



Santa Cruz River at Cortaro Road

An ARIZONA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Volunteer Restoration Project

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Introduction

Pima County Regional Flood Control District (PCRFCD) repaired a collapsed riverbank along the Santa Cruz River north of the Cortaro Road bridge during the summer of 2012. In the process of the repair, heavy construction equipment removed/disturbed approximately 3 acres of land in the floodplain of the Santa Cruz River, including overbank areas (Figure 1). The work was performed under a Nationwide Permit #3 from the US Army Corps of Engineers in compliance with the Clean Water Act. This newly disturbed area, along the Santa Cruz River Park, is vulnerable to the invasion of buffelgrass (*Pennisetum ciliare*), which is present in immediately adjacent edge of the desert saltbush flats. The Tucson Chapter of the AZNPS has been working collaboratively with Pima County and the Town of Marana to restore the project area since August 2012.

Project Goals

This project is consistent with the mission of the AZNPS, which is: to promote knowledge, appreciation, conservation, and restoration of Arizona native plants and their habitats. The Tucson Chapter of AZNPS has recently become more active in on-the-ground restoration efforts, and this project continues that effort. Specific project goals include:

1. Prevent the spread of buffelgrass into this new area.
2. Revegetate the disturbance with a diverse suite of native species.
3. Increase wildlife habitat value.
4. Encourage a positive relationship between AZNPS and local jurisdictions.
5. Provide opportunities for community involvement and environmental education.



Figure 1. Proposed project location. Approximately 3 acres on the east bank of the Santa Cruz River, north of Cortaro Road. The disturbed area is adjacent to the Santa Cruz River Park and the Quarry Pines Golf Course.



New invasive species from Australia – cupgrass (*Dactyloctenia radulans*).



Volunteers removing buffelgrass(*Pennisetum ciliare*).



Pima County removes bagged buffelgrass.

SEED MIX (Wildlands Restoration)	
Species	Common Name
<i>Aristida purpurea</i>	purple three awn
<i>Atriplex polycarpa</i>	desert saltbush
<i>Baileya multiradiata</i>	desert marigold
<i>Bouteloua rothrockii</i>	Rothrock grama
<i>Cassia covesii</i>	desert senna
<i>Digitaria californica</i>	Arizona cottontop
<i>Encelia farinosa</i>	brittlebush
<i>Eschscholtzia Mexicana</i>	Mexican gold poppy
<i>Isocoma tenuisecta</i>	burrowweed
<i>Larrea tridentata</i>	creosote
<i>Leptochloa dubia</i>	green sprangletop
<i>Lesquerella gordonii</i>	bladderpod
<i>Lupinus sparsiflorus</i>	lupine
<i>Plantago insularis</i>	Indian wheat
<i>Salvia columbariae</i>	chia
<i>Setaria macrostachya</i>	bristle grass
<i>Sphaeralcea ambigua</i>	globemallow
<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>	sand dropseed



Groups of volunteers gather the 4th Saturday of every month.

CONTAINER PLANTS (Grown by Signature Botanica and Nighthawk Natives)			
Quantity	Size	Species	Common Name
3	15-gal	<i>Acacia constricta</i>	white thorn acacia
6	15-gal	<i>Acacia greggii</i>	catclaw acacia
4	1-gal	<i>Atriplex canescens</i>	fourwing saltbush
2	5-gal	<i>Carnegiea gigantea</i>	saguaro
10	30-in	<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	desert willow
10	5-gal	<i>Lycium exsertum</i>	wolfberry
1	15-gal	<i>Parkinsonia florida</i>	blue paloverde
4	cuttings	<i>Sarcostemma cynanchoides</i>	desert milkweed



DriWater irrigation supplement was used to help get plants established. Naturally-occurring microbes in the soil break down the gel and release water at the roots of the plant.



Naturally recruited seedlings of native perennials are protected and watered.



Installation of 30" tall pot.



Newly installed plants are protected from herbivores with wire cages.

MATERIALS GRACIOUSLY DONATED BY:

