



## Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area ~ Fact Sheet

### About Rio Salado

- 595-acre desert river habitat
- 5 miles of the Salt River
- 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue west to 28<sup>th</sup> Street east
- Rio Salado is Spanish for 'Salt River'
- Trails along terraced banks lined with trees & wetlands
- 200-foot wide, 15-foot deep low flow channel to carry storm releases of up to 12,200 cubic feet per second
- 1,185 tons of tires and 138,572 cubic yards of debris and waste removed.
- Over 76,000 trees, plants and shrubs planted – seeds & cuttings collected within ½ mile of the Salt River
- Operated and managed by City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department

### Water Source

- 5 supply wells pump from a non-potable aquifer directly under the riverbed
- 3 million gallons per day recycled for irrigation
- 22 storm drains flow into the riverbed

### Habitat Features

- 200+ species of migratory birds; various mammals, reptiles, & amphibians
- 88 acres of mesquite bosque habitat
- 14 acres of cottonwood/willow habitat
- 39 acres of wetland marsh
- 193 acres of lower Sonoran habitat (palo verde and mesquite association)
- 57 acres saltbush/quail bush/burro brush
- 31 acres of aquatic strand
- 160 acres of open space

### Recreation & Education Features

- Multi-use trail system
- Hiking / Bicycling
- ADA accessible paved trails
- Wildlife viewing / Birding
- Dogs allowed on leash
- Equestrian areas
- Photography
- Guided tours
- Audubon Visitor Center - Ph: 602-468-6470

### Partnerships

- City of Phoenix
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Flood Control District of Maricopa County
- Arizona Water Protection Fund

### History of the Salt River

Shortly after the turn of the century, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation placed dams along the Salt and Verde Rivers, providing a reliable supply of water year-round for the Salt River Valley. While the dams provided a reliable water supply for the valley, they left behind a dry, barren river filled with sand and cobbles. The land along the riverbed had become lined with landfills, sand and gravel pits, and industrial areas.

In 1993, the City of Phoenix was successful in a request for a restoration study of the Salt River. After review of the area by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, they determined that there was federal interest in the project to partner with the City of Phoenix on the \$85 million dollar Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project. In August 1999 Congress authorized the matching federal construction funding for the Rio Salado project by signing the Water Resources Development Act. With inflation and additional grant dollars, the project's total cost is \$100 million. Rio Salado Habitat's grand opening was November 2005.

### Benefits of Rio Salado Habitat

- Maximize habitat value within the Salt River corridor
- Major urban landscape for blighted river corridor
- Improvements in flood management
- Environmental education opportunities
- New trails and links to existing trails
- Visitor destination near downtown
- Trigger new development oriented to the river

### National Significance

- 90% of the Sonoran wetlands have been lost or destroyed. \*U.S. Forest Service
- Riparian areas are critical to the survival of fish and wildlife species in Arizona.

***Rio Salado Hours of Operation: Sunrise to Sunset, or 7pm; whichever comes first seasonally.***

***For more information, or to report any suspicious activity, please call the Ranger Office: 602-262-6863***  
*Visit us on the web:*  
[www.phoenix.gov/parks](http://www.phoenix.gov/parks)