

2007 • annual report  
**Arizona**



Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

### The Power of Partnerships

Over the years, The Nature Conservancy has continually challenged itself like no other organization to work at larger and larger scales to protect the Earth's lands and waters, for people and for nature. In Arizona, that means redoubling our efforts to work with our public and private partners and local communities to protect land and water essential to sustaining our quality of life.

The Arizona Chapter is taking part in negotiations for voluntary

land protection agreements throughout the state—especially in areas where valuable water sources are being alarmingly depleted. One of these places is the Babocomari River, where the Conservancy helped to negotiate four conservation easements with owners who will continue to live on and use their land.

Our largest gift of the fiscal year occurred last April when the Conservancy received the Cobra Ranch and its adjacent grazing leases. Thanks to this generous donation from Dan Bates of Tucson, our preserve at Aravaipa Canyon now includes a rare desert riparian habitat where the Aravaipa Creek springs from the ground, beginning its westward flow to the San Pedro River.

Our preserve staff and volunteers continue to work diligently to accomplish great feats of conservation, such as re-establishing populations of native fish and collaborating with state and federal agencies to promote healthy forests and grasslands. The Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve, the first preserve established by the Conservancy in Arizona, turned 40 this year. The Hassayampa River Preserve held a grand celebration marking both its 20th anniversary and the acquisition of critical areas adjoining the preserve.

I invite our staff, trustees, donors, members and volunteers to join me in acknowledging the hard work and commitment which resulted in a remarkable year for the Conservancy's Arizona Chapter.

Pat Graham  
State Director

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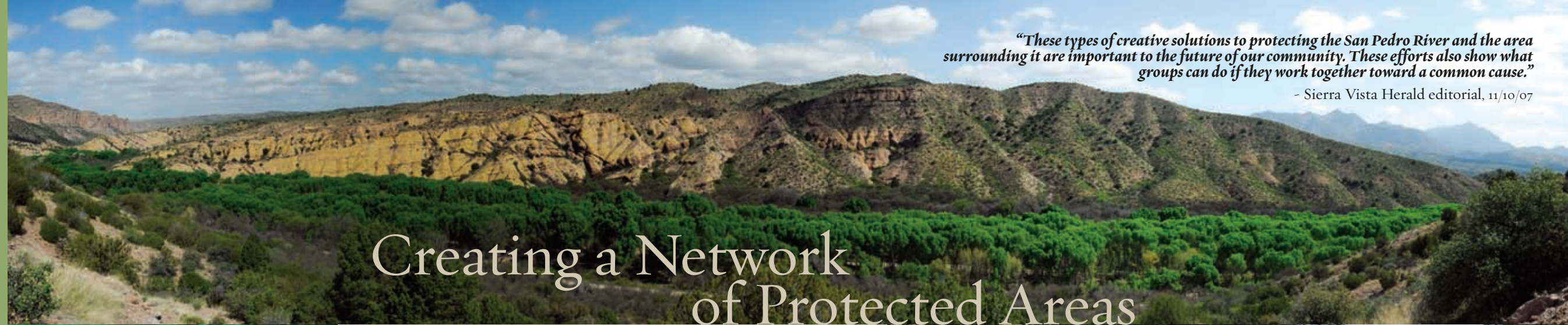
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# Creating a Network of Protected Areas

*"These types of creative solutions to protecting the San Pedro River and the area surrounding it are important to the future of our community. These efforts also show what groups can do if they work together toward a common cause."*

- Sierra Vista Herald editorial, 11/10/07



The conservation vision of the past was to set aside the best wild areas for future generations. While we cherish those places today, we now know this is not enough for a sustainable Arizona. We are part of the web of life that extends across ecosystems and along riparian corridors that cross borders, providing life-giving water for plant and animal communities, as well as the needs of cities and towns.

**The Conservancy is committed to create and sustain a network of protected areas in Arizona and beyond our borders. Some of the year's accomplishments:**

- The protection of a key region of the San Pedro River system through four conservation easements on the Babocomari River. The voluntary land use agreements were purchased through efforts by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Fort Huachuca Army Installation and the Conservancy. The easements protect more than 1,411 acres and more than 4 miles of the Babocomari River, a major source of water for the San Pedro River.
- The addition of Cobra Ranch, which adjoins the Aravaipa Canyon Preserve to the east and represents a significant addition to the protected riparian area of Aravaipa Creek, an important tributary to the San Pedro River. The ranch, donated by Tucson restaurateur Dan Bates in honor of his mother, Mary, includes 1,250 private acres plus 10,000 acres of state and federal grazing leases.
- The purchase of 62 acres adjacent to the Hassayampa River Preserve with mitigation funds from developers in the rapidly urbanizing area west of Phoenix. The property protects important linkages between the river and Sonoran Desert upland habitat for wildlife movement.





# Securing Our Water Future

Water is the lifeblood of Arizona and it is at risk. Dwindling water supplies aggravated by drought and rapid growth are taking an increasing toll on our natural water resources.

The Conservancy is working with a wide range of public agencies and private entities to create conservation blueprints using sound science to protect Arizona's rivers, wetlands and aquifers—particularly in high-growth areas.

## Verde River

The Verde River springs to life near Prescott and provides one-third of the surface water contributing to the Phoenix area water supply. It is nourished by a large aquifer underlying the Big Chino Basin, which faces numerous threats, including excessive groundwater pumping to meet the demands of rapidly expanding urban areas.

The Conservancy has entered a partnership with the Yavapai Board of Supervisors and the Trust for Public Land to study conservation options and conduct a public opinion poll. The goal is to encourage a conservation ballot initiative and/or a program to purchase development rights from private landowners.

We are working with Arizona's congressional delegation to push for the federal designation of Fossil Creek as a "Wild and Scenic River." Restoration of natural flow and native habitat is continuing here since the decommissioning of a hydroelectric power plant in 2005 by Arizona Public Service. The Conservancy and its partners played a key role in the 15-year process.

## San Pedro River

The San Pedro River flows north from Mexico into southeastern Arizona and supports the second-largest concentration of mammal species in North America. For 20 years the Conservancy has worked with many partners in the San Pedro watershed and borderlands area to protect this vital habitat.

Conservancy scientists have documented the area's increasing vulnerability to accelerated growth, extensive groundwater pumping and drought coupled with climate change. This year the U.S. Geological Survey, using science contributed by the



Conservancy and others, completed a groundwater model for the Sierra Vista Subwatershed. The model provided a scientific basis for Cochise County's decision to establish an overlay district requiring water conservation measures for new development in the Sierra Vista subwatershed portion of the county.

The Conservancy also played a role in the formation of the Upper San Pedro Water District and is serving on a governor-appointed board to assist with an election plan and a comprehensive plan for the conservation and wise use of water within the district.



*"The Nature Conservancy promises a new kind of environmentalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Rather than simply focusing on protecting natural areas from people, it must be about conserving land and water for people."*

**Bennett Dorrance**  
Trustee



Jacque & Bennett Dorrance



## Verde River Basin: A gift of green in the desert

The 6,600-square-mile Verde River Basin encompasses a vast area of Arizona. The watershed runs north to Flagstaff—including Sedona, Prescott, Prescott Valley, Chino Valley and Paulden—and south through Clarkdale, Cottonwood and Camp Verde.

Early in 2007 The Nature Conservancy hosted the Verde River Ecoflows Workshop. Scientific experts in hydrology, geology and other specialties gathered to study the Verde's state of health and examine "what if?" scenarios for plant and animal species along the river, as well as for human water needs. The now completed study promises to be a valuable policy tool for local, regional and state governments involved in planning issues along the Verde.



**Verde River Watershed**



*“There is tangible excitement about creating a more diverse and dynamic economy in Arizona. At the same time, there is growing concern about choosing a path which maintains the health of our natural environment and the livability of our communities.”*

**Craig E. Weatherup**  
Trustee

## Restoring the Health of Our Land

Arizona’s natural interplay of forests, grasslands and native prairies must be in balance in order to thrive. Today, the future of our state’s water supply, native species and rural lifestyle are at risk. **The Conservancy is partnering with state and federal agencies, local communities and others to create and implement an unprecedented plan to revitalize our land.** Drawing on sound science and the power of economic incentives, our recent successes hold the promise of restoring nature’s balance.

- Enactment of the Malpai Safe Harbor agreement with the federal government, two years in the making, with the Conservancy’s assistance. This allows the rancher-led Malpai Borderlands Group to continue ranching practices that sustain habitat for endangered species—including the Chiricahua leopard frog—on these ranches.
- Completion of the first phase of the Southwest Forest Assessment Project, a cost-sharing agreement with the USDA Forest Service. The project aims to restore the health of 22 million acres of Forest Service land. The science and models developed in this phase will provide the basis for developing new plans for the management of all 11 national forests in Arizona and New Mexico. A work plan for Phase II is being finalized.
- Removal of several small dams in Scotia Canyon in the Coronado National Forest, as part of the recovery plan for the Sonora tiger salamander. The project, a collaborative effort with the Sky Island Alliance, would not have been possible without the hard work of Conservancy staff. The project will restore the free flow of Scotia Creek and allow the stream’s riparian habitat to recover.



## Partnerships Beyond Our Borders

The Nature Conservancy’s goal to double the conservation of major habitat types complements the United Nations Millenium Goal to reduce by half the number of people in the world without access to drinking water and sanitation by 2025.

Through a collaborative Borderlands project with partners on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, the Conservancy is working to protect critical migratory corridors for animals. Working together we have already protected more than 1 million acres within two cross-border conservation areas—the Land of the Northern Jaguar and Eastern Chihuahuan Desert. The Borderlands project will build on this success through strategies such as purchasing water rights for conservation, ecological services payments and prescribed burns.



## Taking the long view

Climate change is one of the most serious challenges of our time, possibly the single largest threat to our work, according to Peter Kareiva, the Conservancy’s chief scientist. As the largest conservation group in the world, the Conservancy has a huge stake in the issue and a major role to play.

Close to home, even conservative estimates of climate change predict significant potential impacts on the Colorado River system by the end of this century due to decreased snowfall and snow pack and increased evaporation,\* including:

- 40 percent decrease in Colorado River Basin storage
- Decline in hydroelectric power production of 45 to 56 percent of the historical average
- Reduction of Arizona’s forested areas by 15 to 20 percent
- Milder, drier winters that increase likelihood of insect outbreaks and wildfires

**In Arizona our goal is to ensure climate change strategies are part of our habitat restoration plans.** As part of the Governor’s Climate Change Initiative, the Conservancy is sharing its experience to help address this critical issue across the state. In addition, our efforts to directly safeguard vital lands and waters take into account the uncertainty we are now faced with as a part of global climate change.

\* Source: “Climate Change Action Plan” by the Arizona Climate Change Advisory Group, August 2006



*“The Nature Conservancy has a global reach and creates local results. We have a bold plan for the future of Arizona and our role as global citizens leveraging as much as \$10 for conservation from every philanthropic dollar we raise.”*

**John W. Graham**  
Trustee

## ANNUAL SUPPORT DONORS

*The Nature Conservancy’s accomplishments were made possible by the many individuals, organizations, businesses and foundations that made gifts to our vital conservation programs in Arizona during fiscal year 2007 (July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007). Every gift, regardless of size, plays a crucial role in our work: “Protecting nature. Preserving life.”*

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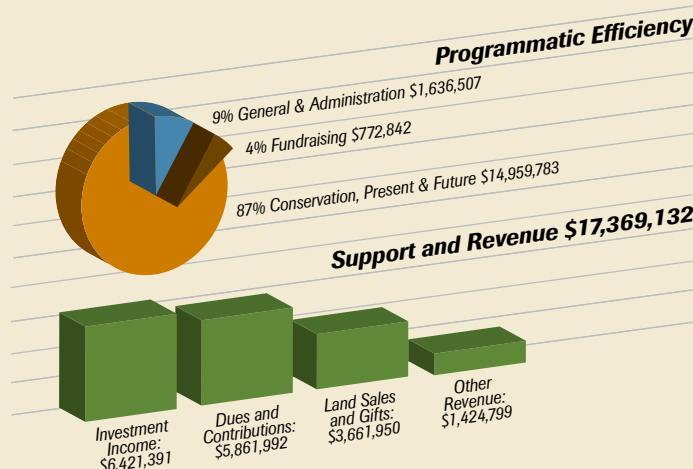
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*(continues page 10)*

## The Nature Conservancy in Arizona Statement of Financial Position

	At June 30, 2007	At June 30, 2006
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and Investments	\$21,284,913	\$19,322,263
Endowment Funds	\$25,391,417	\$24,561,645
Conservation Lands	\$25,060,104	\$20,939,104
Other Assets	\$3,383,302	\$3,187,780
	<b>\$75,119,736</b>	<b>\$68,010,792</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	\$15,956,951	\$13,051,444
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$59,162,785</b>	<b>\$54,959,348</b>
	<b>\$75,119,736</b>	<b>\$68,010,792</b>



During FY2007, The Nature Conservancy in Arizona experienced growth in a number of areas:

- Generous support from our donors, through contributions as well as planned gifts, coupled with careful management of our budget, allowed our cash and cash reserves to grow by 10%. Our operating reserves ended the year above the recommended benchmark of 25% of operating expenses.
- Our portfolio of conservation lands increased by over \$4.1 million, reflecting in large part the gift of the Cobra Ranch, adjacent to the Aravaipa Canyon Preserve.
- In spite of the transfer of \$4.2 million to our World Office to support work around the globe, healthy investment returns and the addition of new endowment funds fueled modest growth in our endowments.

Total assets grew to \$75 million by June 30, 2007. Moving forward in Arizona, we are confronted with challenges and opportunities on a scale greater than ever before: planning for wise land and water management, the need to forge effective public and private partnerships, the impacts of climate change and border issues. Healthy cash reserves and financial stability position us to act swiftly when needed and seize opportunities to intervene and impact decision-making in all these areas that are so crucial to our mission in Arizona.



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***The Nature Conservancy is helping to preserve the biological diversity of lands and waters in our backyard as well as globally. Thanks to our supporters who contributed to the Conservancy's work in 30 countries around the world.***

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***If you have any questions or concerns regarding this list, please call Cheryl Marino in Tucson at (520) 547-3425 or Melissa Magyar in Phoenix at (602) 322-6999.***

***Thank you.***



## ARIZONA PRESERVES



- 1 ARAVAIPA CANYON
- 2 HART PRAIRIE
- 3 HASSAYAMPA RIVER
- 4 MULESHOE RANCH CMA
- 5 PATAGONIA-SONOITA CREEK
- 6 RAMSEY CANYON

### THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IN ARIZONA

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