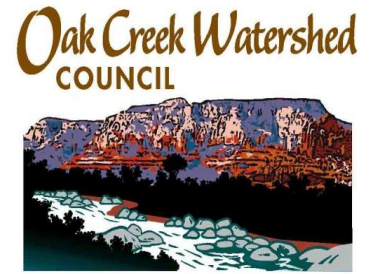


OAK CREEK CHRONICLES

...news you can use about our watershed



OCWC in 2013: Water Quality, Quantity and Conservation

Other News: OCWC Nonprofit of the year (P.2)
ADEQ Grant Cycle13 (P.2)
OCWC forms Friends of Oak Creek (P.2)
New OCWC Board of Directors (P.3)
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December 31, 2012



2012 Recap and what's ahead in 2013

Barry Allan, Executive Director

The completion and approval of the [Oak Creek Watershed Improvement Plan \(OCWIP\)](#) was the significant achievement for our Council this year. Also completed was the [Oak Creek Community Outreach Program \(OCCOP\)](#) which is designed to solicit community help in protecting the integrity of Oak Creek by raising the bar on standards for outdoor ethics. The Oak Creek Community Outreach Program will play a major, but supporting role, in keeping Oak Creek healthy because responsibility for fecal contamination invariably starts and ends with each resident and visitor. A start has been made on implementing the OCWIP and OCCOP. Please visit www.oakcreekwatershed.org for updates.

The OCWC Board of Directors held a Strategic Planning Session on October 5th to discuss the direction of the Council, and in a subsequent workshop several community group leaders were invited to give their feedback. The Oak Creek Watershed Council continues to collaborate with other Verde Valley environmental groups in order to protect the interests of the Oak Creek Watershed and the Verde Watershed as a whole.



While focus will continue on improving the water quality of Oak Creek and removal of the bacteria *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), the Board will diversify OCWC services moving forward by tackling issues concerning water quantity and conservation, habitat degradation and the economic, social and environmental impact (of these issues) on the Oak Creek Watershed community. Progress since October includes:

- *Water Quantity Team* headed by Gail Clement, Consulting Geologist has written an Oak Creek Watershed Water Resource Analysis proposal which is currently under review.
- *Water Conservation Team* formed by Dr. Marianna Hartsong and Ryan Matson will be developing a water conservation program for the watershed community in collaboration with city and county staff, and UA's Conserve to Enhance (C2E) program.

- *Watershed Restoration* in the Oak Creek corridor was given a boost this year by [Friends of the Verde River Greenway](#) (FVRG) through a grant from the Walton Family Foundation to remove invasive species. The OCWC is collaborating with FVRG and will explore ways to have OCWC's Watershed Restoration Team provide ongoing support in the future for habitat degradation projects along Oak Creek.
- *Economic, Social and Environmental Impact* of water issues in Oak Creek Watershed is actively being discussed and promoted by OCWC with civic and community group leaders as well as through the Sedona Chamber of Commerce. In 2013, OCWC plans to continue to demonstrate its commitment to sustainable tourism and offer help in attaining a truly 'vibrant community.'



On November 4, 2012 the Oak Creek Watershed Council (OCWC) was awarded Nonprofit of the Year by the Sedona Community Foundation, an affiliate of the Arizona Community Foundation, at the Spirit of Sedona Awards. The award was presented by Stephanie Giesbrecht, member of the Advisory Board, who noted the importance of Oak Creek as a major tributary of the Verde River contributing as much as half of its volume at the confluence of both water courses.

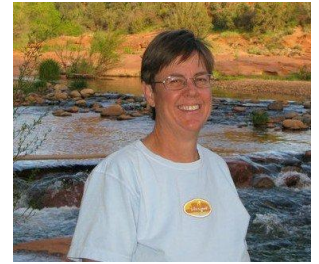
The OCWC also received a capacity-building grant from SCF that would allow it to retain the part-time services of a person to help with operations and activities in 2013. Marie Snyder joined OCWC as Executive Assistant shortly after. Marie has a Master of Arts in Sustainable Communities and will be working with the Executive Director and Board Executive Committee. Marie can be reached at marie@oakcreekwatershed.org

Shortly after the completion of the OCWIP, ADEQ opened its Water Quality Grant¹³ cycle and the OCWC grant management team submitted two companion grant applications on November 30, 2012. The "technical" grant application was prepared by Morgan Stine and Laura Palm and includes 6 construction-related projects with education and outreach components involving \$575,353 in direct funding. The second "outreach" application was submitted by Barry Allan, and includes a single construction-related project involving the Forest Service as well as 4 education and outreach projects with boots-on-the-ground components involving \$253,326 in direct funding. Total matching funds are \$620,759 and the total of both grants including direct and matching funding is \$1,449,438. Awards will be made in April, 2013.



On December 14th the Oak Creek Watershed Council ratified formalizing the development of its group of volunteers to be called "**Friends of Oak Creek.**" Managing Director of FOC will be Kathy Dunham, MWS assisted by Gwynne Reese, MWS and Shelley Holiday, MWS. Several other Council members will be meeting on January 8th to help FOC put together a business plan.

New volunteers will be invited to join from the watershed community and participate in a variety of OCWC activities and tasks. A sustainable training course for volunteers will be developed in 2013 like the Master Watershed Steward program in 2011. Specialized training will also be offered for activities on the new grants in 2013. Kathy can be contacted at kathy@oakcreekwatershed.org



At its annual meeting in December, the OCWC Board of Directors welcomed two new members, Kathy Dunham, MWS and David Peck, Assistant Engineer (City of Sedona) whose three year terms start on January 1, 2013. Outgoing members Kurt Harris, P.E. and Jim Sandoval were recognized for their years of service to the Council and Board.

The Board elected Gail Clement, Consulting Geologist, as its Chairperson for 2013, and Steve Estes as Vice-Chair. Judy Lewis will continue as Secretary, and Lee Luedeker, Treasurer. Other Board members include Cindy Dunn, Morgan Stine, and Josh Myers.

Watershed Improvement Commission (WIC)

For the past three years, OCWC grant management team has received guidance, feedback and advice from the Watershed Improvement Commission. Even though the OCWIP has been completed, this citizen's steering committee is being asked to continue in its 'mentor' role with the BMP implementation, and also to adjust its scope to include all (non-political) water issues pertaining to the Oak Creek Watershed. *A limited number of environmentally concerned citizens and community leaders are being invited to join the WIC.* For further information contact barry@oakcreekwatershed.org

In Memory

Jim McInnis, Master Watershed Steward, died December 10, 2012. Jim was born Dec. 26, 1933, in Mexico, Maine and is survived by his wife Harriet and daughter Melissa Theriault as well as others in his family. Jim was known for his Oak Creek fishing expeditions and volunteered his time as a member of OCWC during the development of the Oak Creek Watershed Improvement Plan shown here on a sampling session. The OCWC has set up the *Jim McInnis MWS Scholarship Fund* in his memory to help out future Watershed Stewards entering the program. You are welcome to donate to it on our website.



Thank you for your continuing support and helping us to maintain a standard of excellence for watershed stewardship. We hope 2013 will be the Year of Sustainability in all we do together.