

Education

Teens Jump into Arizona Rivers

Martha P.L. Whitaker, Jim Washburne and John Madden – University of Arizona

Some high school students spend their summers working part-time jobs or hanging out at the mall. But for 18 days in June, a group of high school students conducted environmental research at 15 riparian ecosystems throughout Arizona. The Arizona Rivers Project hosted this program, known as the high school Riparian Research Experience (RRE), to raise awareness and foster an appreciation of Arizona's fragile riparian ecosystems. In addition, RRE aims to promote student-directed riparian research and develop lasting partnerships among students, teachers, and local riparian experts.

The program began with a three-day workshop at Biosphere 2, near Oracle, Arizona, where students and teachers worked together to learn methods of environmental data collection, including

water quality testing, sampling of macroinvertebrates (aquatic insects and arthropods) to assess river health, identification and census methods for birds and plants, and global positioning system skills to locate their data collection sites. The teachers completed the workshop with plans to implement their new knowledge in the classroom in the forthcoming year, while the students stayed on to begin their research tour of 15 riparian ecosystems in Arizona (see map).

The experience provided a unique opportunity for high school students to gain firsthand familiarity with a diversity of riparian ecosystems, develop skills to monitor riparian health, gain access to monitoring equipment and local experts, and conduct basic data collection and research—all within 18 days! The students plan to develop their own riparian research projects in the forthcoming academic year.

Arizona Rivers RRE was supported during its first year by Science Foundation Arizona, however, no long-term funding has been identified. Requests are already coming in from students and teachers to attend the next RRE, which is planned for summer 2009.

Visit www.azrivers.org.

Help send a kid to Riparian Research Camp!

You can become a sponsor of the Arizona Rivers Project Riparian Research Experience. To make a tax-deductible donation, contact Martha Whitaker at 520-621-9715, mplw@hwr.arizona.edu, or visit www.azrivers.org.



RRE visited 15 riparian systems in Arizona.



Daniel B. Stephens & Associates, Inc.

- Water Resources/Water Rights
- Site Assessment/Characterization
- Soil and Groundwater Remediation
- Regulatory Compliance/Permitting
- Attorney Support/Expert Testimony
- Vadose Zone Hydrology
- Mining Support Services
- Information Management/GIS
- Computer Modeling
- Hydrologic Testing Laboratory

Albuquerque • Los Alamos
Santa Barbara • Newport Beach
Austin • Lubbock • Boulder

1-800-933-3105
www.dbstephens.com



RRE students Jenny Miller and Myron Wolverton collect water samples at Wet Beaver Creek.