



NORTHERN ARIZONA FOREST FUND

The Northern Arizona Forest Fund: *A Valuable Investment in our Watersheds*

A Critically Important Resource

Most of Arizona’s surface water resources are sustained by high-elevation forested watersheds that capture rain and snow and then carry surface water downstream. The National Forests in Northern Arizona provide most of the water to the Salt and Verde Rivers, which are vital surface water supplies to downstream users in the greater Phoenix metropolitan areas.

Although the water provided by Arizona’s high-elevation forest watersheds is critically important to life and the Arizona economy, past forest management practices have created unhealthy forest conditions. Decades of fire suppression have created highly dense, overstocked National Forests. These conditions, in combination with ongoing climate shifts, challenge the health of the forests and the sustainability of Arizona’s water supplies and water quality.

The Cost of Unhealthy Forests

The threats to Arizona’s watersheds highlight the vulnerability of Arizona’s water-dependent industries and municipalities. The economic impacts of catastrophic wildfire are staggering, with figures often totaling hundreds of millions of dollars for a single wildfire. A full cost accounting of the Rodeo-Chediski Fire, one of Arizona’s largest wildfires on record, estimates the direct and indirect costs of wildfire suppression and recovery to be more than \$308 million. The Schultz Fire in Flagstaff’s watershed, while significantly smaller than the Rodeo-Chediski Fire, burdened local residents and businesses with \$147 million in post-fire flood damage.

Phoenix metropolitan area residents and businesses depend on healthy watersheds for the delivery of reliable, clean water to their rivers, reservoirs, and canals. Past fires in Colorado demonstrate the detrimental effects that large-scale fire can have on water delivery infrastructure. Denver Water has spent over \$45 million reducing post-fire erosion into streams and dredging sediment from reservoirs.

An Ecological and Economic Solution

For the National Forests in Northern Arizona, wildfire is not a matter of if, but when. Proactive watershed restoration reduces the risk of catastrophic wildfires that cause widespread tree mortality and result in negative impacts to water supplies, such as those seen in Denver and Flagstaff. Investing now in “green infrastructure” through watershed restoration efforts will reduce future water treatment costs, minimize the risk of costly infrastructure damage, sustain forest-based recreation and tourism markets, increase property values, and support restoration-based employment opportunities.



Delivering water and power.™



Investment in watershed restoration through the Northern Arizona Forest Fund protects vital water supplies and shows your commitment to environmental stewardship in the landscape that serves your business and community.

By investing in the Northern Arizona Forest Fund, your business can be part of the solution.



NORTHERN ARIZONA FOREST FUND

The Northern Arizona Forest Fund: *A Valuable Investment in our Watersheds*

Be Part of the Solution

Developed by the Salt River Project and the National Forest Foundation, the Northern Arizona Forest Fund (NAFF) provides an easy way for businesses and residents of Arizona to invest in the lands and watersheds they depend on. With declining forest health and tighter federal budgets, local partnerships and active stewardship are more critical than ever. The NAFF's projects will reduce wildfire risk, improve streams and wetlands, enhance wildlife habitat, restore native plants, and limit erosion and sediment into Arizona streams, rivers, and reservoirs. The NAFF's projects will also create jobs and provide volunteer opportunities in local communities through partnerships with local conservation and stewardship groups.

How it Works

On a regular basis, funds will be deployed to complete high priority restoration projects on National Forests in the Salt and Verde River watersheds. Types of projects will include:

- Forest Thinning and Prescribed Burning – Restore natural fire to the forest ecosystem, mechanically thin small-diameter trees to reduce fuel loading, minimize bark beetle impact, and improve understory and soil conditions
- Stream and Wetland Restoration – Restore and stabilize stream banks, reconstruct and enhance wetlands, and install fencing to protect sensitive habitats
- Sediment and Erosion Management – Improve runoff and drainage conditions, and reduce sediment loading into springs, streams and wet meadows
- Habitat Improvement and Re-vegetation Projects – Improve and restore aspen forests, grasslands, wet meadows and other important forest and woodland habitats

Contributions to the NAFF will be collected by the National Forest Foundation and awarded to local non-profit stewardship organizations, local contractors, and the U.S. Forest Service to implement high priority projects on the Apache-Sitgreaves, Coconino, Kaibab, Prescott, and Tonto National Forests.

Tangible Results

To provide participating contributors with clear expectations on how funds will be spent and the benefits provided, the National Forest Foundation and the Salt River Project will work with the U.S. Forest Service to identify an annual list of priority projects that will improve the health and resiliency of National Forest lands in the Salt and Verde River watersheds. Each year, contributors will receive official reports detailing stewardship accomplishments associated with these priority projects.

Benefits of Participation

In addition to helping ensure the health and sustainability of Northern Arizona's forests, participating businesses can enjoy significant marketing benefits. Participating businesses will receive marketing opportunities to show how their contributions have been used to protect Northern Arizona's National Forests and watersheds. Participating businesses can be recognized in the NFF's magazine (distributed nationwide to 50,000 people), annual report, and Website. We will also work with your business to help develop marketing materials that communicate partnership information to your customers and the community. Lastly, through the National Forest Foundation's Friends of the Forest Days volunteer events, participating businesses can involve their employees in hands-on stewardship.

For more information contact:

**Marcus Selig at (720) 437-0290, mselect@nationalforests.org, www.nationalforests.org
Rebecca Davidson at (602) 236-6617, Rebecca.Davidson@srpnet.com**

