

# Project Portfolio

Arizona



## Alpine Ranger District Riparian Improvement

Grant Source: Arizona Water Protection Fund

### BACKGROUND

This project is a cooperative effort between the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Alpine Ranger District. The long-term goal of the project is to improve and enhance 524 acres of riparian habitat on eight riparian sites on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest.

As part of a previous AWPf grant, NWTf conducted a riparian inventory field survey on 69 sites across the entire Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest on all five ranger districts. Based upon this inventory, eight sites on the Alpine Ranger District in need of riparian improvements were identified as part of this grant application. This project will improve and enhance riparian habitat on these eight riparian sites.

### LOCATION

Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest – Alpine, Arizona

### ISSUES BEING ADDRESS

Properly functioning riparian areas serve key roles in providing fish and wildlife habitat, preserving water quality and water supply, and providing recreational opportunities. Our goal with this project is to improve and enhance riparian habitat on eight riparian sites on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest. Specifically this project will provide many values to society and natural ecosystems, including (1) improved water quality and natural flood and erosion control, (2) key habitats for many different species of plants and wildlife, (3) courtship and nesting conditioning habitats for migratory waterfowl and songbirds, (4) habitat for threatened, endangered and sensitive species, and (5) focal settings for recreational activities including nature study, photography, camping, hiking, birding, fishing, and hunting.

Each project site will have informational signs on the enclosures to educate forest users and recreationalists on the value of riparian habitat. These signs will be used to introduce people to

the riparian habitat and the role they have in improving water quality and wildlife habitat. In addition, an educational brochure will be utilized to educate the general public on those same topics.

### OBJECTIVES

The project objectives are to: 1) improve wildlife habitat, including wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo merriami*) nesting and brood habitat; 2) provide protection for populations of native riparian plant species, especially Bebb's willows; 3) improve water quality and natural flood and erosion control; 4) improve key habitats for many different species of plants and wildlife; 5) improve courtship and nesting habitats for migratory and resident birds; 6) improve habitat for threatened, endangered and sensitive species; and 7) enhance focal settings for recreational activities including nature study, photography, camping, hiking, birding, fishing, and hunting.

### PARTNERS

NWTf  
U.S. Forest Service

### FUTURE PLANS

The NWTf anticipates the short-term project-related benefits to last at least 10 years. Degradation from overgrazing takes between 3-10 years with total riparian exclusion initiating the recovery process. The NWTf is committed to establishing this regeneration period, which is also consistent with the NRCS cost-share/incentives schedules for wildlife habitat programs. In the long-term (15 plus years), our objective is to strive for healthy wet meadow conditions without fences.

### TIMEFRAME

Project Start Date: December 2008  
Project End Date: December 2013

### NWTf PROJECT STAFF

NWTf Project Manager/Staff: Scott Lerich

### TOTAL GRANT AMOUNT

\$361,065.59