

What Makes Fossil Creek Special?

In 2009, Congress designated Fossil Creek as a Wild & Scenic River to ensure for the protection of its rare, unique, and exemplary geologic, biological, and recreation values, as well as its exceptional cultural value to the Yavapai-Apache Nation. Fossil Creek is one of only two Wild & Scenic Rivers in Arizona and has been described as the most diverse riparian area in the state.

At its headwaters Fossil Creek seems to appear out of nowhere, originating from a collection of artesian springs that produce a constant, year-round flow of nearly 30 million gallons of water per day. The high mineral content of this water leaves travertine dams and deposits, giving rise to the fossil-like features for which the creek is named.

Early in the twentieth century Fossil Creek was diverted for hydropower production. In 2005, the hydropower project was decommissioned, restoring full flows to the creek. This effort enhanced conditions for the many plants and wildlife species that depend on Fossil Creek for habitat, including otters, beavers, leopard frogs, common black hawks, and federally listed or sensitive native fish species. The restored flows also allow visitors to fully enjoy Fossil Creek's deep, clear pools and beautiful blue-green water. Fossil Creek has a number of Dilzhé'é (Western Apache) culture sites. The Dilzhé'é lived along Fossil Creek for generations and still consider this to be their homeland.

The Forest Service has an obligation to protect this special place and is working with the public to develop a long-term plan for the area's management. In the meantime, interim rules have been implemented to protect Fossil Creek's diverse and unique values. Please help us in this effort by respecting and abiding by the rules listed on this brochure.

For More Information...

Or to comment or become involved in the long term planning for Fossil Creek, contact:

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<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/coconino/fossilcreek>

