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Environmental film festival celebrates protecting rivers



Films coming to the Environmental Film Festival “The Land We Live In” (from left), “Avanyu Native Waters Rio Grande,” “Lost In Light,” “Sky Migrations,” “Selah Water from Stone,” “The Wild President” and “A Letter to Congress.” (Courtesy)

By **Jason Wheeler**

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[PrescottWheels](#)

Friends of the Verde River has partnered with Prescott Creeks and Citizen’s Water Advocacy Group (CWAG) to present the Wild & Scenic Film Festival to the Elks Theatre and performing Arts Center as well as at the Cliff Castle Casino Hotel in Camp Verde.

Both locations will have a 3:30 and 6:30 showing and with 13 shorts in all. Though the programs will be the same, both screenings are going to be different, said Deb Pastor of CWAG.

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival, which was started by the South Yuba River Citizens League in 2003, collects films people send in and provides a sort of menu of them for cities from all over the country to pick from, Pastor said. The showings at the Elks Theatre and Cliff Castle Casino Hotel were chosen as they relate to some of the issues pertaining to the rivers and water supplies in Arizona including mining, dam removal, bird migration and light pollution, she said. A couple also detail the Wild & Scenic River designation and how states can use the act.

While there aren’t any films centering on the Verde River itself, all the films have topics that show there are parallels that can be drawn with what’s happening in the Verde River Watershed, said Prescott Creeks Executive Director Michael Byrd. The head waters may be up in the Prescott area, but a lot of people don’t have access to it, and down in the valley, everyone uses it and it’s in their face, Pastor said.

“We’re trying to get people to see that this river is one river and all of us use it,” she said. “Get that in people’s heads, to get awareness out there.”

The Elks Theatre and Performing Arts Center showings are Thursday, Oct. 25, and the Cliff Castle Casino Hotel showings are Saturday, Oct. 27. Tickets are \$15 for one screening and \$25 for a double feature in advance, and \$20 for one screening our \$30 for a double feature on the day of and can be purchased online at www.verderiver.org/wild-scenic.

The festival is not political, Pastor said. Rather, it’s better to introduce people to the water and get them to think about the river, she said. Further, the festival also recognizes the 50th anniversary of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, Byrd said. The act preserves certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

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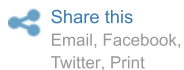
The festival benefits Friends of the Verde River, Prescott Creeks and CWAG, but Byrd said he wants to keep the focus on the celebration of protecting rivers.

“Our hope is that the folks walk away really feeling inspired about ‘oh my gosh, we all live right here in the Verde River Watershed, it’s a special place,’ ” he said. “It’s got a couple designations as wild and scenic, what can I do in my daily life to help participate to make sure it continues to be wild and scenic.”

The Elks Theatre and Performing Arts Center is located at 117 E. Gurley St. Cliff Castle Casino Hotel is located at 555 W. Middle Verde Road.

For more information and listings for both programs, visit

www.wildandscenicfilmfestival.org/events/friends-of-the-verde-river-3 for the 3:30 program and www.wildandscenicfilmfestival.org/events/friends-of-the-verde-river-2 for the 6:30 program.



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