourism, recreational, and agricultural economic benefits that exist downstream."

The Verde River above Horseshoe Dam is the longest (162 miles) and the last perennial, free-flowing, relatively pristine river in Arizona and the Southwest. The OAW represents the upper third of a remarkable riparian habitat corridor, connecting six wilderness areas, eight inventoried roadless areas, three National Forests, one National Monument, two Wild and Scenic Rivers, two state parks, two Important bird areas, and one wildlife preserve.

"The OAW designation not only helps protect recreation and extensive cultural resources, but it also recognizes the upper Verde River as a treasure in the Southwest," said **Gary Beverly, vice-Chair of Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter**. "Sierra Club first proposed OAW status in 2012, so it feels great to achieve our goal. We are grateful for the cooperation and assistance from ADEQ."

In addition to the Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter, the nomination was supported by the Arizona Riparian Council, the Verde River Institute, Friends of the Verde River, Citizens Water Advocacy Group, the Center for Biological Diversity, American Whitewater, The Wilderness Society, and American Rivers.

The Verde is threatened by diversions and groundwater pumping, which are exacerbated by prolonged drought and climate change, so additional efforts to protect it are critical.

Sandy Bahr is director for the Grand Canyon Chapter

UNEXPECTED SOLAR FARM BENEFIT

SUPPORTS BURROWING OWLS



by Greg Clark 

The construction of a large solar farm in desert grassland requires clearing all the vegetation away and leveling the ground. Prior to this a wildlife survey is done so that impacted animals can be removed and relocated. This is unfortunate, especially for burrowing owls (owls) that are using burrows created by



badgers or kit foxes, animals that would also be affected. However, one large solar farm owned by Longroad Energy near Tonopah, AZ, has been assisting Wild At Heart (WAH) in creating new artificial burrows in creosote-flat desert grassland near the solar farm and relocating owls to the burrows. There is some urgency in investigating the suitability of creosote-flat habitat because the typical habitat for owl relocation is irrigated

cropland. Often, this is where the owls are being displaced. The irrigation encourages insects near the burrows and the owls have plenty to eat. But irrigated cropland is becoming more challenging to find. Owls displaced near Phoenix today might need to be relocated more than 200 miles away.

If owls could be relocated in creosote-flat habitat near Phoenix this could solve many logistical problems, with more volunteers available, and costs lower.

In 2025, forty artificial burrows were installed near solar panels and 19 owls were relocated. It was expected that if the owls stayed and raised young, extended supplemental feeding (defrosted mice) would be needed, as insects are minimal in the breeding months of May and June.

Twenty years ago, WAH tried to make this work but no owls would stay at the burrows. It was a complete surprise that this time all the owls stayed at the burrows and raised young. When the monsoon arrived, generating insects, supplemental feeding was suspended, the owls stayed and began a new breeding season in 2026. All through the project one peculiar owl behavior was observed: the owls were flying into the solar panels area. The assumption was that solar panels have nothing to offer to owls. So why were they there? To determine when supplemental feeding is needed, we monitor the abundance of insects using solar lights and a camera. In 2026 it was observed that when there were no insects there didn't seem to be owls in the panels. New cameras installed to monitor owls in the panels showed owls hunting and eating below the panels. Instead of nothing to offer, the panels appear to be an enhancement for food. From the beginning, a plan to create food enhancements for pollinators and wildlife was contemplated. A way to raise native crickets is being investigated. As there will be many

solar farms in creosote-flat grassland, it is possible that other solar farms can be recruited for artificial burrows and owl relocation. The large size of solar farms means more opportunities to raise more owls, install more micro habitats, and support more wildlife. Instead of a steady decline in the owl population, solar farms offer hope for sustainability and population expansion.



Images of burrowing owls
by the author

Greg is a long time member of the Sierra Club

To access all these links, go to <https://www.sierraclub.org/arizona/canyon-echo-newsletters> and click on the latest edition

NEWSLETTER

To sign up for the e-newsletter, send an email with your full name and membership ID (8-digit number found on your mailing label) to CanyonEchoESub@gmail.com. You will receive an email when the new issues become available online.

CHAPTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

To check for
Chapter Announcements
for Fall 2026
[https://www.sierraclub.org/
arizona/events-activities](https://www.sierraclub.org/arizona/events-activities)

CURRENT NEWS

To check for
Current News
[https://www.sierraclub.org/
arizona/current-news](https://www.sierraclub.org/arizona/current-news)



Chapter
AZ Water Sentinels
Borderlands Campaign
Grand Canyon Campaign



Chapter
Borderlands Campaign
Grand Canyon Campaign



Chapter
Palo Verde Group



Chapter

Stopping Harm at the Arizona Legislature in 2026

by Sandy Bahr 

After 153 days and the introduction of 2190 bills, resolutions, and memorials, the Arizona Legislature finally adjourned sine die on June 13th. This session Sierra Club co-hosted another great Environmental Day at the Capitol with more than 40 organizations and 400 participants from throughout Arizona, many of whom met with their own legislators. It was a highlight of the session. We also hosted seven training sessions to help prep for the day.

Legislators passed a bipartisan budget that included a number of positive provisions, including a three-year moratorium on tax breaks for new data centers, funding for water quality programs, clean-up dollars for the Iron King Mine site, funding for heat relief centers (although not nearly enough) and some dollars for school community gardens. The budget did not include the repeal of tax benefits for solar and wind that was proposed by the majority. There was still too much funding for border “security,” but less than before, and legislators swiped some money from the Game and Fish Heritage Fund and provided no funding for the State Parks Heritage Fund. This budget was not the budget needed for a sustainable, equitable, and healthy future, but it did include provisions that actually help people at a time when communities are struggling.

A number of harmful bills died at the end of session due to inaction, including a bill to allow private water companies and a New York hedge fund, Water Asset Management, to engage in the interbasin transfer of groundwater from the McMullen Valley in La Paz County, which would have harmed the people who live there. Several anti-solar bills died due to lack of action in the Senate. HB2975 would have prohibited the State and Department from using solar score maps or other similar types of evaluation of state trust lands for their appropriateness for solar energy generation and HB2267, which would have established that any utility-scale solar or wind project that is built within four miles of a residence was automatically considered a public nuisance. Several harmful wildlife measures died, including a bill to expand the definition of “predators”



Arizona State Capitol, Photo by Ana Gorla

to include bears and mountain lions, opening them up to less protective management, and HB2497 that sought to create a right to “harvest wildlife” and would have included trapping, thus undermining efforts to limit cruel trapping methods. Several anti-wolf bills died with the Governor vetoing two of them.

The session saw no action to address overpumping of groundwater or to protect streams. While legislators passed the moratorium on tax breaks for new data centers, they tried repeatedly to expedite siting data centers with small modular nuclear reactors by preempting county government from any kind of regulations and limiting environmental reviews. Sadly, legislators loaded up the ballot with bad ballot measures.

At the end of the session and with our partners, we issued our annual Environmental Report Card on the Legislature and Governor. Check out the grades on the next page and view the entire report card on our website. Interested in being part of the action for the 2027 Legislative Session? contact Sandy Bahr at sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org.

Sandy Bahr is director of the Grand Canyon Chapter



Book Review

by Mark Coryell 

What kind of person do we want to be elected to Congress or the Arizona Legislature in the upcoming November 2026 election? We want someone who protects wilderness. Someone who gets serious about solving the climate crisis. But change in public policy equires more than just saying the right thing. It requires a person with a sincere and enduring personal commitment.

Jacinda Ardern served as Prime Minister of New Zealand from 2017 to 2023.

She became a member of the New Zealand Parliament in 2008. During her time as Prime Minister she successfully dealt with the COVID pandemic, a mass shooting at two Christchurch mosques in 2019, and was able to stop future offshore oil exploration.

Just before Jacinda Ardern was sworn in as New Zealand's Prime Minister, the youngest in 150 years, she told a reporter:

"I want this government to feel different. I want people to feel that it's open, that it is listening, and that it's going to try and bring kindness back. Kindness..... It is a child's word, in a way. Simple. And yet, it encompassed everything that had left an imprint on me. Some people thought kindness was sentimental, soft. A bit naïve, even. I knew this. But I also knew they were wrong. Kindness has a power and strength that almost nothing else on this planet has. I'd seen kindness do extraordinary things. I'd seen it change minds and transform lives. I wasn't afraid to say it out loud, and as soon as I did, I was sure: kindness. This (will) be my guiding principle for what lay ahead." (p201-02)

A Different Kind of Power is one of the most unusual autobiographies you will ever read. Jacinda Ardern's story begins inside a bathroom waiting for the results of a pregnancy test. She had just been elected Prime Minister of New Zealand. Along the way you get to know her family, her parents, her grandparents, and her friends going all the way back to her childhood. Each one of these people shaped her focus on creating a government with a "Human Face" Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's will become your new best friend.

Jacinda Ardern also has a connection to Arizona. Before her final year at the Univeristy of Waikato she spent a semester at Arizona State University studying political science in the fall of 2001. She was here in Arizona for the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. Her perspective was much different from ours as foreign student from far away New Zealand.

When you vote this coming November try voting for someone who believes in Kindness.

Mark Coryell is a long time Sierra Club member

2026 ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT CARD

A Governor Hobbs	
SENATE GRADES	HOUSE GRADES
A+ Epstein, Gonzales, Kuby	A+ Austin, Garcia, Marquez, Mathis, Sandoval, Stahl Hamilton, Villegas
A Alston, E. Diaz, Hatathlie, Miranda, Ortiz, Sears, Sundareshan	A Abeytia, Aguilar, Blattman, Cavero, Connolly, P. Contreras, Crews, De Los Santos, Gutierrez, Ligouri, Luna Nájera, Peshlakai, Simacek, Travers, Volk
B Bravo, Fernandez, Gabaldón	B L. Contreras, A. Hernandez, Tsosie
C	C C. Hernandez, L. Hernandez,
D	D
F Angius, Bolick, Carroll, Dunn, Farnsworth, Fincham, Gowan, Hoffman, Kavanagh, Leach, Mesnard, Payne, Petersen, Rogers, Shamp, Shope, Werner	F Allen, Biasiucci, Blackman, Bliss, Carbone, N. Carter, P. Carter, Chaplik, L. Diaz, Fink, Gillette, Gress, Griffin, Heap, Hendrix, Keshel, Kolodin, Kupper, Livingston, Lopez, Marshall, Martinez, Montenegro, Nguyen, Olson, Peña, Pingerelli, Powell, Reim, Rivero, Taylor, Way, Weninger, Willoughby, Wilmeth

Sierra Club Elections

Who can vote?

All current Sierra Club members in good standing (dues paid) who belong to the Grand Canyon Chapter.

How do I vote?

- ***NOTE:** You can now vote online! Please go to sierraclub.org/arizona for details.
- Review the candidate biographies on pp. 7-9.
- Mark whether you have a Single or Joint (household) membership.
- Vote by marking the box space(s) beside the candidates of your choice. Vote for no more than the number of candidates indicated for the Chapter or Group.
- After voting, photocopy or cut out your ballot and place it in an envelope with your name, membership number (if not known, call 602-253-9140 and leave a message), and address on the return address. Your membership number is the 8-digit number above your name on your newsletter mailing label.
Deadline: December 1. Ballots postmarked later than December 1 OR without a name, membership number and address on the envelope will not be counted.

Why are there two boxes following each candidate's name?

The second vote column is for joint memberships (two people living in the same household who are members). If you fill in the "S" box, your vote will count once. If you have a joint membership, fill in the "J" box and your vote will count twice for one household. If you have a joint membership and the two members want to vote for different candidates, check two "S" boxes in the same section. Do not check both the S and the J boxes.

What do I need to remember when marking the ballot?

Do not put your name on the ballot. Before counting, names and joint memberships will be verified from your return address on the outside of the envelope. Ballots will be counted after the deadline (December 1).

All members may vote for Chapter Executive Committee candidates, but members may only vote for the candidates in the Group in their respective residential location. If you are unsure of which Group you're in, contact 602-253-9140 or grand.canyon.chapter@sierraclub.org.

Rather than voting by mail, you can vote electronically by visiting:
<https://www.sierraclub.org/arizona/2026-elections-for-chapter-and-groups>



Sierra Club
514 W. Roosevelt St.
Phoenix, AZ 85223

If you are not sure who your group members are,
contact 602-253-9140 or
grand.canyon.chapter@sierraclub.org.

2026 ELECTION BALLOT

GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Vote ONLY for Members of Your Group

Postmark
deadline for
ballots is Dec. 1



Be sure to include your name and address on the envelope
(not on the ballot). Any envelopes without this information
will be discarded and the ballot will not be counted.

*Membership type Single Joint

CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
All members vote

Vote for no more than 4 candidates

Kristen Brady
Jasmin Loaiza
Michele Lund
Horst Schmidt

*Single	Joint

NOPALES GROUP

Vote for no more than 6 candidates

Nick Arnold
William R. Soland

*Single	Joint

PALO VERDE GROUP

Vote for no more than 5 candidates

Greg Clark

*Single	Joint

SAGUARO GROUP

Vote for no more than 4 candidates

Sally Howland

*Single	Joint

YAVAPAI GROUP

Vote for no more than 2 candidates

Stan Bindell
Zach Czuprynski

*Single	Joint

Nominations for Chapter and Group Ex Coms 2026

Grand Canyon Chapter Executive Committee Vote for no more than 4

Kristen Brady (#52663172)

I've admired and been passionate about Sierra Club's work for many years. To me, Sierra Club is a trusted authority on conservation matters, leading the way for those of us who believe that if we don't take care of the planet, nothing else matters.

I would be honored to serve on the Grand Canyon Chapter's Executive Committee to help ensure that Sierra Club's critical Arizona work continues. I'm amazed every year at the dedication of Arizona staff and volunteers and how much they accomplish -- and I would love to contribute my own time and advocacy, communication, fundraising, and collaboration skills to these efforts. Thank you for your consideration.

Jasmin Loaiza (#55932874)

My commitment to environmental justice comes from my own experiences building a connection with the land. One experience that deeply shaped me was camping at the Grand Canyon. Experiencing its beauty firsthand, made protecting it feel personal. When I learned about the mining threats facing the area, I understood that protecting public lands is not just an environmental issue; it is about protecting the lands that hold meaning and ensuring others can experience that same connection.

That experience strengthened my belief that when families have opportunities to explore, learn from, and build relationships with the land, they become more invested in protecting it. I want to create those opportunities for families and young people through local parks, rivers, trails, and natural spaces, while they learn about the ecosystems, history, and Indigenous communities who have cared for these lands for generations.

By connecting people to the land, we can strengthen communities, and inspire action.

Michelle Lund (#42360312)

My name is Michelle Lund. The Sierra Club has been a part of my life since I was a kid. My dad took us on a rafting trip down the Yampa and Green Rivers through Dinosaur National Monument in 1985. I started volunteering at the Grand Canyon Chapter office in 2014. Since then, I've helped with various tasks, like tabling events and supporting Environmental Day at the Capitol and the People's Climate March. Three years ago, I became the Chapter Treasurer. It's been an honor to be a part of this organization and work with Sandy and so many amazing volunteers. I'm currently attending all the Chapter Executive Committee meetings as Treasurer and have a good understanding of their process. Thank you for the opportunity.

Horst Schmidt (#55347264)

Came from the Upper Peninsula in Michigan about three years ago dealing with similar issues as here in Arizona. Since joining, I've focused on testifying at ACC hearings and doing tabling where I enjoy educating the public about the SC and the state's environmental issues. I'm active on the Palo Verde section of the Chapter, the lead on the Climate and Energy Action Team. We need to continue educating and warning the public about the dangers of air pollution, water depletion, mining and our flora fauna.

Nopales Group Vote for no more than 6 candidates

Nick Arnold (#50709617)

Southern Arizona is facing many important questions about our environmental policy and political future, and I am grateful to be part of the small team working to keep up the Nopales Group's presence. These big questions have complicated answers and we need more volunteer leadership to help develop these answers.

William R. Soland (#42623334)

As a lifelong Arizonan I've always felt a drive to protect the Sonoran Desert. I grew up in Phoenix but spent weekends hiking with my father and my brother outside of New River before Anthem was built. I heard stories from my father and his siblings about their childhoods spent playing in undeveloped desert around Tucson. I want to be able to share these experiences with my own kids, but the cities are growing, the water is disappearing, and the environmental safeguards I believed in my whole life are under attack. I believe that local organizing, mutual aid, and direct action are the best ways to ensure that the special landscape of southern Arizona continues to survive and thrive.

Palo Verde Group Vote for no more than 5 candidates

Greg Clark (#55082849)

Greg works to relocate Burrowing Owls at risk from land development and to enhance arid grassland by creating micro habitats that benefit wildlife. Greg's work has been featured in National Geographic Magazine, Audubon Magazine, and Arizona Horizons PBS. Greg supports Sierra Club events such as Environment Day.

Saguaro Group Vote for no more than 4 candidates

Sally Howland (#46901049)

Yavapai Group Vote for no more than 2 candidates

Stan Bindell (#47066215)

Stan Bindell is a longtime Sierra Club member and has served on the Yavapai Group for several years. He creates videos for Preserving Az Wildness about the beauty and recreation in these areas. He is also an environmental reporter. I also have a background working with Native Americans on environmental issues such as uranium mining. I am also the author of an environmental adventure novel Falling Into Congo.

Zach Czuprynski

I seek to serve with the Yavapai Group ExComm as an at-large member. I am a new member of the Sierra Club, though I have been involved in similar discussions and adjacent work for a few years as a Sustainability Coordinator in higher education. The continuity of conservation efforts by younger generations is essential to the Sierra Club's long-term work. One of my goals is to increase the involvement of younger folks from diverse backgrounds in environmental conservation, while fostering joy and connection to the outdoors that help younger generations overcome climate despair and fears of ecocide. Other general interests include public education of the natural world, using creative outlets like poetry and photography to spark emotional connections to nature, and working to ensure trails are accessible to all.

For more voting information click here



Jim Shea His Legacy Lives On!



Jim Shea. Photo courtesy of the estate of James Shea

Jim Shea was a long-time volunteer for many organizations in Arizona—his passion was animal protection and he collected loads of signatures to help ensure more humane treatment of animals, including to ban cockfighting in Arizona. Jim also understood that in order to ensure better protections for animals, we need to be involved in political actions. He showed up at public comment sessions to ensure the reintroduction and recovery of the Mexican gray wolf and to support reintroduction programs for black-footed ferrets and California condors. Jim spoke up for better management of mountain lions and limiting the hunting season so it was not year-round. He advocated against wildlife killing contests, which now, thanks to him and many like him, are limited in Arizona. Jim showed up! at the Arizona Legislature for our Environmental Day at the Capitol and other lobby days, at the Arizona Game and Fish Commission for more reasonable rules on wildlife—wolves, mountain lions, prairie dogs, etc., at public comment sessions hosted by U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and at many locations to collect petition signatures.

Jim also sent donations every year, usually with a short note of appreciation. We did not know that he had included Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter in his planned giving, but he did. Jim passed away in November 2025, but his good work lives on through all he did for animal protection and his support of wildlife and wildlife habitat. It also lives on through his generous gift. The Grand Canyon Chapter is so grateful for all he did, including this final act of generosity. Thank you, Jim!

Sandy Bahr, director, Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter

Current Donors 06/13/2026 to 09/08/2026

MONTHLY DONORS

Fannie Allen
Nancy Atherton
Sergio Avila & Jenny Neeley
Jennifer Baltz
Joan Batchelor
Ms Rebecca Berry
Gail Bliss
David Bowman
F Robert & Antoinette Buckner
Christine Carlson
Eric Coons
Jessica Couleur
Margaret Day & John Hertz
Andra Doherty
David Dube
Dwight Finkel
Judy Flanagan

Mr Rick Freas
Vanessa Gallego
Jerry Gless
Sarah W Gordon
Rebecca Smith Gross
Anne Hammonds
Paul Jehle
Anne Jehle
Jane Kennedy
Laura Key
Joanne Lewis
Phillip Long
Hollace Lyon
Gary McCormick
Amy Meyertholen
Karen Michael
Spencer Miller

Dan Millis & Kate
Van Roekel
Emily Mokelke
Elena Moshinsky
Karen Muir
Mark Mulligan &
Toni Ramsey
Janice E. Myers
Mary Ruth Nagle
Jerry Nelson
Shane Nicholas
Michael J Pope
Richard Porterfield
Peter Ragan
Kathleen Rahn
Nyssana Reyes
Mrs Lisa Reyes

Leilani Rothrock
Deborah Seebree
Vivian Sorenson
Robin Spiegelman
Abby Spotskey
Tiffany Sprague
Alice Stambaugh
Ms Marsha Turkin
Margaret Weesner
Deborah Weir
Elizabeth Wilkening
T.J & Sandy Wolner
Thomas Wright
Loraine Zagula

HITCHED TO EVERYTHING ELSE
IN THE UNIVERSE (\$1-\$49)

Mrs Lisa Reyes
Leilani Rothrock
Deborah Seebree
Vivian Sorenson
Robin Spiegelman
Abby Spotskey
Tiffany Sprague
Alice Stambaugh
Ms Marsha Turkin
Margaret Weesner
Deborah Weir
Elizabeth Wilkening
T.J & Sandy Wolner
Thomas Wright
Loraine Zagula

KEEP CLOSE TO NATURES
HEART (\$50 - \$99)

Michael &
Katherine A Baron
Carolynn Bryan
Michael Chehoski
Mr Ronald Cohen
Cathy Cohn
Mary Lewis
Lori L Pearlmutter
Alvin Renaud
Philip & Kiisa Service
Clyde & Margaret
Stanley
Andree Tarby
Mrs Cyndi Tuell

MAKE THE MOUNTAINS GLAD \$100 - \$499)

Ann Blanc
Paula & Richard Bollogh
Amy Etzkorn
Dr Gregory Gessay
Dominick Grillas &
Anne Samyn Grillas
Lynn Hassler
Mr & Mrs Kenneth
H Hinkle

Barbara Holloway &
Todd Christensen
Laurence Kolonel
David Lutz
Ms Diana A McHenry
Jan Peterson
Linda & J Michael Powers
Brit Rosso
Celia Tuttle

MAKE THE MORNING STARS SING TOGETHER (\$500+)

Robert W. Sanderson Jessie Whitfield

For this amazing list and for those
who choose to remain anonymous,



PAC DONORS

Josephine Abrams
Sandy Bahr
Deron Beal
Charlotte Benford
Marjorie Bernardi &
Steve Finucane
Bettina Bickel
Kay Bordwell
Carolyn Bosserman
Laura Brown
Sid Bucher
Doug Campos-Outcalt
Mark Coryell
Tim Cullison
Lynn DeMuth &
Eugene Mertz
Gary Egan
Diane Evance

Chris Fleischman
Stacy Fletcher
Anne Gin
Kathleen Griffith
Roger Hacker
Diane Evance
Chris Fleischman
Stacy Fletcher
Anne Gin
Kathleen Griffith
Roger Hacker
Robert Haines
Sally & Ehrick Howland
Thomas Ireson
Paul Kallina
William Kaszeta
George Lapinsky
Ron Lonski

Marianne Mahoney
Mr James R Manshardt
Joan Mason
Mr Blair McLaughlin
Michael McLaughlin
Ms Ellen McNulty
Andrew Means
Frank Mirgeler, Jr
Margaret Mitchell
Jean Miyake
Laura Moore
James Nafziger
Wayne Nelson
Steve Obrenovich
Lee Oler
Marshall Olp
Matilda & Larry Orzechowski
Ellie Patterson

Carroll Reitz
Barbara Saillard
Marie G Sansone
Cynthia Sidrane
Don Steuter
Connie Stone
Robert Stuart
Roz Switzer
Jill Taylor
Lisa Thrush
Dan Tokar
Ali Wait
Donald Wall
Mrs Marcia Weary
Jeanne Rossini Weir
& Peter Thomas
Randy Wenninger
Duffie Westheimer
Gabriel P Zinsli



Outings

Oct. 3rd(Sat) Join the Saguaro Group for a get-into-shape-the-for-the hiking-season with a hike at Jewel of the Creek. This is a 2-mile easy hike in a beautiful riparian area. We will meet at the southwest corner of the parking lot for the Spur Cross Ranch

Conservation Area at 44000 N. Spur Cross Road, Cave Creek AZ at 7:30 to beat the heat. Please bring water and hat, and dress for the weather. Sign up on www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Grand-Canyon-Chapter or on the Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter's website.

Nov. 7th (Sat) Join the Saguaro group for an easy hike and an amateur bird watching event at Hassayampa River in Morristown. We will spend a couple of hours exploring the trails and birds at this beautiful preserve. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars. The preserve is part of the Maricopa Park system and there is a fee of \$10 per car. We will have a meet-up spot at the corner of I17 and Cave Creek Rd. For further info watch our signup info www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Grand-Canyon-Chapter or on the Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter's website a few weeks before the event.



Hassayampa River, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter
514W. Roosevelt St.
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Phoenix, AZ
Permit No. 2139

Chapter Election Voter Guide Inside Vote by December 1st!



Sears-Kay archaeological site courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Dec. 5th (Sat) Join the Saguaro Group for a social hike at Camp Creek Falls followed by a pot luck snack and picnic area cleanup at Sears Kay Ruins (2 miles down the road from the hike's trailhead). The hike is an easy 3 -miles round trip on soft gravel. The trail is at an unmarked trailhead on Cave Creek road about 2 miles south of the Cave Creek ranger station. If you are unfamiliar with the area we will be car sharing from Lowes at the intersection of Cave Creek Road and Carefree Highway at 7:45. Please bring a snack to share and plenty of water. We will provide gloves and trash bags for the cleanup. Sign up on www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Grand-Canyon-Chapter or on the Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter's website a few weeks before the event.

Jan. 2 (Sat) Join the Saguaro Group for a social hike on the Black Canyon Trail in Black Canyon City just north of Phoenix. This is a pretty 3-4 miles hike down and back to the horse bend of the Aqua Fria River. There are elevation gains in both directions. We will be sharing rides from the park- and- ride on Daisy Mt. Rd exit in Anthem behind the Circle K right off the highway. For further info watch our signup info www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Grand-Canyon-Chapter or on the Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter's website a few weeks before the event.



Aqua Fria River. Photo by Jennifer Martin-McLeod