

DRAFT

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Improvement Plan for the Upper Granite Creek Watershed, Arizona

Version 1.0



Prescott Creeks & the Granite Creek
Watershed Improvement Council
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is a preliminary Watershed Improvement Plan (WIP) for the Upper Granite Creek watershed, located in Prescott, Arizona in the Verde River Watershed (**Fig. 1**). This project originated as a community-driven watershed survey and planning effort to address nutrient and bacteria water quality concerns in the watershed.

Unlike pollution from industrial and sewage treatment plants or other discernible, confined and discrete conveyances (defined as point sources), nonpoint source (NPS) pollution comes from many diffuse sources. NPS pollution is caused by water from rainfall, snowmelt, and irrigation moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, and ground waters. Due to its diffuse nature, NPS pollution is not regulated by ADEQ. As a result, ADEQ developed the Targeted Watershed Grant program to provide funding for WIP development and implementation to NPS impaired watersheds.

WIPs are needed to identify and prioritize water quality improvement projects critical to restore water quality. These plans are targeted at specific pollutants causing impairments within a targeted drainage area. The goal of plan implementation is to reduce pollutant loads from nonpoint sources causing surface waters to be listed as “impaired” or “not attaining” surface water quality standards. The ultimate objective of the Targeted Watershed Grant program is to use developed WIPs to focus future on-the-ground priority projects that will ultimately lead to bringing an impaired water back into attainment of water quality standards.

The Upper Granite Creek watershed was identified by ADEQ as a priority for WIP development based on water quality standard exceedances in both Granite Creek and Watson Lake, resulting in Impairment designations for low dissolved oxygen (Granite Creek and Watson Lake, 2004), nutrients and pH (Watson Lake, 2004) and *E. coli* bacteria (Granite Creek and Watson Lake, expected 2012) by ADEQ. Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies in development by ADEQ have determined that these impairments were primarily a result of NPS pollution.