



Northern Arizona Forest Fund ~ Year in Review 2018



NORTHERN ARIZONA FOREST FUND

Connect the dots from water in your kitchen faucet to where it begins its journey at the top of our forested mountains.

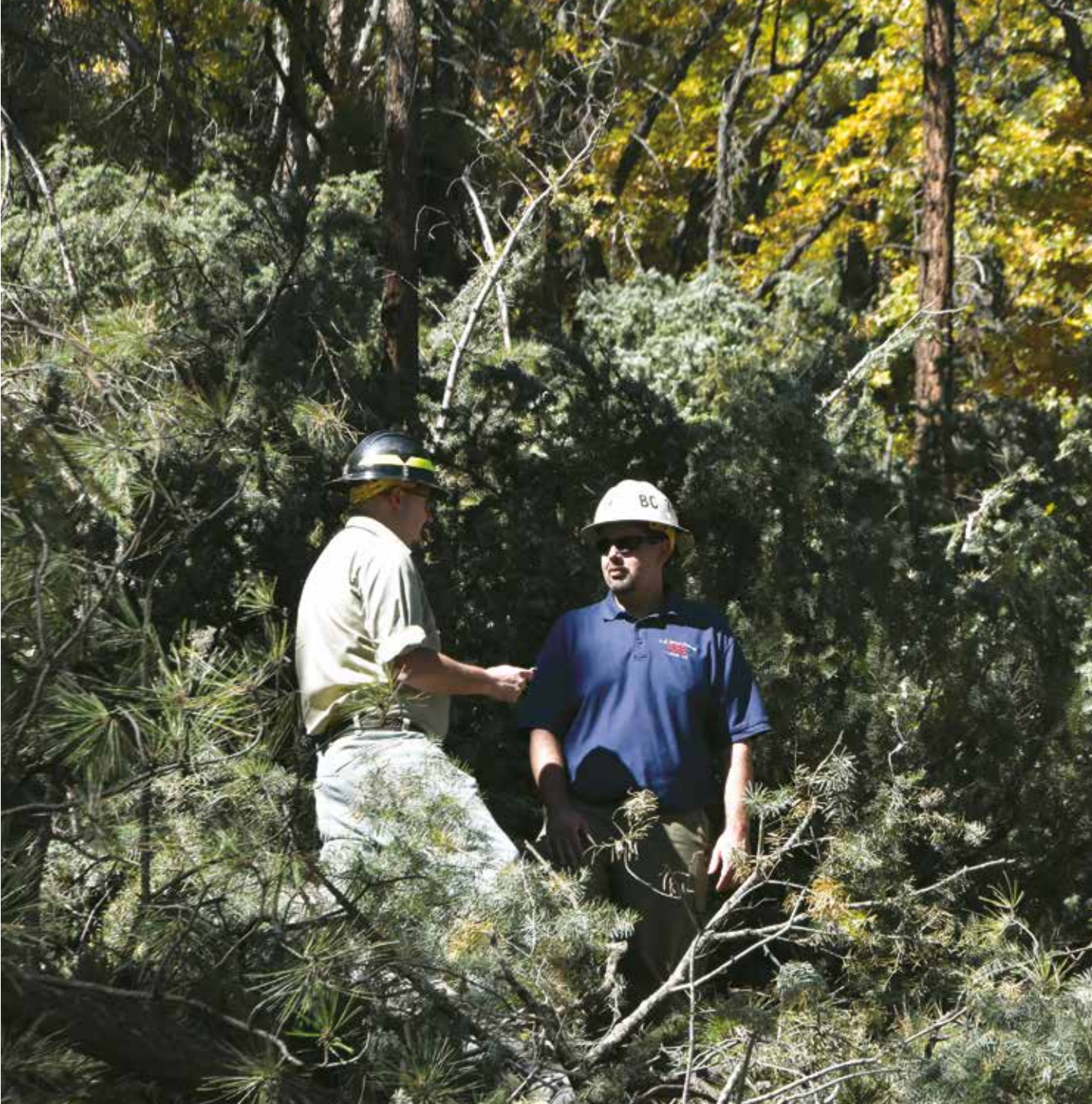


Our water's journey is invisible as you wash your clothes, take a refreshing swim in your pool, water your vegetables, or drink a hot cup of tea. But the National Forest Foundation (NFF) has a clear view of the path your water takes, and we're protecting it from the tap to the top (of the watershed).

At the NFF, we work hard to connect the dots to our forests to ensure you have clean and abundant water. Our work to reduce the risk of severe wildfire helps minimize post-fire toxic runoff and flooding, protecting homes, communities and water supplies. By reducing sediment that moves downstream into our streams and reservoirs, we're improving water quality and ensuring a more resilient and long-term water supply. And when we improve the function of springs, wet meadows, and streams, water is stored onsite and then released slowly over time, improving the health of our watersheds at a landscape scale.

Your support through the Northern Arizona Forest Fund (NAFF) helps us protect even more drops of water across even more acres of our National Forests. So whether you're a global corporation, local government, or a community resident, you care about your quality of life, the resources you need for your business and family, as well as the water you use every day.

Stepping up to contribute to the NAFF to champion our watersheds is easy. Your contributions are used here in Arizona on site-specific watershed protection projects with measurable results, each and every year. And those benefits add up!



Through the NAFF, the NFF is uniquely positioned to complete priority watershed restoration projects in hard-to-access and steep areas that have little commercial value and that could not otherwise be funded by timber operators or through federal budget allocations. By filling this distinctive ‘pre-commercial’ thinning and restoration niche, we fulfill a larger stewardship purpose, leveraging project benefits across the landscape and catalyzing further restoration.

The NAFF focuses on projects within four main categories:



Reducing wildfire risk.



Minimizing erosion and sedimentation.



Improving function of degraded streams, springs and wetlands.



Planting native trees along rivers, streams, and springs.

CUMULATIVE RESULTS TO DATE



The NFF has successfully implemented 21 high-priority restoration projects through the NAFF since 2015. Restoration accomplishments include:

- Over 13,000 acres of fuels reduction projects within ponderosa pine and pinyon-juniper forests,
- Over 160 miles of erosion control and drainage improvements on roads and trails,
- Over 2,600 acres of stream and wetland protection, and
- Over 4,500 trees planted along streams, meadows and wetlands.



Projects are strategically located to maximize benefits, leverage resources, and integrate into priority U.S. Forest Service efforts—and at a landscape scale. With this approach, and with partners at the table, we achieve tremendous benefits.

Sustainability Champions

In October of 2018, the NFF received the top honor at Arizona Forward's 38th Annual Environmental Excellence Awards presented by Salt River Project. The NFF received a Crescordia award as a "Sustainability Champion" and the President's Award, beating out dozens of other organizations for the highest honor of the evening.

"We are thrilled to be recognized for the Northern Arizona Forest Fund," said Mary Mitsos, NFF President. "This approach is one example of how we work to improve these incredible landscapes. Across the country, the NFF is creating innovative conservation partnerships like the Northern Arizona Forest Fund that leverage funding to make lasting improvements to America's 193 million acres of National Forests."

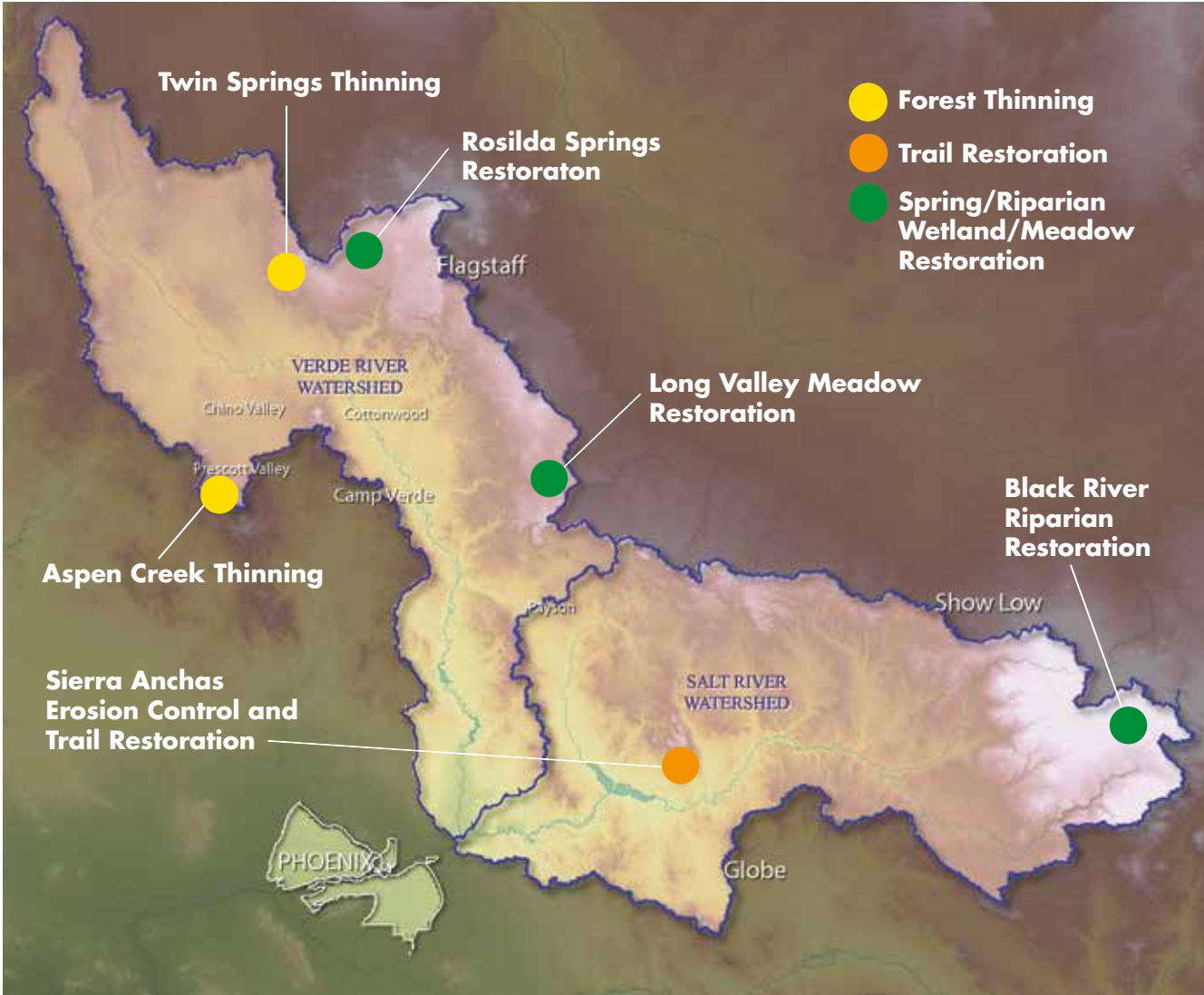
"The declining health of Northern Arizona forests puts the state one catastrophic wildfire away from an impact on its water supply," said Lori Singleton, President and CEO of Arizona Forward.



“The Northern Arizona Forest Fund has made substantial progress in improving forest health, and also provides a model for other regions across the nation facing similar challenges.”

—Lori Singleton President & CEO, Arizona Forward.

2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Through the NAFF, the NFF implemented six priority watershed restoration projects within the Salt and Verde River watersheds.

- In 2018, the NAFF accomplished the following:
- Completed six high-priority restoration projects,
 - Fostered partnerships with 14 businesses, municipalities, governments, and conservation organizations,
 - Worked with four nonprofits and two restoration contractors, and
 - Completed over \$500,000 in restoration work improving forest health conditions and protecting our water supplies.

In 2018, the NFF invested more than \$500,000 to complete projects across the Apache-Sitgreaves, Coconino, Kaibab, Prescott, and Tonto National Forests. Preliminary results show the following benefits:

- Reduced fire risk by 30% on over 400 acres through hand-thinning treatments,
- Reduced sediment loading into streams and reservoirs by over 30 tons through improved and enhanced drainage structures on 34 miles of trails,
- Replenished over 20 million gallons of water back into natural wetlands and meadows,
- Planted 4,500 native trees to protect one mile of streambank, restore a degraded spring, and
- Minimize erosion throughout the Salt and Verde watersheds.

Additional economic and social benefits:

- Protection of local and downstream drinking water supply reservoirs and valuable communication infrastructure,
- Improved water quality in the Verde River system, including reduction in E. coli bacteria transmission,
- Improved habitat for wildlife, including rare and sensitive species like the Mexican Spotted Owl, Apache Trout and New Mexico Jumping Mouse,
- Supported Arizona restoration economy by contracting with two local contractors and granted to four local nonprofits,
- Added capacity to the Forest Service by managing and implementing landscape-scale restoration projects.

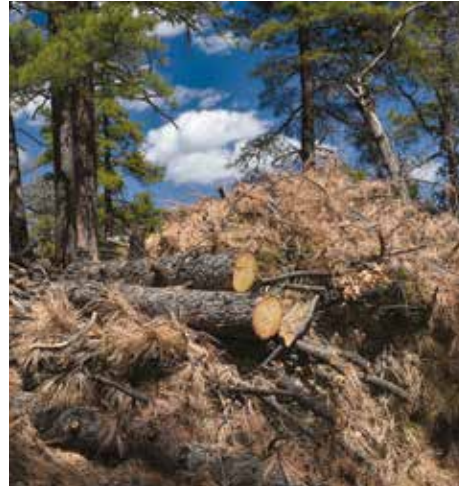


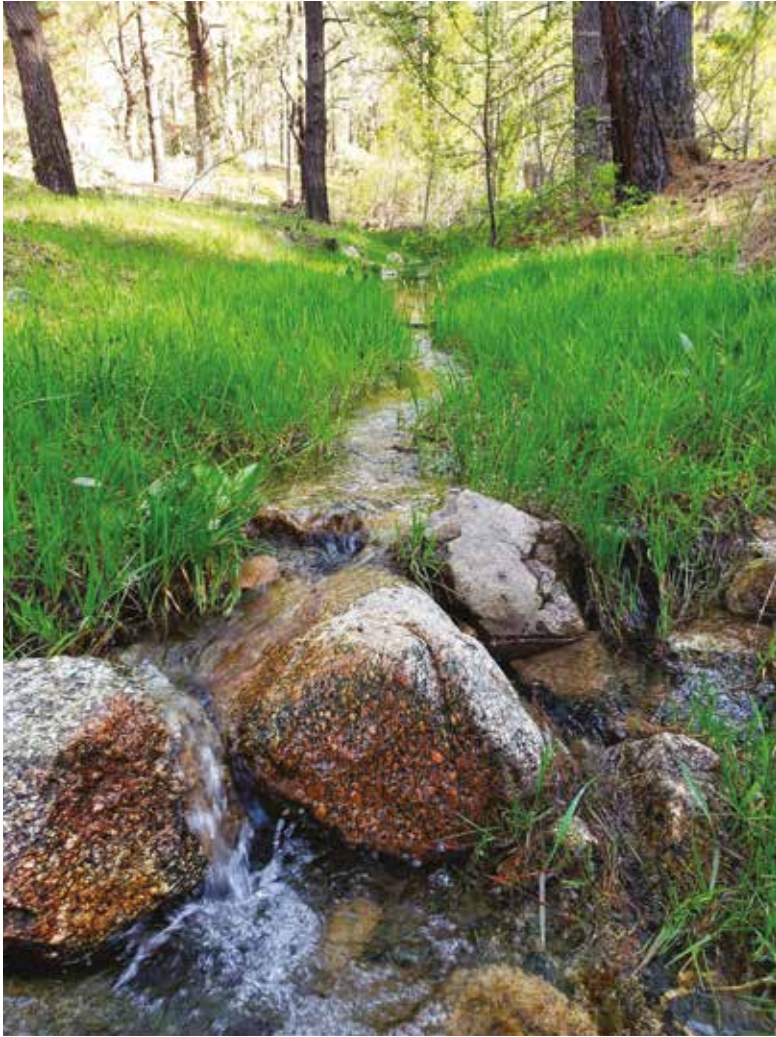


Fire Risk Reduction Projects

The Twin Springs Fuels Reduction Project,

located on Bill Williams Mountain on the Kaibab National Forest, reduced the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire on 270 acres of overgrown ponderosa pine forests. This project is a continuation of forest restoration work within a larger area to restore forests, protect local and downstream communities from the risk of severe wildfire and post-fire flooding. Our work for the Twin Springs Fuels Reduction Project is part of a larger, multi-year effort at the Bill Williams Mountain Restoration Project, an area of approximately 15,000 acres near the City of Williams. Since 2016, the NFF has completed three projects and improved more than 600 acres of overgrown forests as part of the larger, Bill Williams Mountain Restoration Project.





The Aspen Creek Watershed Restoration Project,

located near the City of Prescott on the Prescott National Forest, reduced fuel loads and restored two aspen stands on 152 acres of overgrown forest stands. Reducing fuel loads reduces fire risk by about 30% and protects a critical watershed for the City of Prescott and the Upper Verde Watershed. Cumulatively, the NAFF improved over 300 acres of forests in this project area.





Erosion and Sediment Control Projects

The Sierra Ancha Trails Erosion Control and Drainage Improvement Project,

located on the Tonto National Forest is designed to rehabilitate over 46 miles of trails and reduce sediment transport into creeks that flow directly into the Salt River and/or Roosevelt Lake.



By minimizing sediment that moves downstream into our streams and reservoirs, we're improving water quality and ensuring a more resilient and long-term water supply.



Wetland, Spring and Stream Restoration Projects

The Long Valley Meadow Water Replenishment Project

is located in a high-elevation meadow that provides water filtration, ground water storage and soil stabilization in the Verde Watershed, along with wildlife habitat along the Mogollon Rim of the Coconino National Forest. In 2018, we:

- restored function to the meadow area by decreasing erosion along stream banks,
- removed encroaching conifers on 40 acres, and
- replenished over 20 million gallons of water back into the natural hydrologic system.



The Rosilda Spring Restoration Project,

identified in the Four Forest Restoration Initiative as a priority area for restoration, is located on the Coconino National Forest. While relatively small at just under 400 square meters, the restoration benefits are tremendous. In 2018, we replenished over 215,000 gallons of water back into the natural hydrologic system. We also planted more than 300 native plants and trees, reducing the erosion and downstream movement of sediment.

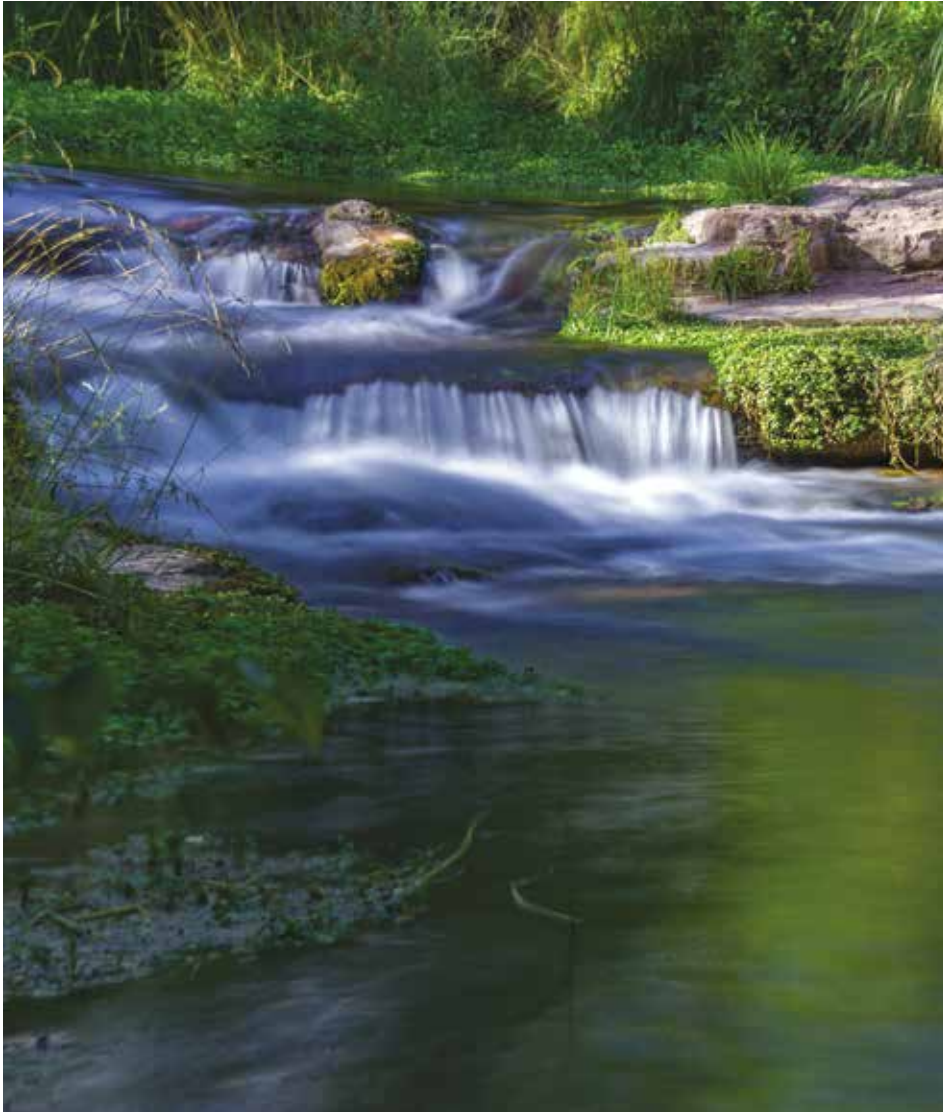


The Black River Wetland Restoration and Revegetation Project

is located on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest. Between 2016 and 2018, we have worked to protect thousands of acres of riparian habitat in this area by

- Installing over five miles of boundary fencing,
- Installing exclosures around sensitive aquatic habitats and
- Planting more than 4,000 native willow, alder and cottonwood trees in excluded and protected riparian habitats.

MONITORING RESULTS TO DATE



- Black River and Red Flats monitoring show that exclosure and meadow projects have increased native vegetation cover which reduces erosion and increases water filtration.
- Monitoring at Aspen Creek on the Prescott National Forest and the Upper Hells Canyon on the Kaibab National Forest has shown a reduced risk of crown fires by up to 30% in project areas.
- NAFF's trail restoration work on the Sierra Anchas is reducing sediment transport by an estimated 30 tons annually (WEPP modelling).





NAFF restoration accomplishments include over 4,500 trees planted along streams, meadows and wetlands on the Coconino and Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests since 2015.



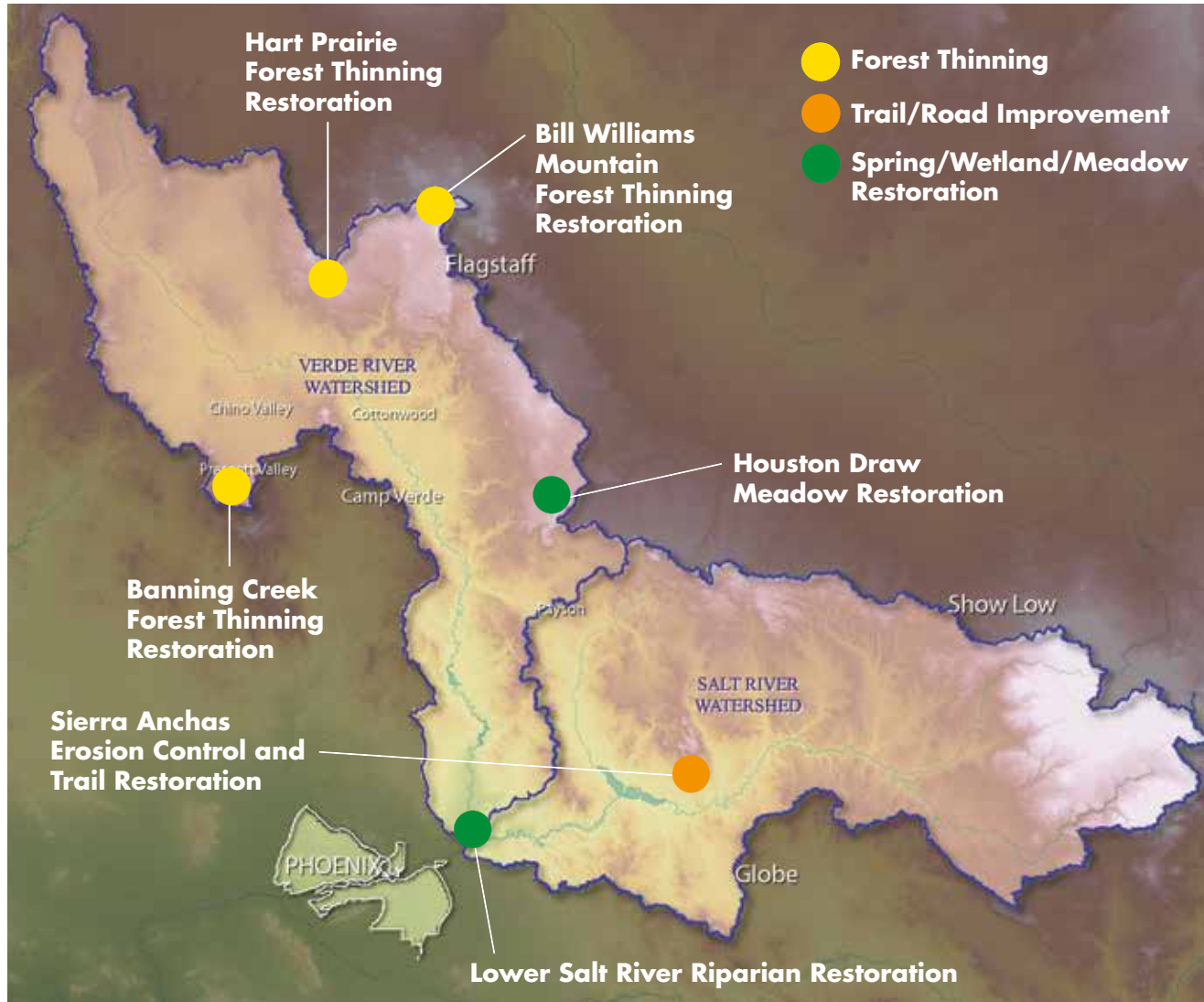
Getting a Head Start in 2019

Jumping into work in 2019, the NFF hosted three tree-planting volunteer events along the Lower Salt River on the Tonto National Forest, near Phoenix. With support from Northern Arizona University, we engaged more than 200 people and planted 8,000 trees. Thanks to funding partners Intel Corporation and Salt River Project, we will restore 120 acres of riparian habitat on the Lower Salt River in 2019, and will plant about 87,000 native trees.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2019

15



Bill Williams Forest and Watershed Restoration Project

- 200-300 acres of steep slope treatment
- 30% fire risk reduction

Hart Prairie Forest and Meadow Restoration

- 340 acres of thinning

Banning Creek Forest Restoration Project

- 180 acres
- 30% fire risk reduction

Sierra Anchas Erosion Control and Trail Restoration Project

- The remaining 12 miles of trail, of the 46 mile system

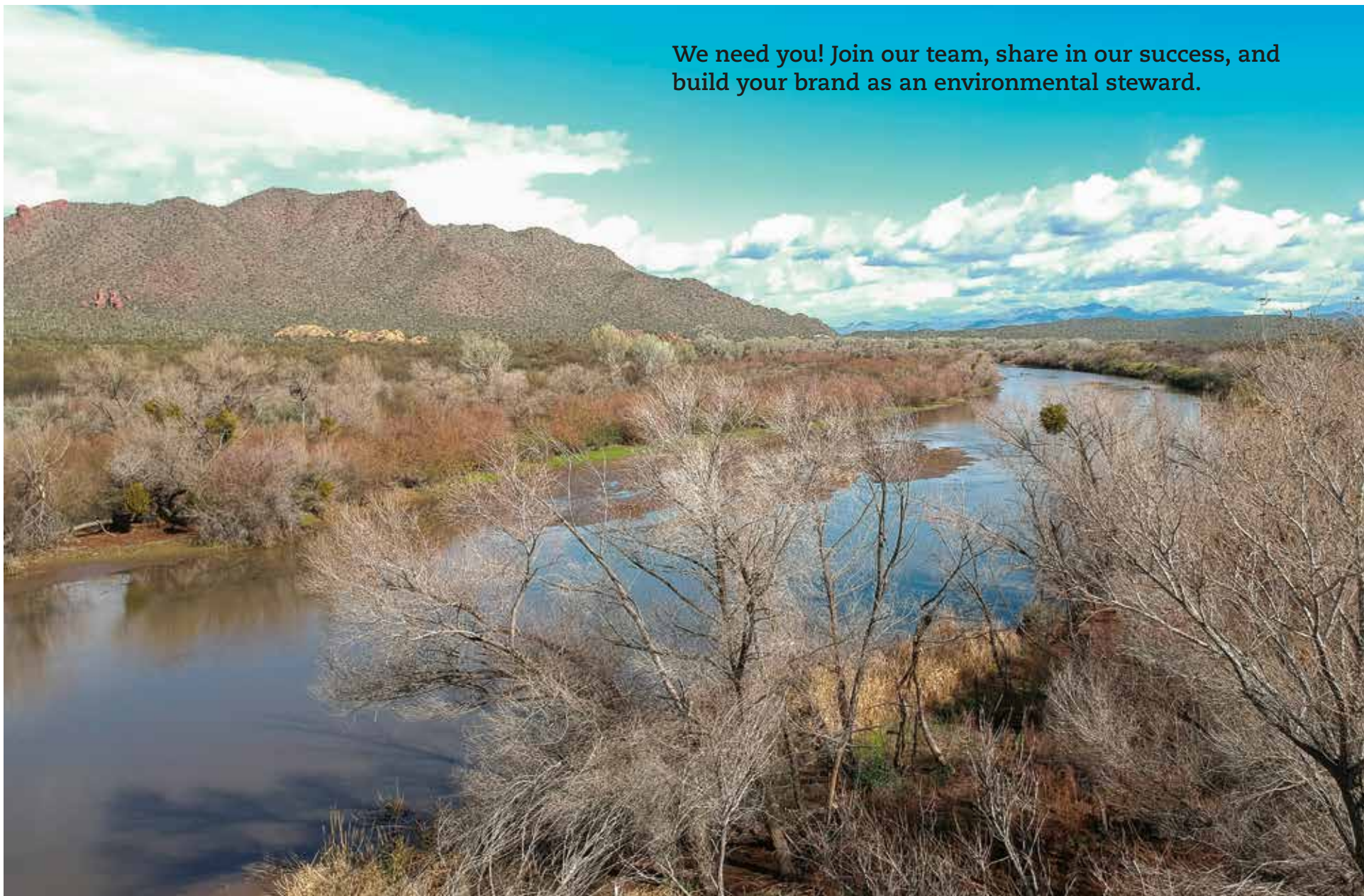
Lower Salt River Riparian Restoration Project

- 120 acres restored (removal of non-native tamarisk and arundo)
- 87,000 native trees planted
- 89 million gallons restored

Houston Draw Meadow Restoration

- 5 million gallons restored
- six acres of meadow improved

We need you! Join our team, share in our success, and build your brand as an environmental steward.





The NAFF's 2018-2019 strategic partners include:



The NAFF thanks USDA, SRP and Kevin Youngblood for supplying photography for this report.



ARIZONA
FORWARD

**2018 Crescordia
Sustainability Champion
and recipient of the
Crescordia President's Award.**



NORTHERN
ARIZONA
FOREST
FUND



Delivering more than power.™



nationalforests.org
Building 27, Suite 3
Fort Missoula Road
Missoula, MT 59804

Printed on recycled paper 

