

WET-DRY MONITORING UPDATE

San Pedro River, Benson, Arizona

Local Residents and Volunteers help map 120 miles of the San Pedro River

Local residents and property owners recently joined over 100 participants in mapping approximately 120 miles of the 170-mile San Pedro River beginning in Sonora, Mexico to where the San Pedro meets the Gila River northeast of Florence, Az.

From St. David to the Narrows above Pomerene, seven teams co-coordinated by the Community Watershed Alliance either hiked, rode horses or ATV's to GPS where wet areas of the river start and stop.

After standardizing the recording process with BLM, The Nature Conservancy, and coordinators up and downstream, the Community Watershed Alliance contacted property owners, organized teams, and trained volunteers to operate GPS units and record data on field protocols.



Peter Moran and Bill Killian from St. David join Team Leader, Doris Weaver, from N. Ocotillo to take three ATV's on a 3-mile stretch of the river.

From 5:30 A.M. to approximately 11:00 P.M. on Saturday, June 21st, teams traveled stretches of the river varying from 3 to 8 miles across lands to which property owners provided permission. Deer, Teals, Turtles, Minnows, and lots of fresh track were spotted by participants as they encountered intermittent water south of Benson, and dry white sands to the north.

Wearing grit, insect repellent, layers of sun screen, all returned with a smile and a feeling of accomplishment – mastering technology while seeing parts of the river seldom traveled.

The data collected will be used to create maps which can be compared with previous years to identify trends in flow improvement or depletion.

While the Conservancy and BLM initiated monitoring on portions of the San Pedro in 1999, last year was the first time the majority of the river was mapped,

2007 data in the Benson Subwatershed showed 13 wet segments mapped with the longest wet segment being 2.23 miles. Approximately 7 miles were wet of the 32 miles surveyed or approximately 22%. Over the entire length of 134 surveyed miles, 46% was wet.

Willing property owners, energetic volunteers, supporting businesses (Rocking R and Economy Sales) made this year's event a real splash!

**2008 DATA
COLLECTION
Contact CWA at
520-609-2738**