

Although this project has been managed by the OCWC team, it is community-driven, and guidance, feedback and advice for the past two years has been given by the Watershed Improvement Committee of 12 citizens and environmental professionals, also called the WIC.



Moving forward, the WIC will be expanded to 20 members, and renamed the Watershed Improvement Commission to reflect the importance and dedication it has assumed in helping to develop the Watershed Improvement Plan as well as protect the integrity of Oak Creek, and the welfare of the watershed. *We are in the process of inviting environmentally concerned citizens and community leaders who have particular expertise in outreach and education, to participate on the WIC.*

Included in Phase 2 of the Oak Creek Watershed Improvement Plan grant is funding for a few initial Best Management Practice (BMP) projects that will help to mitigate some of the priority problems identified in the Plan. Other BMPs will be implemented in the future as funding is available. A monitoring plan will be developed to keep track of the effectiveness of the BMPs, and volunteer sampling teams will be assembled again.

Volunteers played a huge role in OCWC projects in 2011, and will continue to do so in 2012. Judy Lewis and Jim Sandoval managed the litter pickup teams in Oak Creek Canyon, and graduates of our first Master Watershed Stewards program involved themselves on sampling teams as well as administrative functions, and will be called upon to give their support to the Community Outreach Program in 2012. *We highly value each person's time and effort and thank you all so very much for your help and assistance. You're the best!*



Oak Creek Community Outreach Program development begins in Jan. 2012

As stated previously, the OCWIP is a community-driven project, based on a scientific approach, and designed to identify and reduce, if not eliminate, fecal contamination. However, OCWC recognizes that without continuing involvement, and understanding, from the watershed community on an on-going basis, permanently removing Oak Creek from Arizona's list of impaired waters due to nonattainment of water quality standards, will be an overwhelming challenge.

To this end, the mission of the Oak Creek Community Outreach Program (OCCOP) is to educate residents and visitors to Oak Creek to consistently use practices that will protect the health of the creek.

The WIC will be instrumental in guiding the development of the Outreach Program and we have reason to believe it will be a project in which all residents of the Oak Creek watershed community can wholeheartedly endorse and support.

If there was ever a cause that could bind together people of all walks of life throughout Sedona, Yavapai County, and Coconino County, and resurrect a spirit of community, it is to protect Oak Creek and help to nurse it back to good health!



The Program will be far reaching and include the manufacture of a terrain model of the Oak Creek Watershed to be used as an education tool for students and adults, and be on display for all residents and visitors to view at outreach meetings and other public places.

Another highlight of the Program will be developing a task force of at least fifty volunteers to clean up six - one mile test segments of Oak Creek twice in 2012, and remove all litter and trash. If feasible, in the afternoon of one of those days, an environmental fair will be planned including booths, entertainment, etc. *Representatives from community groups as well as civic leaders and their staff will be consulted, and asked to participate in, and/or support, all these events, and the OCCOP in general.* For more information on the Community Outreach Program please go to our website at:

<http://www.oakcreekwatershed.org/images/PDFfiles/CommunityOutreach/OakCreekCommunityOutreachProgram-ExecutiveSummary.pdf>

Kurt Harris elected Chairman of OCWC Board of Directors



At their annual meeting on Dec. 9, 2011, *the Board of Directors of the Oak Creek Watershed Council elected Kurt Harris to be Chairman for 2012.* Kurt is a Professional Engineer with ADOT, and has previously worked as a Consultant, as well as at ADEQ. Vice-Chairman for 2012 will be Joshua Myers, Environmental Health Specialist, and reelected as Treasurer is Judy Lewis.

Outgoing Chairman, Charles Ester, Water Resource Operations Manager at SRP has been a member of OCWC since the nineties, and was instrumental in its transition to a nonprofit corporation. Charlie is shown here receiving an award for his meritorious services from Executive Director, Barry Allan. Newly elected Board members are Gail Clement, Consulting Geologist; Steve Estes, Community Outreach Director of VVLP and FVRG; and Lee Luedeker, Wildlife Manager at AZ Game & Fish. Thank you for your continued support!

