

Prescott Creeks—2005 Grant Application
Yavapai County Community Foundation—Unrestricted Funding Opportunity

1. Project name:

Volunteerism and Membership Continue the Flow

2. Project Summary (up to 3,000 characters or 500 words):

Simply stated, Prescott Creeks lacks the current capacity to respond to community demands for increased services and volunteer opportunities. Volunteerism is on the rise and it is an essential part of Prescott Creeks' work in the community. For a decade and a half community involvement has been the foundation of all Prescott Creeks' programs and projects. In 2004 alone, volunteer labor was valued at approximately 10% of the organization's budget. During the past several years, Prescott Creeks has been inundated with community interest, yet the organization cannot respond effectively. Unfortunately, this "problem" is limiting Prescott Creeks' ability to fulfil its mission of "protecting and celebrating the ecological integrity of the Granite Creek Watershed riparian systems and associated wetlands through conservation, restoration and education."

Through this project, Prescott Creeks will establish formal volunteer and membership programs to engage individuals, families, youth and school groups in meaningful interactions with the land. Coordination with schools, and other local organizations and agencies will be essential to learn from their programs and avoid duplication of services. Outreach to at least 1800 prospective volunteers and members will capitalize on existing materials developed through previous Yavapai County Community Foundation grants and culminate in a series of hands-on, field-based projects that will be educational and will build community among the participants.

3. Requested amount:

\$10,000.00 (Funded at 41%)

4. One sentence description of project.

This project will build on Prescott Creeks' foundation of providing community members meaningful interactions with the land by creating a plan to assess volunteer and member interests, recruit and retain volunteers and members, and to engage them in educational and personally rewarding hands-on projects that benefit not only the many creeks of Prescott, but the larger natural and human communities of the Upper Granite Creek Watershed.

5. Contact Person:

Michael Byrd, Executive Director/Preserve Manager

Phone: 928-445-5669

Fax: 928-445-5671

Email: MByrd@PrescottCreeks.org

6. Project description including objectives (measurable outcomes), methods (how to achieve them), and timeframe (start and finish dates).

Through this project, Prescott Creeks will establish formal volunteer and membership programs to sustain our 15-year history of providing community members with meaningful interactions with the land through our conservation, restoration and education efforts. In particular, Prescott Creeks will meet with other organizations and agencies with successful programs, develop plans for our programs, and implement the plans through outreach, volunteer recruitment and/or membership drive(s), and hands-on projects.

Volunteerism is on the rise and it is an important component of Prescott Creeks' work.

IndependentSector.org estimated the 2003 national hourly average value of volunteer labor at \$17.19. In the

Prescott Creeks—2005 Grant Application
Yavapai County Community Foundation—Unrestricted Funding Opportunity

last 12 months, 21 volunteers and members worked on tasks for Prescott Creeks ranging from envelope stuffing for outreach to creek-side property owners, to groundwater monitoring for restoration of the endangered cottonwood and willow ecosystem at Watson Woods Riparian Preserve; from baseline creek surveys throughout the Upper Granite Creek Watershed, to database development for tracking volunteer and member involvement with Prescott Creeks. The value of their contributions was just over \$7,000 (or approximately 10% of the Prescott Creeks budget).

Unfortunately, community demand for opportunities has outpaced Prescott Creeks' organizational capacity to effectively employ all of the prospective volunteers who approach it. To address this need identified in the organization's 2004 strategic plan "A Vision Toward the Future", Prescott Creeks will establish and implement formal plans for volunteer and membership programs. These plans will include elements such as: 1) Program structure, 2) Outreach and recruitment, 3) Placement, coordination and training, and 4) Recognition, reward, and retention of volunteers and members. Prescott Creeks will approach volunteerism and membership with separate but interrelated plans. Volunteers and members are closely linked: Volunteers represent a potential membership source, major donors, committee and board members, etc. Conversely, members represent an already-invested group that may be interested to increase their level of involvement through volunteering on tasks ranging from outreach efforts, to field work to administrative tasks. Engaging volunteers, as a primary focus of this project, will allow Prescott Creeks and the community to achieve maximum results. This includes increasing charitable giving, enhancing the reputation and public image of the organization, and increasing the overall capacity of the organization to fulfill its mission of protecting and celebrating the ecological integrity of the Granite Creek Watershed riparian systems and associated wetlands through conservation, restoration and education.

Steps to the development and implementation of these plans will include: 1) Secure contract staff to coordinate the project, 2) Review and assessment of Prescott Creeks' past efforts and successes, 3) Coordination with other local organizations and agencies (including, but not limited to, United Way Volunteer Center of Yavapai County, the Highlands Center for Natural History, Sharlot Hall Museum, Prescott Public Library and Prescott National Forest) to learn from their programs, and to avoid duplication of services, 4) Write program plans, 5) Assess volunteer and member interests, 6) Develop program and project schedules, and 7) Implement hands-on projects and/or other outreach efforts or events. Where possible, Prescott Creeks will utilize already-developed materials such as the Prescott Creeks and Watson Woods brochures (funded through an Arizona Community Foundation), the Upper Granite Creek Watershed Map/Poster (funded through the Yavapai County Community Foundation), and the riparian fact sheets 1-3 redesigned in coordination with the Arizona Riparian Council and funded by the Arizona Water Protection Fund.

During this one year project (approximately June 2005—May 2006), measurable outcomes will include: completion of two interrelated program plans, a minimum of 1,800 individuals & organizations reached (representing about 50% of the Prescott Creeks database records), implementation of at least 2 volunteer-based on-the-ground projects. Projects might include: watershed monitoring, re-vegetation and restoration projects, or water testing. A detailed list of project is also presented below in the statement of need. Long-term results for the project are expected to include increased volunteer contributions and increased membership, with a significant retention of both.

7. Statement of need (why this project/program/purchase is necessary).

Simply stated, Prescott Creeks lacks the capacity to respond to community demands for increased services and volunteer opportunities. In late 1999, the Prescott Creeks board of directors held an informal strategic planning session; establishing "brand-recognition" for Prescott Creeks was an organizational commitment

Prescott Creeks—2005 Grant Application
Yavapai County Community Foundation—Unrestricted Funding Opportunity

that resulted from the exercise. With successful volunteer-based projects at Watson Woods Riparian Preserve, the new Prescott CreekWatch Network, and installation of the creek identification signs, the organization became relatively well known in the community. Since then, multiple factors have led to successes and ensuing challenges for Prescott Creeks.

These successes and challenges might be best illustrated with a brief history of the organization: Established in 1990, Prescott Creeks has enjoyed a long history of working to engage the community in riparian issues. Initial project focuses for the organization included the Granite Creek Trail downtown (now known as the Prescott Greenway) and Watson Woods Riparian Preserve--both site-specific efforts. Internal and external pressures led the organization to expand its project focus to add the Prescott CreekWatch Network and Watershed Monitoring programs without significant consideration for organizational capacity issues such as governance, project and volunteer management, administrative systems (volunteer and membership recruitment programs and databases, etc.) and sustainable financial resources (that go beyond grants).

While working out of coffee shops, board and staff home offices, and in the field had been sufficient for twelve years, Prescott Creeks anticipated the need to be more accessible to the community. Prescott Creeks built it, and they came! In 2002, Prescott Creeks opened its first-ever office public office and has been inundated with community interest. This interest out reaches the capacity of Prescott Creeks' one paid staff person, who is supported by 3 part-time Prescott College work study students/interns (full staff list available at: www.PrescottCreeks.org). While the organization has been successful at recruiting and retaining volunteers for specific, one-time projects, it has not succeeded at retaining and training volunteers for leadership positions. To effectively respond to community demands (increased opportunities for volunteerism) and to sustainably fulfill its mission, Prescott Creeks needs to establish and implement formal volunteer and membership programs.

Volunteer and member project examples include: inventory and monitoring projects such as creek morphology surveys, macroinvertebrate surveys, bird surveys, vegetation monitoring, photographic monitoring, water testing; re-vegetation and restoration projects such as removal of exotic species, planting native vegetation, post-project monitoring, installation and maintenance of irrigation systems; and educational/outreach projects such as storm-drain stenciling, slideshow presentations, and working with school children. Some of these projects are planned or underway in limited capacities, but they lack the continuity of dedicated volunteers who have been trained to assume leadership positions. In addition to the direct benefits to Prescott Creeks, the non-profit organization, the benefit to Prescott's creeks and the community are immense. Hands-on interactions with the land are community-building events. A 2002 Prescott Creeks project included over 150 volunteers represented by a rich cross-section of the community; community service workers, individuals, students, families, and Boy Scout troops with ages ranging from 2 to 78 years old participated in the project.

8. Identify which segment(s) of the Yavapai County population will be served:

As demonstrated above, Prescott Creeks' projects are meaningful and educational to a broad cross-section of the community. Projects resulting from this proposal will emphasize working with families, youth and schools at all levels. Through these projects, Prescott Creeks will build relationships with other organizations (Big Brothers/Big Sisters, for example) to create a climate of personal and community wholeness, integration or community building.

9. If applicable, estimated number of people to be served by this project.

The 2000 population estimates for the City of Prescott (33,938) and Chino Valley (7,835), were obtained from the US Census Bureau. Combined with the Prescott Chamber of Commerce's estimated 2004 walk-in

Prescott Creeks—2005 Grant Application
Yavapai County Community Foundation—Unrestricted Funding Opportunity

tourist 36,160, a conservative estimate of the number of people served by this project would be over 78,000 people. With Granite Creek as a headwater to the Verde River, and the Verde as a tributary to the Salt River, it is arguable that this project is of value to the Prescott, Chino Valley, Verde Valley, and Phoenix communities, with a combined population of approximately 1.9 million.

10. How the project results will be evaluated. Please be very specific:

Primary evaluation of this project will be the successful accomplishment of the measurable outcomes described in the project description. The project will be determined to be successful if two interrelated program plans are established and implemented with a minimum of 1,800 individuals & organizations directly engaged and at least 2 volunteer-based on-the-ground projects are held. Long-term results will be evaluated for the project upon a sustained growth and retention in both volunteer contributions and membership numbers.

11. Qualifications of project manager:

Michael Byrd, Executive Director, Watson Woods Riparian Preserve Manager, and past President of Prescott Creeks (1996-1998), has a background in environmental conservation with an emphasis on resource management. Michael has managed the Preserve since its inception in 1995, and in addition to his management of numerous other grants with the Arizona Water Protection Fund, River Network and Arizona Community Foundation during the past 9 years, he has successfully managed several YCCF grant funded projects for Prescott Creeks (Creek Signing Project Phases II-IV and Watershed Monitoring Planning). During the past ten years, Michael has also managed projects for riparian restoration, education and research projects with his consulting firm, Riparia.

12. Other and future funding for the project, if applicable:

If funding is awarded from YCCF, Prescott Creeks will provide matching funds in the form of in-kind labor and services from volunteers and additional contributions toward the project will be solicited from major donors and local civic organizations. Additionally, Prescott College work study student labor will help to offset projects costs. Future funding for the project will come from a variety of sources that, again, include volunteer labor, Prescott College work study student labor and possible future interns from AmeriCorps or the Student Conservation Association. With ongoing and increased volunteer participation with Prescott Creeks, growth in the organizational membership is expected to follow. Ideally, this project will become self-funding.

13. How will your agency publicly acknowledge the funding, if received?

Prescott Creeks plans to acknowledge the Yavapai County Community Foundation in many ways if granted funding. The YCCF name and logo will be placed on all physical products that result from this project (maps, handouts, etc.), in The Creekside Almanac (our seasonal newsletter) and in any press releases or news articles about the project. Recognition will also be prominently placed on appropriate pages of the Prescott Creeks web site (www.PrescottCreeks.org).

14. Has funding been received from YCCF, the Arizona Community Foundation, or the Greater Sedona Community Foundation during the years 2002 – present? If so, give funding date(s), purpose(s), and amount(s):

Prescott Creeks received funding from YCCF in 2002 (\$3,500) to initiate the Upper Granite Creek Watershed Monitoring Program; from the YCCF-Fund for the Environment in 2003 (\$1,851) for development and printing of the Upper Granite Creek Watershed Map and in 2004 (\$2,900) to purchase a desktop computer to run the Prescott Creeks geographic information system (currently in progress). During

Prescott Creeks—2005 Grant Application
Yavapai County Community Foundation—Unrestricted Funding Opportunity

2002, Prescott Creeks also received \$7,000 capacity building grant to fund purchase of its first desktop computer and to develop the first Prescott Creeks brochure and develop a new brochure for Watson Woods Riparian Preserve.