

Director's Message

2014 was an especially busy year for the Recreation Services Department. Many great projects have been completed starting with the dedication of the Goldwater Lake day use expansion project in March. June saw the completion of the new baseball field donated by the Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation. In December we had the pleasure of opening the newly renovated Dog Park funded and constructed courtesy of the Beneficial Dream Dog Park Contest. These new facilities will serve the citizens of Prescott for many years to come.

In addition to these monumental projects we continue to serve the citizens with our great adult sports leagues with its increasing participation.

The old adage "you build it they will come" has never held more true than with the City's Mile High Trail system. We are now up to 68 miles with annual trail visits estimated at well over 600,000. We truly are blessed to live in a community of active people.

On behalf of our dedicated staff and great volunteers, I would like to wish you a happy and fruitful 2015. Get out and play!!

Joe Baynes, Director
Prescott Recreation Services

Recreation Services Advisory Board

- Janelle Riedl
- Mike King
- Ted Blake
- Wayne Howell
- Thomas Dwyer

Special Issue - 2014's Monsoon Season

The 2014 monsoon season in Arizona has been described as the best in ten years. A transitional zone, the weather and precipitation levels in the Prescott area vary widely. The National Weather Service (NWS) at Flagstaff has two stations in Prescott, at Sundog and the Airport. In their September 30, 2014 monsoon summary for July, August, and September, NWS recorded totals of 18.23 inches at the Sundog site, and 9.09 inches at the airport (which is in a drier area). Arizona Meteorological Network's data totals 12.04 inches for the three month period. Various others sources reported downtown Prescott and some higher elevations, such as Groom Creek, at 20 inches or more.

Technically, monsoon season begins when the dew point reaches 55 degrees for three consecutive days. To simplify confusion about the season's onset, Arizonans recently began stating that the season is from approximately June 30th to September 30th. The monsoons start in the south (as early as mid June) and move north, usually reaching Prescott around July 1st.

In winter, Arizona weather is dry with winds flowing in from the west and northwest (California and Nevada). Moving into summer, the winds shift direction and flow in from the south and southeast. Moisture flows in from the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, producing radical changes in moisture. Although the moisture eases fire conditions, fires are often created by dry lightening strikes. Sudden heavy rains often cause flash floods in creeks and washes. They can flow fast and deep enough to carry a vehicle downstream.

As an arid region, water is precious and an important issue in the State of Arizona. This edition of the newsletter discusses water, monsoons, the 2014 monsoon season and how they effect the Recreation Services Department and Prescott area in general.

(Contributor and photo Nancy Nesbit)



Granite Creek spillway at the old railroad trestle in town, on August 20, 2014.

Contents

- Parks Page 2
- Lakes Page 3
- Trails Page 4
- Volunteers Page 5
- Sports Page 6
- Fishing Page 7
- Dams Page 8
- History/Dams Page 9
- Watershed Page 10
- Wildlife/IBA Page 11
- Ramada Rentals Page 12

The Parks - Granite Creek Park Hardest Hit



(Photo above courtesy of Nancy Nesbit, photo below Chris Hosking)

Granite Creek Park was temporarily closed in August 2014 due to flooding.

After two days of steady rain, and 15 hours later, Granite Creek still ran swiftly. Flowing parallel to LaGuardia Bridge, the creek flooded into the area under the bridge, and went into a portion of the park. The entrance to the park was flooded causing the closure until the water had subsided.

Just west of LaGuardia Bridge, the small foot bridge over the creek leading to the Greenways Trail was damaged by the flooding (above photo).

Prompt repairs are a priority for this heavily traveled trail. Trail counters indicate this bridge receives an annual average traffic of 179 people per day.

A break-away bridge, it is fastened at one corner with a chain and anchored to a tree, to keep it from flowing down stream when a blow-out occurs. The other three corners of the bridge have metal eyelets so additional chains can be attached, enabling the bridge to be hoisted and guided back into place (below photo). Blow-outs are usually due to debris build-up, and sometimes flooding. This bridge had not experienced a blow-out in three or four years.

For more information on trail and bridge damage see pages 4 and 5.



Of all the parks, Granite Creek Park was the only park requiring closure, which happened around noon on August 19, 2014. Out of concern for the quickly rising creek waters and flooding of the entrance, it was decided that it would be prudent to close the park. With the assistance of the Prescott Police Department, cars were evacuated. Once the water had subsided and the entrance cleaned up, it was reopened late the following morning. Other than general debris (sand, rocks, tree branches and weeds) and a bridge blow-out (see photos) there was no further damage.

The only other park with significant problems was Vista Park. Because of ongoing drainage problems, the park suffered damage due to mud and debris, and will require drainage engineering and grading to control future flooding. Acker Park received some erosion along the park's dirt road which required grading.

One of the oldest parks, Flinn Park, which usually fairs well, did so again with no problems. Other parks only had minimal, but expected damage. None of the hard Assets, such as restrooms, ramadas, playgrounds or other facilities received any significant damage, and remained open.

Because of the unusually heavy rainfall, weeds have been an on-going struggle throughout Prescott. With the help of several sources, including the City and County Community Restitution programs, weed control has been ongoing in the parks, lakes, natural parklands, easements, and city properties, on a rotational basis. It is anticipated that there will be an excessive weed problem well into 2015.

(Contributors Rudy Litka and Nancy Nesbit)

A.C. WILLIAMS
GRANITE CREEK PARK
554 N. 6th St., Prescott, AZ

Summer Hours
(Memorial Day through Labor Day)
7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Winter Hours
7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Free Parking

For ramada and large grass area rentals see page 12.

Visit us online through the City website at:
www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks

The Lakes Changing Water Levels

The questions most often asked are; why are the lakes so low, where has the water gone, and are they pumping it out for cattle? The answer is no. The simple answer is, evaporation. A couple of other factors also come into play. When Watson and Willow Lakes were purchased from the CVID (Chino Valley Irrigation District) in 1998, the City was mandated to recharge the aquifer near the airport from Watson Lake every year (*see page 8*).

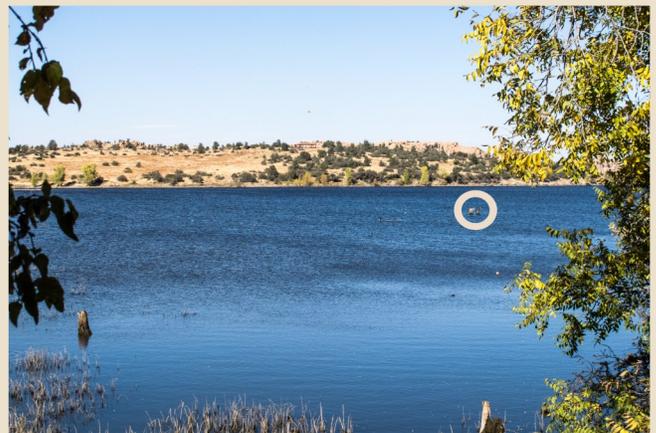
Reservoir water is also occasionally used to help fight forest fires. Such was the case in May 2012. Goldwater Lake was closed while helicopters dropped buckets into the lake, drawing water to help fight the Gladiator fire.

Lake replenishment depends on "Mother Nature". Snow melt runoff along with monsoon rains and creek runoff are the sources that fill the lakes with water. When the weather is mild in winter with little snow, and summer monsoon rains are below average, the dry conditions cause evaporation which can drop water levels rather quickly. However, with good monsoon rains like the 2014 season, water rapidly returns to the lakes.

Watson Lake gained 10 feet of elevation, filling it to capacity within weeks (mid-August). This enabled the transfer of water through the cross cut channel into Willow Lake, which was 14.5 feet below the spillway on August 12th. With the water from Watson Lake, and Willow Lake's natural monsoons drainage way, Willow Lake was only 5.1 feet below the spillway on October 3rd.

Just when it seems the lakes are disappearing, the monsoons return with vigor, bringing our lakes back into the vision we have of what they were and should be.

(Contributor Nancy Nesbit)



(Photos courtesy of Archie Maclellan)

(Above top) In spring 2014, Watson Lake's south end revealed an expanding sandy shore and sand bars due to dropping water levels.

(Above bottom) With the heavy monsoon rains starting about July 1st, the lake was full by August 20th. In the same area the waters not only covered the sand dunes and shore, it expanded into the trees close to the trail.

Note: For perspective, the white circles reference the same tree.

(Left) Thunderclouds over Watson Lake on August 20, 2014. Declared full, water covers the "gray water line" that's been visible the past few years.

(Photo courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)



LAKE HOURS

Summer: 6:00 am—10:00 pm
(Memorial Day Weekend through
Labor Day Weekend)

Winter: 7:00 am—Sunset

For information on rentals for ramadas and other information see page 12.

The Trails & Natural Parklands Floods Overran Many Trail Bridges

With over 60 miles of trails within the City's Mile-High Trail System, monsoon season can be challenging. Flooding and runoff can cause erosion and debris problems with tree branches, sand, weeds, and rocks. The 2014 monsoon season also caused some problems with bridges along the trails. On the Greenways Trail, two bridges were affected. On the north end of the trail, the break-away bridge just west of Granite Creek Park and LaGuardia bridge, experienced a blow-out (*see page 2 for details*). One of the older bridges located just west of Tom Pettit Park was flooded (*top left photo below*). Repairs included shoring up each end by replacing and tamping down new soil, as well as repair of the rockwork. Greenways also experienced quite a bit of erosion and debris from trees. The Over the Hill Gang worked on the repairs (*see page 5*).



(Photo courtesy of Chris Hosking)

(Above) Flooding of the bridge over Granite Creek at Tom Pettit Park. (*See page 5 for repairs on this bridge, top right photo.*)

(Below left) The bridge on Discovery Trail in Watson Woods was covered with water.

(Below right) The bridge at Granite Gardens Trail is shown with debris flowing down stream piled up behind it. Debris build-up generally causes more problems with bridges than flooding.

(Photos below courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)



The Granite Gardens Trail bridge, near the parking area, experienced a blow-out and debris piled up behind it (*photo bottom right*). The repairs included raising it by almost a foot. Prior to the monsoons, portions of the trail were improved, including drainage diversion, general tread improvements, and additional rock work. These improvements helped minimize the 2014 monsoon damage.

Most of the other trails within the system fared the storms quite well. The trails are continually being assessed. Some of the older trails with design problems, are being realigned to prevent future storm damage. A steep, eroded portion of one of the trails at Acker Park has just been rerouted to make the slope gentler and runoff damage along it less likely.

(Contributor Chris Hosking)

The public is advised to wait an hour or two until water levels go down before resuming use of the trails.

For information on the trails, and downloadable trail maps, visit the City website at:

**www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks
or www.prescotttrails.com**



Volunteers - Over The Hill Gang Post Monsoon Trail Repairs

As soon as the 2014 monsoons had subsided, OHG (Over the Hill Gang) swung into action and started repairing damage to the trails and bridges around Prescott.

Much of their time was spent on the Greenways Trail where creeks rise above the level of the trails and scours the surface, resulting in missing material, deposits of boulders, and uneven/unsafe surfaces.

OHG also modified several other trails by installing bridges, steps, retaining walls, handrails, culverts, and more. Wherever possible, boulders and other natural materials at the location are used, but in some cases materials need to be brought in to make changes. Much of the work done was newly designed to help alleviate future storm damage.

Trails receiving attention included Peavine Trail, Iron King Trail (towards Prescott Valley), the "fishing trails" at both Watson and Willow lakes, the Prescott Lakes trails including at Basis School, Lakeshore Trail, Pioneer Park, the new Sundog section of the Circle Trail, and others.

Aside from erosion damage, they also spent many hours on weed control (see page 2).

(Contributor: George Sheats, Volunteer Coordinator - OHG)

The Over The Hill Gang completes two to three-tenths of a mile of trail during each three hour session. Working two mornings a week they complete approximately six to 10 miles of trail per year. All ages are welcome. The size and scope of our trail system is in large part due to the hard work of volunteers who contribute to our city and the Prescott area in general. To volunteer for Over the Hill Gang visit the Prescott Trails website at: www.prescotttrails.com (Click on the link at Help Build Prescott's Trails System.)



(Photo courtesy of Chris Hosking)

Runoff and flooding from the monsoons resulted in erosion and other damage to most of the trails, including the Greenways Trail system. OHG was involved in most of the repairs.

(Above) Repairing the trail and bridge leading over Granite Creek at Tom Pettit Park included patching erosion and repairing rock edges. (See page 4 for flooding of this bridge, top left photo.)

(Below left) Chris Hosking, Trails and Natural Parkland Coordinator for Prescott Recreation Services Department, distributes soil along the trail to patch holes and repair erosion. OHG followed by further distributing the soil and tamping it down.

(Below right) At shifts end, some of the debris previously collected was loaded onto a trailer and hauled off.

(Photos below courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)



Sports Page A Challenging Season



Pioneer Park Four-plex

As soon as the storms subsided, maintenance crews immediately went into action draining water and relining fields in preparation for the many scheduled weekend tournaments and weekday league games. None of the tournaments encountered much in the way of weather. All were held according to schedule. Only a few of the 150 league teams had rain-outs that required rescheduling.

Summer monsoon season is always busy for the sports staff and maintenance crew, with the many tournaments and league games occurring during this time. Scheduling, combined with maintaining and prepping fields, takes time and coordination.

The 2014 season was especially challenging with the record monsoon rains creating a variety of problems at the five sports complexes consisting of 13 fields.

As Rick Hormann, Recreation Supervisor, puts it, all of the staff and maintenance crews in Prescott are the best. They are a well oiled machine, working together to make sure that the fields are well prepped, so schedules are met and cancellations kept to a minimum.

Tracking weather conditions is a daily chore, with daily (sometimes hourly) updates giving detailed information about cancellations and conditions over the telephone on the sports hotline. Complicating the situation is Prescott's transitional zone weather patterns. Storm cells may be drenching one side of town, while other portions of Prescott are sunny and dry. Cancellations are called only when absolutely necessary, and only those games in areas with severe weather conditions are called.

Many downpours only last a short time, causing rain delays. Lightning is monitored more closely, leading to delays at 30 minute intervals. Games are resumed only when the storms are moving out of the affected area.

Because safety is a primary concern, all of these above-and-beyond efforts have led to the many successful tournaments, outdoor sports leagues, and events hosted by Prescott Recreation Services Department during monsoon season. Every effort is made to make games happen. Taking care of the teams and people who come to Prescott to participate in these events is a priority.

(Contributors Rick Hormann, Rudy Litka and Nancy Nesbit)



All of the fields, including those at Pioneer Park (above) were saturated and left with standing water covering the entire field. The design of these fields allows for water drainage usually within 30 minutes to an hour after a thunderstorm.

(All photos courtesy of Rick Hormann)

The two Bill Vallely fields were the hardest hit. After each rainstorm the fields flooded, causing erosion and carrying the infield soil and other sand over most of the parks' surfaces. During the first storm, the infield was hit hard on the lower field (above photo). Repairs involved three staff (24 man hours) and 50 to 60 tons of new material. During the third storm, the upper field sustained significant turf damage due to flooding. Prompt repairs of these fields were necessary for scheduled season league play by Yavapai College.

For information on both adult and youth sports, visit us online through the City website at: www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks
Calls us at (928) 777-1557 or (928) 777-1122
Visit us at Grace Sparkes Memorial Activity Center
824 E. Gurley St., Prescott, AZ 86301
Sports Hotline during the season is (928) 777-1688

Fishing Report - Water Level Effects on Fishing

Generally, high runoff from summer monsoon storms can benefit fish populations by bringing in additional nutrients, and creating less competition for food. Following are a few updates from 2014.

Watson Lake - This lake filled to capacity with the summer monsoons. Due to a \$5,000 donation from Prescott Kiwanis for the annual Prescott's Great Outdoors event, the following was accomplished at the north boat ramp cove: The Recreation Services Department borrowed fish nets from Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD), and purchased additional nets from Tennessee, for successfully netting areas to create a 2-1/2 acre stocked cove for the event. The Friday prior to the event, Crowther's Freshwater Trout from south central Colorado delivered 650 lbs. of rainbow trout, some up to 24 inches long. The following morning, AZGFD delivered another 1300 lbs. of rainbow trout from Page Springs Fish Hatchery. Throughout the two-day event, hundreds of anglers participated, with some taking home multiple catches. AZGFD staff, Kiwanis volunteers, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University honors students, and other volunteers assisted the many kids. Following the two-day event, the nets were pulled allowing approximately 2/3 of total stocking to populate the lake. The original 2011 trout stocking demonstrated that trout do well in Watson Lake, with anglers occasionally reporting catches of over 24 inches. At this time, the Recreation Services Department is also exploring a purchase of black crappie from Arkansas in an attempt to return the crappie population to pre-1997 levels.

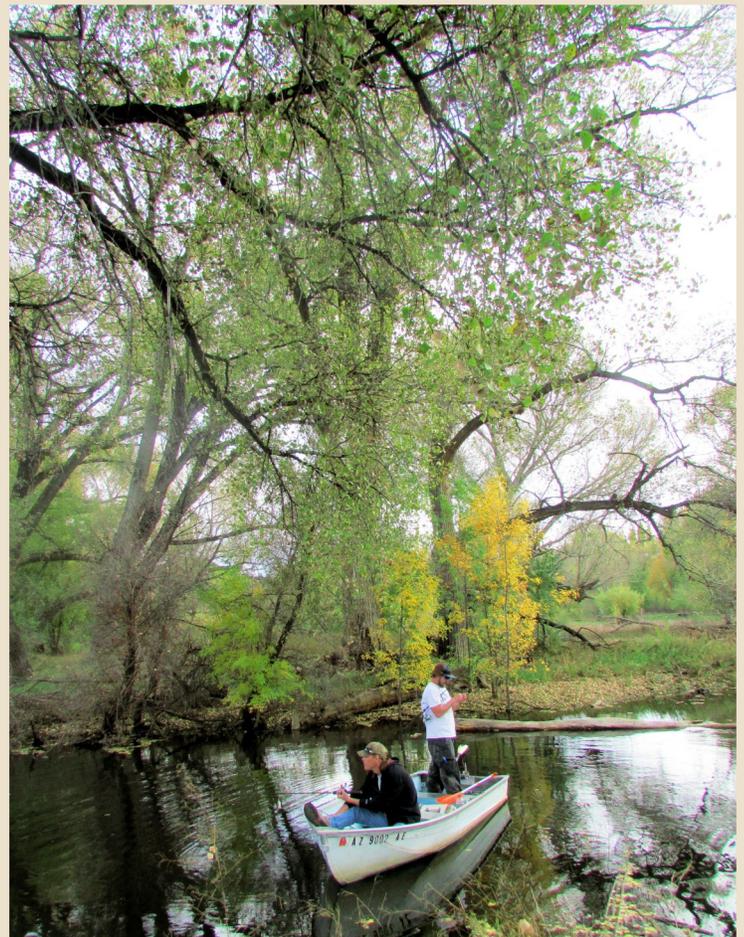
Goldwater Lake - The monsoon season brought this lake to almost-full capacity. Prior to the summer, AZGFD relocated many bass from the lower lake to the upper (park) lake. AZGFD also instituted a new policy whereby the daily bag limit is one bass, minimum size 13 inches, in anticipation that bass reproduction will increase. To compliment this effort, the Recreation Services Department continues to trap and remove crayfish in order to allow more vegetation to benefit bass reproduction.

Willow Lake - This lake benefitted greatly from the monsoon season as water levels had previously dropped to the lowest point since 2008-09. Much of this significant lake level increase was due to the water diversions from Watson Lake, when it had filled to capacity. While no fish stockings to Willow Lake have occurred, AZGFD's annual electro-surveys reveal that the bass population is doing well. Also, due to increased water level, the boat ramp and courtesy dock are functional once again.

(Contributor Eric Smith)

With Watson Lake filled to capacity, anglers once again have access to portions of the lake that expanded into a section of Watson Woods.

(Photo courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)



Arizona Game and Fish Department 2015 Winter - Trout Stocking Schedule:

	January	February	March
Goldwater Lake:	None	9, 23	9, 23
Watson Lake:	5	2	None

The trout stocking schedule dates listed represent the Monday of the week the stocking will occur. These schedules are tentative and subject to change due to weather conditions at the sites. Consult the Weekly Fishing Report before you go at: www.azgfd.net/artman/publish/FishingReport/

Prescott's Dams - Watson & Willow Lakes

The two most popular and accessible City of Prescott dams are located at Watson Lake and Willow Lake. Unlike the other dams which are closed to the general public, access behind the dams is obtainable via the trails that circle each lake.

Construction of Watson Lake Dam (a.k.a. Granite Creek Dam), the oldest of the two, probably began in late 1914 and was completed in 1920 (*NID) for the Hassayampa Alfalfa Farms Company, one of the predecessors of the Chino Valley Irrigation District (CVID). A concrete gravity arch dam with two adjacent spillway arches, its length is 187 feet with a height of 81 feet. Maximum storage capacity is 4,900 acre feet. It was designed and used to impound irrigation water for transport and use in the Chino Valley area. The

Lake was named after James Watson, a U.S. Senator from Indiana (November 8, 1916 to March 4, 1933). James was a principal investor in the Arizona Land and Irrigation Company, the predecessor of Hassayampa Alfalfa Farms Company.

To augment Watson Lake, the Willow Lake Dam (a.k.a. Willow Creek Dam) was built in 1936 by the CVID, and was a great depression era U.S. PWA (Public Works Administration) project. It was designed by Prescott resident James Bell Girard, P.E., who designed many projects throughout Arizona and in 1909 became the first and only territorial highway engineer. A thin arch concrete dam, it has a separated thin arch spillway. The lengths total 297 feet with a dam height of 99 feet. Maximum storage capacity is 7,800 acre feet.

The City of Prescott acquired both dams through the purchase of assets and water rights of the CVID in 1998, after the Arizona Department of Water Resources declared the area was mining groundwater and designated the Little Chino Subbasin an Active Management Area (AMA).

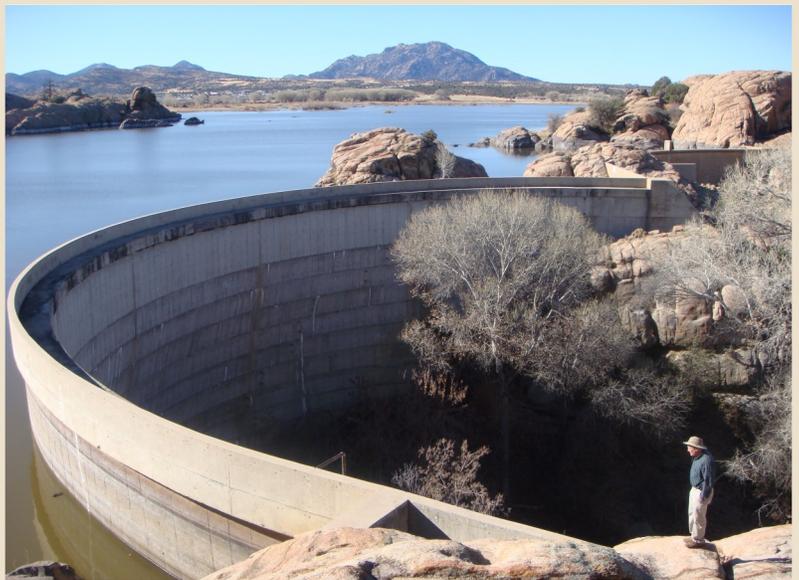


(Photos courtesy of Chris Hosking)

(Above) Water discharging from Watson Lake Dam
(Below right) Willow Lake Dam

(Contributor: Nancy Nesbit)

*All dam specs are from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NID-National Inventory of Dams.



The 1998 purchase of the dams mandated that the City of Prescott recharge the aquifer. Water from Watson Lake is discharged from the lake through the dam into Granite Creek. Located downstream (north) from Watson Lake Dam, a small diversion dam (left) pumps water from Granite Creek to the airport recharging facility.

(Photo left, courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)

History Page

Mayor Morris Goldwater Prescott's Centennial Man of the Century

Many assume that both Goldwater lakes and dams were named after Barry Goldwater. They were actually named after his uncle, Morris Goldwater, one of Prescott's most historic figures.

Originally from England, Morris' father Michael temporarily left his family behind and immigrated to the United States with his brother Joseph in 1852. Morris followed immigrating to California. At the Age of 20, he joined his father and uncle Joe in their store in Phoenix. In 1876 the brothers set up another mercantile business in Prescott, J. Goldwater and Bro., located on the southeast corner of Cortez and Goodwin Streets (present location of City Hall). Morris moved to Prescott later that year and worked in the store. With Joe's absences in Prescott, the partnership dissolved in May 1880 and the store was renamed Michael Goldwater and Son. The store was successful and in three years they erected their own building on the southeast corner of Cortez and Union Streets.

Active and prominent in Prescott, Morris Goldwater joined many organizations and societies. For a number of years he was the president of Commercial Trust and Savings Bank.

Morris Goldwater also became heavily involved in politics and was Prescott's mayor for 20 years, intermittently between 1879 and 1927. He also served on the Prescott City Council between his first two terms as mayor. One of the major issues during this time was water. The great fire of July 14, 1900 which destroyed most of Whiskey Row, reinforced the issue and need for a reliable water source. One of his biggest achievements, Morris Goldwater worked on getting adequate water and sewer systems to Prescott.

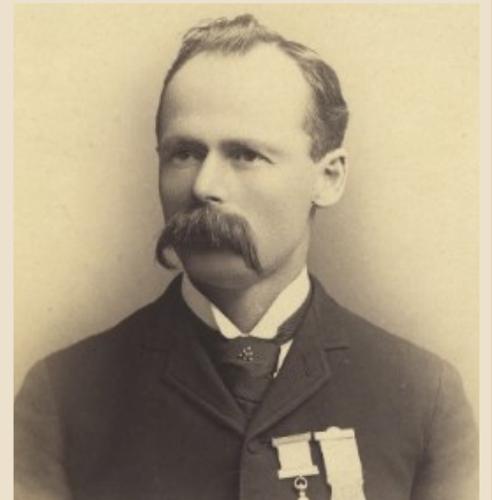
A bachelor most of his life, he was married at the age of 54 to widow Sarah Fisher in September 1906 in Los Angeles. He rented a room from her for many years on Cortez Street.

Goldwater Dams

The first of the dams, lower Goldwater Dam was constructed in 1923 as a surface water storage and potable water treatment plant, which has since been decommissioned. It is a concrete gravity dam with an integral spillway. The dam is 508 feet long and 72.15 feet high. It has a maximum capacity of only 351 acre feet of water.

To supplement lower Goldwater Lake, upper Goldwater Dam was constructed for the City in 1932 as a surface water storage reservoir. It is a slab-buttruss concrete dam with an integral spillway. It has a length of 383 feet and height of 52 feet. The maximum storage capacity is much larger than that of Lower Goldwater Lake at 700 acre feet. Construction of this dam was in conjunction with dams on Banning (a.k.a. Bannon) and Miller Creeks to obtain sufficient water for Prescott's growing population. Only upper Goldwater Lake is open to the public for recreational purposes.

There is limited access to the northwest corner of Upper Goldwater Dam at the end of North Shore Trail. All other public access to the dams and Lower Goldwater Lake is prohibited.



(Photo courtesy of Sharlot Hall Museum)

Morris Goldwater

Birth: January 16, 1852, England
Death: April 11, 1939, Prescott, AZ
Careers: Businessman, politician
Mayor of the City of Prescott
Vice President of the 1910 Arizona
Constitutional Convention
Member of three legislatures,
both territorial and state
Yavapai County Commissioner



(Photo courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)

Upper Goldwater Lake Dam



(Photo courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)

The pond in Watson Woods Riparian Preserve

Granite Creek Watershed

A Watershed: Wherever You Are, You're In One Watershed: the term simply means the area that drains to a single body of water. For example, when you are at the Plaza in downtown Prescott, any water that falls there, whether rain, snow, or sprinklers, drains into Granite Creek. That area, and most of Prescott, is part of the Granite Creek Watershed. By the smaller creeks, when anything falls near them it is part of that watershed. When you are at Flinn Park, in West Prescott, everything flows to Miller Creek and it is in the Miller Creek Watershed. That smaller watershed is part of the larger Granite Creek Watershed. Smaller watersheds fit inside larger ones, like nesting dolls.

Prescott has nine named creeks, with many tributaries. These creeks generally start in the forest toward the south end of town and wind through town, where many of them flow into Granite Creek. The last one to flow into Granite is Willow Creek, which joins Granite below Watson and Willow Lakes. From that point Granite Creek heads north until it flows into the Verde River.

Understanding what a watershed is, and how it functions, is important because it helps us to comprehend the flow in our creeks and any pollution issues. Any issues along the creeks have the ability to affect everyone, and everything downstream.

Prescott Creeks is a nonprofit organization with the mission to achieve healthy watersheds and clean waters in central Arizona for the benefit of people and wildlife through protection, restoration, education and advocacy.

(Contributor: Michael Byrd, Executive Director, Prescott Creeks)



More information is available at:
www.PrescottCreeks.org
or by calling (928) 445-5669

Stream Gauging Stations

Are you interested in monitoring stream flows during weather events? Stream flow gauging stations in the Prescott area allow you to go on-line to see increases in creek levels during storm events, and changes in flows. Some of these gauging stations are managed by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), with data continually uploaded.

Most gauging stations in Arizona managed by U.S.G.S. can be found at the following link:

<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/az/nwis/current/?type=flow>

For a Granite Creek gauging station located on the Yavapai-Prescott Indian Reservation:

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/az/nwis/uv/?site_no=095033000&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060

For a Granite Creek gauging station downstream of Watson Lake Dam in the Granite Dells:

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/az/nwis/uv/?site_no=095033000&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060

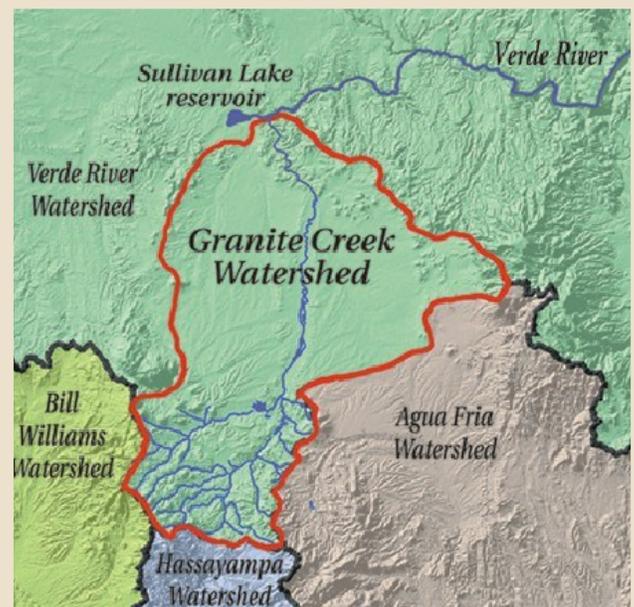
The National Weather Service - Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service also provides a good link to stream flow gauging along Granite Creek.

<http://water.weather.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?gage=grca3&wfo=fgz>

And finally, to compliment the above, Yavapai County Flood Control District maintains rain gauges adjacent to many area waterways that aid in preparing for increased stream flows. These can be found at the following:

<http://apps.yavapai.us/FloodALERT/MapAll.aspx>

(Contributor Eric Smith)



(Map courtesy of Prescott Creeks)

Granite Creek and surrounding watersheds.

Water and Wildlife The Watson and Willow Lakes Ecosystem IBA



(Photo by John West, courtesy of Prescott Audubon Society)

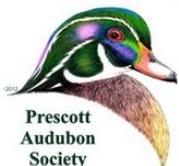
One of the species wintering in Prescott's IBA is the Hooded Merganser. A "specialty bird" when seen, they arrive in small numbers. In contrast, Northern Shovelers usually number in the hundreds.

birds, and many started arriving daily in the fall.

Water in Arizona means life, and waterways like the Verde River are home to a huge percentage of Arizona's wild creatures, including birds. (Willow and Watson Lakes are reservoirs in the Granite Creek Watershed which flows to the Verde River, (See the watersheds map on page 10.) Above normal precipitation during the 2014 monsoons produced more flowering plants, more seeds, and thus more to feed wildlife. Consider animals like deer, where pregnant does will have better chances of doing well over the winter. Insects will hatch and provide fuel for birds, and the like. Pine trees now have good cone crops, and several wintering finches are in Prescott taking advantage of that food source.

Prescott Audubon Society, managers of Prescott's IBA, will conduct its bird surveys on Watson and Willow Lakes over the winter, and expect counts to be high this year unless the lakes have a freeze.

(Contributor: Susan Drown,
Prescott Audubon Society)



More information is
available at:
prescottaudubon.org
or aziba.org

Watson and Willow Lakes, and a portion of Granite Creek flowing through most of Watson Woods Riparian Preserve, have been designated by the Arizona Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area (IBA) and are notable for the number of waterfowl they support during migration and winter periods.

These bodies of water are an oasis for resident and migratory birds alike. Lake levels and good food sources are among the determining factors in the numbers of birds arriving at the IBA during migration. According to the Arizona IBA, in wet years waterfowl numbers can exceed 5,000 at one time. In general, if an oasis like Willow Lake dries up, the birds must push on in hopes of another unclaimed spot with adequate food. With the rise in lake levels, it seems likely that Willow Lake will be able to support its "normal" quota of



(Photo courtesy Nancy Nesbit)

Prominent along Willow Lake Trail is Cormorant Tree, an old, dead cottonwood used as a rookery by cormorants for several years. The cormorants have since moved to the cottonwoods in nearby Cottonwood Grove, just south of the old tree. The Arizona Game and Fish Department takes an annual survey of this sizable rookery, which supports many Double-crested Cormorants and Great Blue Herons. These cottonwood trees depend on the rising and falling water levels in the Arizona climate, as do the cottonwoods in Watson Woods Riparian Preserve.

There is a bench for viewing and an IBA sign giving information about the IBA and Cormorant Tree near this site along Willow Lake Trail. It is just north of the trailhead located at the east end of Willow Creek Park. Parking is free.



Ceremonial Pad (Goldwater Lake)

Rentals - Park Ramadas Hold Your Special Event at a Park

Ramadas in city parks can be reserved for small or large groups, for an entire day or half a day. A reservation ensures your group of exclusive use of the ramada, and allows staff advance notice so that we can prepare for your group's arrival. We offer a 25 percent discount to City of Prescott residents. Just bring in your city water bill or Yavapai County Assessor's Office tax bill when you make your reservation to identify you as a resident of Prescott.

Large Ramadas

Will require a \$100 reservation hold within 10 days of reservation. \$100 is refundable if cancelled 45 days prior to event.

Half Day (4 hrs. or less) \$150

Full Day (open to close) \$300

- Goldwater Lake Ramada (capacity 100)
- Goldwater Lakeview Ramada (capacity 100)
- Goldwater Pinetop Ramada (capacity 100)
- Watson Lake Upper Ramada (capacity 150)
- Willow Lake Hilltop Ramada (capacity 150)
- Willow Lake Garden Ramada (capacity 150)

Refundable deposit:

**Commercial Event Rental - \$400,*

Private Event Rental - \$200

**Commercial Event Rentals are any rental that requires a Certificate of Liability. Some large groups may be considered a Commercial Event Rental.*

All rental fees are subject to change without notice.

A \$10 alcohol permit is required at all parks and lakes to consume beer and/or malt beverages only. Only Goldwater Lake and Watson Lake do not require the permit.

Medium Ramadas

Half Day (4 hrs. or less) \$100

Full Day (open to close) \$175

- Granite Creek Park Ramada (capacity 150)
- Vista Park Ramada (capacity 100)
- Willow Creek Park Ramada (capacity 100)

Refundable deposit:

**Commercial Event Rental - \$300*

Private Event Rental - \$200

Small Ramadas

Half Day (4 hrs. or less) \$75

Full Day (open to close) \$125

- Watson Lake Lower Ramada (capacity 40)
- Flinn Park Ramada (capacity 40)
- Ken Lindley Park Ramada (capacity 40)

Refundable deposit: \$200 all rentals

Other Facilities

- Goldwater Lake Ceremonial Pad (capacity 100)
\$35.00 per hour, maximum 4 hours



Recreation Services Department
Grace Sparkes Memorial Activity Center
(Old Armory Building)
824 E. Gurley St., Prescott, AZ 86301
Telephone (928) 777-1122
Visit us on the City website at:
www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks

Large Grass Areas are also available for rent at Watson Lake and Granite Creek Park, as well as Special Event Park Rentals at Watson Lake. For fees on these rentals, and more detailed information on Certificates of Liability, deposits and other requirements for all rentals including sports facilities, visit us online at:

www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks/rentals

Information on camping at Watson Lake, and parking fees and passes at Peavine Trail, Goldwater Lake, Watson Lake, and Willow Lake, are also available online.

You may telephone our office at (928) 777-1122 or visit our office during business hours:

Monday through Friday (except holidays), 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

This newsletter is a collaborative effort between City of Prescott employees and volunteers.

Compilation and graphics provided by Nancy K. Nesbit, Volunteer Park Ranger.

This newsletter is available on line at: www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks

You can also pick up a copy at our office at the Grace Sparkes Memorial Activity Center.