

Prescott Creekside E-News

July 2025



www.PrescottCreeks.org

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"Rain on Granite Creek". Photo: Walt Anderson.

Greetings,

Welcome to the July issue of the Prescott Creekside E-News. In this issue you'll find important information about the potential future of Open Space properties in Prescott, a progress update with the FOREVER PRESERVED initiative, and a call for volunteers with information about the upcoming Important Bird Area migrating bird surveys in Watson Woods Riparian Preserve. All this as we are already 31 days into the Summer Monsoon Season with only 0.15" reported at the official weather station. Our collective fingers are crossed that forecasts for an above average monsoon season materializes this month. It's uncomfortably crispy out there!

Proposition 484: Prescott Voters to Weigh in on Open Space Protection

The August 5th, 2025 Primary Election ballot includes Proposition 484 "Open Space Charter Amendment". Prescott residents may have already received early voting ballots in their mailboxes last week.

At the heart of this issue is how open space properties in the City of Prescott, like Watson Woods Riparian Preserve, will be protected in the future. The common perspective is that with their zoning designation as Natural Open Space these properties, totaling over 4,000 acres, are protected. However, this is NOT the case for most of the City's Open Space properties.



2022 Monitoring Image showing Open Spaces: Granite Dells, Glassford Hill, Watson Lake, Peavine Trail, Watson Woods Riparian Preserve. Photo: OThomas/Prescott Creeks

Only Watson and Willow Lakes and James Acker Memorial Park, totaling 1,259 acres, are protected in perpetuity in the City of Prescott Charter. That leaves the remaining 25 additional Open Space properties, totaling 2,746 acres, unprotected. A simple majority vote of the Prescott City Council could result in any number of actions that are not consistent with protection of Open Space.

Proposition 484 seeks to change this by amending the City Charter to protect these open and recreational spaces in perpetuity and requiring voter approval should a future City Council seek to sell them or change their uses.

Prescott voters need to cast a ballot in the August 5th, 2025 Primary Election to weigh in on this issue. It will not carry forward to the General Election in November.

[Learn More](#)

[...and view a map of the Open Space properties included in Proposition 484.](#)

FOREVER PRESERVED - Update

The Prescott Creeks FOREVER PRESERVED initiative was created in 2024 to broaden public awareness and support for long-term protection of Watson Woods Riparian Preserve. Prescott Creeks and partner organizations hosted multiple FOREVER PRESERVED presentations for the public, along with numerous Watson Woods Riparian Preserve Tours designed to highlight the importance of the unique habitat found at the Preserve and demonstrate the effectiveness of ongoing ecological restoration efforts for wildlife, recreation, and water quality.

In May last year, Prescott Creeks jointly presented with City of Prescott staff to the Prescott City Council and received generally positive comments – which were interpreted as a green light to continue with planning efforts.



Wetland in Watson Woods Riparian Preserve. Photo: MByrd/Prescott Creeks

Since then, Prescott Creeks, three City of Prescott Departments, and four partners have been working collaboratively to advance a variety of plans and agreements that will ultimately lead to permanent protection of the conservation values at the Preserve. We are scheduled to present again to City Council in September this year. At that presentation, Prescott Creeks and staff will provide an update and present:

- **Draft Conservation Easement Language**
- **Draft Lease Agreement**
- **Joint Management Plan** (that clarifies roles and responsibilities between the City of Prescott and Prescott Creeks)
- **Work Plan** (showing on-the-ground ecological improvements within the Preserve)

We hope you will attend the meeting and show your support to *FOREVER PRESERVE* the Watson Woods Riparian Preserve.

Save the Date

Tuesday, September 9th, 2025 | 1 PM
Council Chambers | Prescott City Hall
201 N Montezuma St, Prescott, AZ 86301

[Learn More](#)

2025 Preserve Important Bird Area Surveys – Call for Volunteers

Since 2009, [Prescott Audubon Society](#) and [Prescott Creeks](#) have collaborated on conducting migrating bird surveys in the Watson Woods Riparian Preserve portion of the [Watson and](#)

[Willow Lakes Ecosystem Important Bird Area](#). Surveys were initiated concurrently with ecological restoration work performed on Granite Creek in the Preserve to improve habitat for native birds among other things.



Blue Grosbeak observed in Watson Woods Riparian Preserve. Photo: L Loomis.

Leslie Loomis, a volunteer with Prescott Audubon Society and Prescott Creeks, is organizing the bird surveys that will take place in the Preserve. Surveys will resume this year during fall migration and will take place on:

- Sunday, August 24, 2025
- Sunday, September 7, 2025

Interested individuals should complete the new [IBA Survey Interest Form](#) (even if they've done so in past years). This new form has more questions, and the information you provide will help Leslie to create the survey teams.

[Learn More](#)

Welcome John Grant

Meet John Grant! With his interests in geology, environmental, and cultural points of interest John became a Master Naturalist in 2024. After participating in the weekly Watson Woods Riparian Preserve C.R.E.W., John said "I am amazed at the foresight Prescott Creeks had decades ago to envision a plan and obtain the public's buy-in to restore the area."



John Grant - Always smiling. Photo: PTaska.

John joined the Prescott Creeks Board of Directors in December of 2024. With his AZ Master Naturalist training, John also brings to the organization 43 years of experience in various construction, maintenance, operations and management with the Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

[Learn more about John here...](#)

Prescott Creeks is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to achieve healthy watersheds and clean waters in central Arizona for the benefit of people and wildlife through protection, restoration, education, and advocacy.

Our Contact Information

Prescott Creeks
PO Box 3004
Prescott, AZ 86302-3004
(928) 445-5669
www.PrescottCreeks.org

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