

DEL RIO SPRINGS RANCH PROTECTION PROJECT

LETTERS OF SUPPORT (ATTACHED)

Federal & State Agencies and Local Governments

Town of Chino Valley	Yavapai County - Board of Supervisors
City of Prescott Recreation Services	Yavapai County - Flood Control District
Town of Prescott Valley	U. S. Forest Service – Prescott National Forest
Arizona State Parks and Trails	

Other support letters (alphabetical)

American Rivers	Nature Conservancy of Arizona
Audubon (Prescott Audubon Society)	Prescott College
Back Country Horsemen of Central Arizona	Prescott Creeks
Chino Valley Historical Society	
Citizens Water Advocacy Group (CWAG)	Save the Dells
Friends of the Verde River	Sierra Club (both statewide Grand Canyon Chapter & Yavapai District)
International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA)	Yavapai Trails Association
Natural History Institute	

- *Additionally, SRP and Northern AZ Water Users Association have registered as supporters of AZ Senate Bill 1392 for project*

*Support letters as of 3/14/2023*



Cindy Blackmore  
Town Manager  
202 N. State Route 89  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323

928-636-2646  
928-636-2144  
[www.chinoaz.net](http://www.chinoaz.net)

March 28, 2022

Michael Patrick  
Arizona Program Office  
The Trust for Public Land  
607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F-1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Michael:

The Town of Chino Valley is a strong supporter of plans by The Trust for Public Land and other project partners to acquire nearly 1,000 acres of land from the Del Rio Springs Ranch property from a willing seller for a variety of outdoor recreation, historic preservation, open space and ecological protection. Such a project would further the economic development objectives of the Town by allowing the creation of park, open space and recreation amenities that would be attractive for new businesses considering relocating to our area and could also draw substantial tourism-based spending to our Town and local businesses.

The extension of the existing Peavine National Recreation Trail from the City of Prescott area through the Town to the Verde River is a major priority for both the Town and the larger region, with the Del Rio Springs Ranch property including approximately 3-1/2 miles of the former Santa Fe railroad bed for future rail-to-trail construction for this purpose. We understand that Arizona State Parks & Trails has expressed interest in creating a new state park on this property if the land could be acquired for public use. We have also discussed the potential of using a portion of the property near Sullivan Lake as a site for a new regional wastewater treatment facility, with the potential that resulting effluent could be used to recharge or otherwise benefit the water supply for the Verde River. Overall, the acquisition and protection of this property would provide a platform for a wide range of public uses including ecologic protection of the historic Del Rio Springs and the iconic "mile zero" starting point of the Verde River.

Towards this common goal, we also support efforts to secure public and private funding for the acquisition of this land including Congressionally directed spending, state legislative funding appropriations, stateside Land and Water Conservation Fund application and philanthropic



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Town Manager  
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support. In addition to our support for the project, the Town of Chino Valley would be willing to consider a more active role including the potential of being the owner and manager of some or all of this property since it is located within town limits.

Please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cindy Blackmore".

Cindy Blackmore, Town Manager



Joe Baynes, Recreation Services Director  
Recreation Services Dept.  
125 N. Arizona Ave.  
Prescott, Arizona 86301  
Phone (928) 777-1599 Fax (928) 771-5845  
joe.baynes@prescott-az.gov

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April 1, 2022  
Trust for Public Land  
Attn: Michael Patrick  
607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F-1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
[michael.patrick@tpl.org](mailto:michael.patrick@tpl.org)

**RE: Support for Del Rio Springs Ranch Project**

Dear Michael:

City of Prescott Recreation Services Department is very supportive of the proposal to purchase the eastern portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch in the Town of Chino Valley from a willing seller to preserve the land and have opportunities available there for outdoor recreation.

The City of Prescott has invested substantial resources – funds, staff time and volunteer time – in the development of an extensive recreational trail system network in and around the City. One of the flagships of this trail system is the Peavine National Recreation Trail. This trail is one of the few rail-to-trail projects in Arizona, starting just south of Watson Lake, and has received the national recreation trail designation through the National Park Service. As the trail goes to the north it offers recreationalists a first-class trail experience with amazing views of Watson Lake and the Granite Dells and then up to Highway 89A. The City is currently in process of extending that trail up to the southern end of the Town of Chino Valley, and the Town has recently partnered with Yavapai Trail Association on a significant segment of the trail within the Town limits.

The City is hopeful that ultimately the Peavine National Recreation Trail could extend all the way to Sullivan Lake and therefore the headwaters of the Verde River, for an overall length of over 25 miles. The proposed acquisition property includes the last stretch of that planned trail extension, including both 3.5 miles of the same railroad bed needed for the construction of the trail and Sullivan Lake, which could be its northern terminus, an exciting destination point and the site for a trailhead at the northern end.

The City also owns land in Chino Valley adjacent to the proposed acquisition property and there may be opportunities to discuss for co-management of some of the City and acquired lands.

City of Prescott Parks and Recreation supports this project and hopes that it is successful!

Joe Baynes



March 10, 2023

Trust for Public Land  
Attn: Michael Patrick  
607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F-1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
michael.patrick@tpl.org

**RE: Support for Del Rio Springs Ranch Project**

Dear Michael:

We appreciate this opportunity to express support for the Del Rio Springs Ranch Project. The Town of Prescott Valley is familiar with this 980-acre property that the Trust for Public Land is working to acquire for ecological protection, historical preservation, and outdoor recreation purposes. The property's location at the headwaters of the Verde River makes it ideal for establishing a new state park. The Town owns 20 acres at Del Rio Springs that is part of this larger property. The 20 acres themselves have considerable historical value and the Town is anxious to participate so that the Project as a whole may be successful.

The Town is supportive of such regional collaborations that help protect important lands and provide new outdoor recreation opportunities. The Project fits in with initiatives of both the Trust for Public Land and Nature Conservancy to protect important properties along the Verde River. It will provide opportunities for preserving and interpreting important Arizona history such as the site of the first territorial capital, the Del Rio Springs that provided water to Prescott and a number of other communities in the early 1900's, and the Fred Harvey Company buildings that were important in providing early hotels including El Tovar (Grand Canyon) and La Posada (Winslow) with fresh produce. The Project also includes an extension of the Peavine Trail that connects the communities of Chino Valley, Prescott, and Prescott Valley (and is connected to the Iron King Trail maintained by Prescott Valley). All of this can create economic benefits for the entire region through increased tourism from outdoor recreation.

The Town is anxious to lend its support in exploring property arrangements that incorporate the Town's 20 acres into the Project. Please call me if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Mayor Kell Palguta



Doug Ducey  
Governor

# ARIZONA STATE PARKS & TRAILS

Bob Broscheid  
Executive Director



April 3, 2022

Cindy Blackmore  
Town Manager  
Town of Chino Valley  
202 N State Route 89  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323  
cblackmore@chinoaz.net

## RE: Project Support and Interest in State Park Opportunities

Dear Ms. Blackmore:

I understand from The Trust for Public Land that a partnership is being established for the purpose of acquiring (from a willing seller) land in Town of Chino Valley that is part of the ranch known as Del Rio Springs Ranch. The project appears to have important ecological and historical resources for its preservation and a number of potential outdoor recreation benefits associated with the land. The latter includes the opportunity to extend the Peavine National Recreation Trail from City of Prescott to the headwaters of the Verde River.

I am also aware that the Town's Economic Development Program has expressed support that, if this property could be acquired for ownership by the Town, County or another public agency, the concept of a new state park on part of the property could be an important component for the economic development outcomes such as attracting more tourism-based revenues to the Town and new businesses to the area.

Arizona State Parks and Trails supports the acquisition and protection of a portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch and, if successful, we would be very interested in looking at ideas for how a new state park on the property could further both our mission and the economic and recreation objectives of Town of Chino Valley.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 602-542-3092 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Broscheid".

Bob Broscheid  
Executive Director  
Arizona State Parks and Trails

YAVAPAI COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

[www.yavapaiaz.gov](http://www.yavapaiaz.gov)

District 2  
JAMES GREGORY, Chairman  
[district2@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:district2@yavapaiaz.gov)

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HARRY B. OBERG, Vice Chairman  
[district1@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:district1@yavapaiaz.gov)

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[district3@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:district3@yavapaiaz.gov)

District 4  
CRAIG L. BROWN, Supervisor  
[craig.brown@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:craig.brown@yavapaiaz.gov)

District 5  
MARY MALLORY,  
[district5@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:district5@yavapaiaz.gov)



1015 Fair Street  
Prescott, AZ 86305  
928-771-3200

County Administrator  
MAURY THOMPSON  
[maury.thompson@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:maury.thompson@yavapaiaz.gov)

Assistant County Administrator  
MARTIN BRENNAN  
[martin.brennan@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:martin.brennan@yavapaiaz.gov)

Clerk of the Board/  
Special Districts Coordinator  
KIM KAPIN  
[kim.kapin@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:kim.kapin@yavapaiaz.gov)

March 1, 2023

Honorable Senator, Ken Bennett  
Arizona State Senate  
1700 W. Washington, Room 303  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Honorable House Representative, Selina Bliss  
Arizona House of Representatives  
1700 W. Washington, Room 344  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Honorable House Representative, Quang Nguyen  
Arizona House of Representatives  
1700 W. Washington, Room 226  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Honorable Arizona Legislative District 1 Senator and Representatives,

As the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors, we support Senate Bill 1392, which appropriates \$10 million dollars to the Arizona State Parks Board for the creation of a state park at the headwaters of the Verde River and Del Rio Springs.

This bill passed out of Senate Natural Resources, Energy and Water Committee 7-0 on February 16<sup>th</sup> and on February 23<sup>rd</sup> passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee as amended 7-3. The amendment appropriates \$10 million from the General Fund (state GF) in FY 2024 to the Arizona State Parks Board to establish a state park at the headwaters of the Verde River.

The Yavapai County Board of Supervisors support the concept and the efforts by the Town of Chino Valley, the Trust for Public Land and other project partners to acquire, from willing sellers, a portion of Del Rio Springs that is located on the east side of Highway 89. There are many important resources located on the property such as historic sites, ecological elements and outdoor recreation opportunities that make this project important for preservation and public use. It should be noted that this location was the first site of the Territorial Government in Arizona.

Please contact Supervisor Craig L. Brown with any questions you may have on this bill at 928-771-3207 or email [web.bos.district4@yavapaiaz.gov](mailto:web.bos.district4@yavapaiaz.gov).

Sincerely,

James Gregory, Chairman  
Yavapai County Supervisors



YAVAPAI COUNTY  
FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT  
www.ycflood.com



April 6, 2022

Cindy Blackmore  
Town Manager  
Town of Chino Valley  
202 N State Route 89  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323  
cblackmore@chinoaz.net

Dear Ms. Blackmore:

Yavapai County Flood Control District is supportive of the current efforts by the Town, the Trust for Public Land and other project partners to acquire from willing sellers for protection of the portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch that lies on the east side of Highway 89. These parcels include many significant floodplain areas, including the confluence of the Little Chino Creek and Santa Cruz Wash, as well as the confluence with the Big Chino Wash at the Sullivan Dam.

This entire watershed feeds into the Verde River, and any changes to the floodplains on the Ranch impact properties downstream along the River. By keeping this area open to the natural drainage of the watershed, potential property owners would be protected from building in a flood-prone area, and potential impact downstream property owners within the Verde floodplain would be limited.

Yavapai County Flood Control District supports the efforts to acquire and preserve this portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch. Please call me at (928) 771-3197 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lynn C. Whitman, P.E., CFM  
Director, Yavapai County Flood Control District





**File Code:** 2350  
**Date:** April 1, 2022

To: Cindy Blackmore- Town Manager, Chino Valley, AZ

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Prescott National Forest, Chino Valley Ranger District for the Trust for Public Land's Del Rio Springs Protection Initiative. The Prescott National Forest is pleased to be a part of the recently organized Greater Chino Valley Collaborative (GCVC). As a part of the GCVC the Prescott National Forest supports opportunities and projects with partners that will lead to the enhancement of public recreational opportunities for the area.

The Trust for Public Land's proposal to acquire a portion of the Del Rio Springs Ranch within the limits of the Town of Chino Valley has the potential to expand and enhance outdoor recreational opportunities for the area while also protecting its natural character. The project also has the potential to establish a new state park while also extending the Peavine National Recreation Trail over the potential acquisition to the headwaters of the Verde River.

The Prescott National Forest believes this proposal serves as a great opportunity for multi-organization collaboration through the GCVC while also leading to substantial public benefits for the region. Please feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss this proposal or our support further.

Sincerely,

TONY PAPA  
Deputy District Ranger





April 4, 2022

Rachel Ellis  
American Rivers  
2107 N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Cindy Blackmore  
Town Manager  
Town of Chino Valley  
202 N. State Route 89  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323  
cblackmore@chinoaz.net

Re: Protection of Del Rio Springs Ranch

Dear Ms. Blackmore,

American Rivers believes a future of clean water and healthy rivers for everyone, everywhere is essential. Since 1973, we have protected wild rivers, restored damaged rivers, and conserved clean water for people and nature. With headquarters in Washington, D.C., and 300,000 supporters, members, and volunteers across the country, we are the most trusted and influential river conservation organization in the United States. Our Southwest River Protection Program utilizes a suite of strategies with diverse partners to inform, protect, and celebrate the long-term resilience of the most important rivers across Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah.

American Rivers is deeply invested in the long-term resilience of the Verde River, one of the most ecologically significant rivers remaining in the Southwest. The Verde's survival is dependent on protecting headwater springs and groundwater essential to its water supply. In order to help meet those needs, we want to express our enthusiastic support of current efforts to acquire and protect approximately 1,000 acres of Del Rio Springs Ranch on the east side of Highway 89. The opportunity to put this portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch into public ownership guarantees that historic structures, access to open space and recreation, and groundwater sources for the Verde would be preserved for generations to come. This is an opportunity to protect Chino Valley and the surrounding areas' heritage and way of life while also preserving the beauty and natural wonders of one of the last free-flowing rivers in Arizona.

Thank you for supporting the legacy, beauty, and waters of Del Rio Ranch for future generations. Please reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

## Michael Patrick

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**From:** Sharon Arnold <sharonsarnold43@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 5, 2022 7:49 PM  
**To:** Michael Patrick  
**Cc:** Maria Icenogle; Ryan Crouse; Ellen Bashor; Christina Grijalva; Sandy K; Jo Glaves  
**Subject:** [External] Prescott Audubon Society (PAS) letter of support/Trust for Public Land

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

PAS supports the TPL effort to acquire & protect the eastern portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch for these reasons:

- protection of Del Rio Springs and Sullivan lake;
- possible open space protection, nature preserve, preservation of the springs and historic structures and extension of the Peavine National Recreational Trail;
- Protection of the Little Granite Spring which supplies the surface water flowing in lower Granite Creek through the IBA (important bird area); and
- acquisition would project important resources related to the Verde River & create more public awareness of the importance of the river.

Sincerely,  
Sharon Arnold  
PAS Conservation Chair  
928-533-5355

Sent from my iPad

[FROM PRESCOTT AUDUBON SOCIETY](#)

Supervisor Craig Brown  
Yavapai County  
1015 Fair Street  
Prescott, AZ 86305  
By email: Craig.Brown@yavapaiaz.gov

**RE: Back County Horsemen and Del Rio Springs Ranch Project**

Dear Supervisor Brown:

I received an overview of the proposed Del Rio Springs Ranch project in Town of Chino Valley last week from the Trust for Public Land, and I understand you are a supporter of this project. With plans to create a new state park at the headwaters of the Verde River and extend the Peavine National Recreation Trail, the project would be a wonderful addition to outdoor recreation including expanded opportunities for horse users. There is a deficit of good horse trails in that part of the Chino Valley and a new place for a trailhead, additional trail and overnight camping would be of great benefit to members of Back Country Horsemen of Central Arizona and other recreational trail users. The opportunity to protect the early railroad and ranching history of Arizona, such as the Fred Harvey Company buildings on the property, is also a great way to preserve the rural heritage of Chino Valley.

Back Country Horsemen of Central Arizona strongly supports the goals of the Del Rio Springs Ranch project. We appreciate your role in encouraging and supporting this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendy Timmel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "W" and "T".

Wendy Timmel  
President  
Back Country Horsemen of Central Arizona



Chino Valley Historical Society  
PO Box 4154  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323  
928-636-1622

Cindy Blackmore  
Town Manager  
Town of Chino Valley  
202 N State Route 89  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323

RE: Historic Preservation Opportunities at Del Rio Springs Ranch

Dear Cindy Blackmore:

The land and structures currently known as Del Rio Springs Ranch in Town of Chino Valley are important for the preservation and interpretation of early Arizona settlement. Chino Valley Historical Society is excited about the potential for the eastern 1,000 acres of this property to be protected and is very supportive of this effort.

In 1909, the Santa Fe Railroad and the Fred Harvey Company purchased lands at Del Rio Springs and by 1913 had consolidated the former homesteads into what is now known as Del Rio Ranch. The Fred Harvey Company farmed forage, dairy products, beef, chicken, turkey, and eggs to supply the dining cars on the Santa Fe rail line from Chicago to Los Angeles, the Harvey House restaurants along Route 66, as well as the well-known El Tovar Hotel at the south rim of the Grand Canyon. The ranch was also the wintering grounds for the famous Grand Canyon mules that took tourists down the Bright Angel Trail. Historic structures dating from 1913 remain on the property: the milking barn, milk-processing building, poultry barn, bunkhouse, and the mule barn used to winter the dude stock used for the south rim tourist trade. If the property could be protected, these historic structures could become the backbone of a park celebrating early ranching and farming history. Chino Valley Historical Society would be very interested in being a partner in the restoration of these historic barns and would propose nominating this site to the National Register of Historic Places.



There are a number of other locations and features on the property that have major historic significance, such as the WPA dam that was constructed to form Sullivan Lake and the Del Rio Springs which supplied all of the water needs of City of Prescott from 1901

to 1913 via a steam-driven pumping station and 21-mile wooden pipeline, one of the first such pumping stations in the state.

This is a very important property for preservation and the Historical Society would welcome opportunities to partner in this project.

Please call me if you have any questions.

Kay Lauster  
President  
Chino Valley Historical Society

To: Michael Patrick, Trust for Public Land  
From: CWAG Executive Committee, info@cwagaz.org  
Date: March 31, 2022  
RE: Potential purchase of Del Rio Ranch



The Citizens Water Advocacy Group (CWAG) is a local citizens group vigorously advocating for a sustainable water future for the Prescott Active Management Area and for protection of the upper Verde River. CWAG uses the best available science to educate citizens and to influence governmental decision-making by identifying sensible courses of action.

We see two main problems facing sustainable water management: we continue to pump too much groundwater while failing to develop a regional plan to reduce the stress on our aquifer. Current trends, amplified by population growth, threaten the flow of the upper Verde River.

Protection of the Verde River, one of the most important rivers from an ecological perspective in the Southwest, is a major program for CWAG.

CWAG supports land conservation projects that will protect and benefit the Verde River, such as protection of the main river, its tributaries, springs and water supply. We also believe that projects that incorporate public awareness and sustainable recreation access to the Verde River is important in creating more river advocates and stewards as we seek changes in public policy that will protect the Verde River.

We are very supportive of current plans to acquire and protect the approximately 1,000-acre portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch on the east side of Highway 89 for a number of reasons, including protection of the Del Rio Springs and Sullivan Lake, with its iconic location at 'mile zero' of the Verde River. Contemplated uses of the property such as open space, nature preserves, preservation of the springs and historic structures, and extension of the Peavine National Recreation Trail are all uses that would protect important resources related to the Verde River and also create more public awareness of the importance of the river.

All these benefits enhance the proposed Upper Verde Wild and Scenic River.

CWAG therefore supports efforts to acquire and protect through public ownership the eastern portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch. Please contact us if you have any questions.



April 4, 2022

Michael Patrick  
Senior Project Manager  
Trust for Public Land  
607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F-1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
michael.patrick@tpl.org

**RE: Support for Del Rio Springs Ranch Project**

Dear Mr. Patrick:

On behalf of Friends of the Verde River (Friends), I am pleased to convey our strong support for the acquisition of 980 acres of Del Rio Springs Ranch. Conservation of this land will protect the historic headwaters of the Verde River and remove a threat to the flowing river. Converting open space to developed land, with potentially thousands of homes, will consume water that would otherwise feed the Verde River. Protecting this land could also allow for the extension of the Peavine Trail from Road 5 North in Chino Valley to Sullivan Lake. Other opportunities for conservation of the land include habitat restoration, community open space, and nature preserves at Sullivan Lake and Del Rio Springs, and the possibility of creating a new state park on part of the property.

Friends of the Verde River is a nonprofit organization that works collaboratively for a healthy, flowing Verde River system. Through our sustaining flows, restoring habitat, and community stewardship programs, we have been a major partner over the past decade in protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Verde River and tributary streams. The Verde River and Fossil Creek, a tributary, are Arizona's only two federally designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. The Upper Verde is a candidate for designation. Over the past decade, Friends has completed over 10,400 acres of riparian restoration, removing invasive plants from the river system to protect habitat for wildlife and people. Friends also operates a successful voluntary water offset program to keep water flowing in the river.

The Verde River springs from the ground in the rural community of Chino Valley, southwest of Flagstaff. It meanders southeastward 195 miles through private, federal, state, and tribal lands before reaching its confluence with the Salt River near Phoenix. While the Verde's preservation is vital to wildlife and recreation in Arizona, it is also essential to the health of the river's watershed, which provides water to over 3 million Arizonans downstream. Competing demands for water combined with drought and climate changes, are putting more pressure on the river. Looming development over the aquifer



that supplies the Verde River could reduce the flow of water not only to downstream users, but to the plants and animals that depend on it.

For all these reasons, Friends of the Verde River strongly supports this acquisition to protect the property and associated efforts for project partners to secure public and private funds needed to buy and protect the land. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy L.C. Steele". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nancy L.C. Steele, D.Env.  
Executive Director  
NancyS@verderiver.org



PO Box 20280  
Boulder, CO 80308  
Office: 303.545.9011  
[www.IMBA.com](http://www.IMBA.com)

April 6th, 2022

Trust for Public Land  
Attn: Michael Patrick  
607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F-1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
[michael.patrick@tpl.org](mailto:michael.patrick@tpl.org)

**RE: Support for Del Rio Springs Ranch Project**

Dear Michael:

The mission of the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA), is to create, enhance and protect great places to ride mountain bikes. We believe the future of mountain biking lies in opportunities to develop more trails close to home, and in turn grow the quantity and quality of trail communities across the United States.

IMBA is very supportive of the proposal to purchase the eastern portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch in the Town of Chino Valley. This effort would preserve the land and have more opportunities available there for outdoor recreation, including the extension of the Peavine National Recreation Trail all the way from Prescott to the headwaters of the Verde River. The property includes both the headwaters of the river at Sullivan Lake, and also the railroad bed on which 3-1/2 miles of the national recreation trail could be constructed as a continuation of the 'rail to trail' project that starts over 20 miles away in the City of Prescott.

The expansion of the national recreation trail would build on a remarkable network of trails in and around the City of Prescott and would continue to enhance the reputation of this region as a first class mountain biking destination. It would also further our goal for helping create more opportunities for close-to-home access to high-quality biking trails.

Sincerely,

Patrick Kell  
Senior Partnerships Manager  
International Mountain Bicycling Association  
802-371-9033  
[patrick.kell@imba.com](mailto:patrick.kell@imba.com)

cc: Kent McNeill, CEO - International Mountain Bicycling Association



To: Michael Patrick, Trust for Public Land  
From: Executive Director, Natural History Institute  
Date: April 1, 2022  
RE: Potential purchase of Del Rio Ranch

The [Natural History Institute's](#) (NHI) mission requires us to promote the practice of natural history for the well-being of humans and the rest of nature. We regularly run field excursions for our 2,500+ followers on the upper Verde as it passes through the Prescott National Forest. Our followers have a significant interest in the upper Verde River and enjoy a wide range of recreational activities in the area, including wildlife viewing, hiking, backpacking, camping, boating, and art activities.

NHI's Mogollon Highlands Research Initiative recognizes the biological importance of the upper reaches of the Verde River and the groundwater that sustains it. The Mogollon Highlands Research Initiative's early findings support NHI's assertion that the Mogollon Highlands Ecoregion is one of the most biologically rich ecoregions in the U.S. Much of this diversity comes from the presence of a relatively pristine upper Verde River. We support land conservation projects that will protect and benefit the Verde River, such as protection of the main river, its tributaries, springs and water supply.

Much of the content on [NHI's YouTube Channel](#) is aimed at bringing public awareness to the importance of the upper Verde River. Our strategic plan envisions a sustained and increasing stewardship role on this reach of the river as it is vital to bringing notoriety to the continental scale importance of the Mogollon Highlands Ecoregion.

NHI supports the current plans to acquire and protect the approximately 1,000-acre portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch on the east side of Highway 89. We clearly see the reciprocal relationship between human health and the health of wild areas such as the upper Verde River. The purchase would enhance the promise of health for all.

Sincerely,

Bob Ellis  
Executive Director  
Natural History Institute  
928-863-3232  
[bob@naturalhistoryinstitute.org](mailto:bob@naturalhistoryinstitute.org)

April 5, 2022



Michael Patrick  
Trust For Public Land  
607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F-1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

**RE: Support for Del Rio Springs Ranch Project**

Dear Mr. Patrick:

The Verde River is a critical resource for biodiversity, agriculture, recreation, cultural traditions, and municipal uses. The Nature Conservancy has been working for over 40 years to implement projects and policy tools to preserve and protect the Verde River for its diverse stakeholders. Conservation of the Verde River has been a focus of the Arizona Business Unit not only because of its benefits but also because of the tremendous threats it faces from groundwater pumping, climate change, intractable water policy, and inefficient agricultural water use.

As part of our collaborative efforts in the Upper Verde River and Chino Valley, TNC has led a multi-organization stakeholder group, referred to the Upper Verde River Collaborative. The group focuses on protection of the river in its upper stretch (Chino Valley to Clarkdale) and advocates for river protection through education and sustainable public access to the river. One of the projects that came out of this work was the attached Fact Sheet “The Upper Verde River: What Will It Look Like in 30 Years” which was endorsed by 15 members of the Collaborative.

TNC strongly supports the efforts of several partners to acquire and protect the portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch that lies on the east side of Highway 89. A number of sites specifically called on the second and third pages of that attached Fact Sheet – specifically Del Rio Springs, Sullivan Lake and a portion of Little Chino Wash/Subbasin – are located on the property proposed for protection. Additionally, the project would further the “education and access” component of the strategy described on the fourth page of the Fact Sheet. This could be achieved through the public recreation and interpretive opportunities associated with the acquisition of the property such as the extension of the Peavine National Recreation Trail to the headwaters of the Verde River. There is also potential for restoration, community open space and nature preserves at Sullivan Lake and Del Rio Springs, and the possibility of creating a new state park on part of the property.

Therefore, TNC strongly supports this acquisition to protect the property and associated efforts for project partners to secure public and private funds needed to buy and protect the land. Please reach out to Kim at [kschonek@tnc.org](mailto:kschonek@tnc.org) or 928-925-9221 or Jody at [jody.norris@tnc.org](mailto:jody.norris@tnc.org).

Sincerely,

*Kimberly Schonek*

Kimberly Schonek

Verde River Program Director  
The Nature Conservancy in Arizona

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jody Norris".

Jody Norris

Land & Water Protection Director  
The Nature Conservancy in Arizona



# Prescott College

Office of the President

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March 9, 2023

Michael Patrick  
Trust for Public Land  
607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F-1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Michael:

We appreciate your overview regarding the Del Rio Springs Ranch project that the Trust for Public Land and many partners are working on in Town of Chino Valley. The project provides many benefits for ecological protection, outdoor recreation, and historical preservation that are very important for the region. It is also a crucial project for the overall efforts to protect the Verde River, one of the most important rivers in Arizona.

Prescott College has very many years used the upper part of the Verde River, right next to the project site, for outdoor educational opportunities such as rock climbing and geology classes. We believe and hope that this project will enable our faculty and students to continue using this important area for such purposes. We are also very interested in opportunities to become a partner in the Del Rio Springs Ranch project. We have experts on our staff that could serve to advise the other partners on ways to restore some of the important natural resources like Del Rio Springs and Sullivan Lake and could provide input on the master plan that is currently being drafted for the property.

I am pleased to provide Prescott College's support for this important project, and we look forward to exploring ways that we can help in the success of this initiative.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jean Morris, PhD  
President



**PRESCOTT CREEKS**

# PRESCOTT CREEKS

PO Box 3004 • Prescott, AZ 86302  
Info@PrescottCreeks.org • www.PrescottCreeks.org  
Phone (928) 445-5669

4/4/2022

Michael Patrick  
Senior Project Manager  
Trust for Public Land  
607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F-1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

**RE: Protection of Del Rio Springs Ranch**

Dear Mr. Patrick:

I am writing on behalf of Prescott Creeks Preservation Association (Prescott Creeks) to express support for the permanent protection of the Del Rio Springs Ranch.

Prescott Creeks supports land conservation projects that will protect and benefit watersheds in central Arizona – including the Verde River with its many tributaries, springs, water supply, and associated ecosystem services. Projects that incorporate public awareness and sustainable recreation on the Verde River are important to build broader, long-term support for protection efforts. Plans to acquire and protect the approximately 1,000-acre portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch on the east side of Highway 89 have multiple benefits, including protection of the Del Rio Springs and Sullivan Lake, with its iconic location at ‘mile zero’ of the Verde River. Potential uses of the property such as open space, nature preserves, preservation of the springs and historic structures, and extension of the Peavine National Recreation Trail are all uses that would protect important resources related to the Verde River and create more public awareness of the importance of the river and its watershed.

As you know, Prescott Creeks is a not-for-profit organization established in 1990 with a mission to achieve healthy watersheds and clean waters in central Arizona for the benefit of people and wildlife through protection, restoration, education, and advocacy. Our work at Watson Woods Riparian Preserve is similar in nature to the proposed Del Rio Ranch project in that the area is protected with a long-term management lease (25-years). A conservation easement is also under consideration to protect the Preserve in perpetuity. Ecological restoration projects have improved conditions at the site and a sweat-equity has been developed with community volunteers who have invested 1,000s hours in the project. Efforts like yours at Del Rio Springs Ranch can follow a similar trend and produce material community benefits.

Please feel free to reach out to me by telephone or email if Prescott Creeks can be of further service in the protection of the Del Rio Ranch!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Byrd', is written over a white background.

Michael Byrd  
Executive Director

April 2, 2022



For People, Wildlife, and Community

Cindy Blackmore  
Town Manager  
Town of Chino Valley  
202 N State Route 89  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323  
cblackmore@chinoaz.net

**RE: Protection of Del Rio Springs Ranch**

Dear Ms. Blackmore:

Save the Dells was organized to protect from destructive development our beautiful Granite Dells area, its wildlife, and its recreational values.

Over the last six years, we were joined and supported by thousands who resonated with this message and through their actions were empowered to act, to speak out, and to believe that a better future was possible--for the Granite Dells and for all of us. Through our campaign, the public demonstrated its passion for protection of threatened landscapes, and as more changes are brought to their attention, they will settle for nothing less.

Now, over 473 acres of natural open space have been protected in the Dells and talks of an expanded regional park and preserve are underway.

Our vision is that all residents of Central Yavapai County, including area leaders, are informed and engaged in municipal decisions that promote continued open space conservation, science-informed sustainable water-management policies, and reasonable growth that enables all members of a diverse community to achieve a good quality of life while preserving natural ecosystems.

This includes discussion and acting on an increase in land conservation projects that will protect and benefit the region. Granite Creek, originating in the Bradshaw Mountains and entering the upper Verde River at Stillman Lake, and our world-class Peavine and Iron King Trails in the heart of the Dells are iconic symbols of Central Arizona and intimately connected to the Upper Verde watershed.

We absolutely support, through public ownership, the acquisition and protection of the approximately 1,000-acre portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch on the east side of Highway 89. This action supports the vision, mission, and goals of Save the Dells. Specifically, this action

1. supports expansion of regional parks and public open space,
2. contributes to the continuity of the Peavine National Recreational Trail,

3. protects the Verde Springs area by reducing the number of homes built around the upper Verde River, and
4. demonstrates cooperation among organizations with complementary goals.

Save the Dells is happy to endorse these efforts.

Sincerely,

*Joanne Oellers*

Vice-chair, Save the Dells

P. O. Box 3028

Prescott, AZ, 86302

928.533.6523





Grand Canyon Chapter • 514 W. Roosevelt St. • Phoenix, AZ 85003

Phone: (602) 253-8633 • Email: [grand.canyon.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:grand.canyon.chapter@sierraclub.org)

April 5, 2022

Michael Patrick  
Senior Project Manager  
Trust for Public Land  
101 Montgomery St., Suite 900  
San Francisco, CA 94104

RE: Potential purchase of Del Rio Ranch

Dear Mr. Patrick:

Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter and our 16,000 plus members in Arizona, we want to express strong support for current plans to acquire and protect the approximately 1,000-acre portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch.

Sierra Club's mission is "to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; and to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environments." Sierra Club is committed to protecting public lands and waters so they are available for this and future generations to enjoy and has long advocated for protection of the Verde River, including Wild and Scenic proposals. Our members and supporters enjoy a wide range of recreational activities in the area, including wildlife viewing, hiking, backpacking, camping, and more.

The Verde River is one of the most ecologically significant rivers in Arizona, supporting a diversity of plants and animals and sustaining communities, and is a key priority for our chapter and our local group, the Yavapai Group. Our chapter is and has been for several years actively working to designate the Upper Verde Wild and Scenic River in order to protect this portion of the river and better sustain it downstream. We see a need and also support efforts to protect lands along the Verde to ensure that its water quality and flows are better sustained.

That is why Sierra Club supports plans to acquire and protect the approximately 1,000-acre portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch on the east side of Highway 89. Using this property for open space, a nature preserve, keeping the springs and historic structures intact, and extending the Peavine National Recreation Trail are all uses that are consistent with our vision for the Verde River and would protect important resources related to the Verde River. These uses would also help to better inform and educate the public about the river

and its significance and the uses and protection of this property will help to augment and enhance the Wild and Scenic designation for the upper Verde River.

Sierra Club supports and encourages your efforts to acquire and protect through public ownership the eastern portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandy Bahr". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Sandy Bahr  
Chapter Director  
Sierra Club – Grand Canyon Chapter



# SIERRA CLUB

Yavapai Group

To: Michael Patrick, Trust for Public Land  
From: Executive Committee, Yavapai Group  
Date: March 31, 2022  
RE: Potential purchase of Del Rio Ranch

Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter has more than 60,000 members and supporters in Arizona. Sierra Club's mission is "to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; and to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environments." Sierra Club has long been committed to protecting public lands so they are available for future generations to enjoy. We are advocates for clean water, and healthy wildlife habitat. Our members have a significant interest in the upper Verde River. Our members and supporters enjoy a wide range of recreational activities in the area, including wildlife viewing, hiking, backpacking, camping, and more.

Yavapai Group, part of the Grand Canyon Chapter, represents 850 members in western Yavapai County. Our most important program is to protect the Verde River, one of the most important rivers from an ecological perspective in the Southwest. We support land conservation projects that will protect and benefit the Verde River, such as protection of the main river, its tributaries, springs and water supply. We are now actively working to designate the Upper Verde Wild and Scenic River.

We believe that projects that incorporate public awareness and sustainable recreation access to the Verde River is important in creating more river advocates and stewards as we seek changes in public policy that will protect the Verde River.

We are very supportive of current plans to acquire and protect the approximately 1,000-acre portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch on the east side of Highway 89 for a number of reasons, including protection of the Del Rio Springs and Sullivan Lake, with its iconic location at 'mile zero' of the Verde River. Contemplated uses of the property such as open space, nature preserves, preservation of the springs and historic structures, and extension of the Peavine National Recreation Trail are all uses that would protect important resources related to the Verde River and also create more public awareness of the importance of the river. It will protect Little Granite Spring, which supplies the surface water flowing in lower Granite Creek, a component of the proposed Upper Verde Wild and Scenic River, through the Upper Verde River Important Bird Area.

All these benefits enhance the proposed Upper Verde Wild and Scenic River.

The Yavapai Group of the Grand Canyon Chapter of Sierra Club therefore supports efforts to acquire and protect through public ownership the eastern portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch. Please call me if you have any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gary Beverly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "G".

Gary Beverly  
Chair, Yavapai Group, Sierra Club  
PO Box 176, Chino Valley, AZ 86323  
928-308-1003  
gbverde99@gmail.com

Yavapai Trails Association  
PO Box 403  
Prescott AZ 86302



March 29, 2020

Michael Patrick  
Arizona Program Office  
The Trust for Public Land  
607 Cerrillos Road, Suite F-1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

RE: Peavine National Recreation Trail and Del Rio Springs Ranch

Dear Michael:

Yavapai Trail Association (YTA) supports the efforts to acquire and protect the eastern portion of Del Rio Springs Ranch in the Town of Chino Valley. That portion of the ranch contains the abandoned railbed of the Santa Fe Railroad, which has been used to the south for siting the Peavine National Recreation Trail, one of the few 'rail-to-trail' projects in Arizona. The Peavine Trail is a very popular recreation amenity in the City of Prescott where it runs for about six miles from south of Watson Lake up through the Granite Dells. YTA has more recently led an effort to construct an additional five-mile stretch of the Trail within the Town of Chino Valley, a project which included over 2,000 hours of YTA volunteer time and significant grants in 2020 and 2021. Our trail counters indicate that this new Chino stretch of the Peavine Trail has well over 40,000 trail users a year, representing a great diversity of recreation including hikers, bikers, and equestrians.

The Del Rio Springs Ranch would further the regional goal of extending the Peavine National Recreation Trail all the way from City of Prescott to the headwaters of the Verde Ranch, with an additional 3-1/2 miles of the rail bed lying on the land planned for purchase. YTA is very supportive of efforts to protect this property that is uniquely rich in Arizona history. In addition, requests for funds to acquire the ranch and to build the trail and associated infrastructure such as a Trailhead, parking, and signage on the newly acquired land.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann P. Hendrickson".

Ann P. Hendrickson, President  
Yavapai Trails Association