



# Western Rivers Action Network

## Arizona

### Arizona's Rivers: an Economic Engine

- A sustainable supply of water is the foundation for Arizona's future growth and prosperity.
- The Colorado River provides over \$1.4 trillion (two thirds of the Basin's economic value) in annual economic benefits
- A recent Arizona State University study concluded that over 16 million jobs in the Basin region, accounting for \$871 billion in wages and labor income, are dependent on flow in the Colorado River.
- Tourism is the number one driver of Arizona's economy, ranking first in Arizona's export-oriented business sectors.
- Visitors are drawn to Arizona's rugged and natural beauty and our rivers are a major contributor to that attraction.
- Tourism directly impacts 161,000 jobs located in all 15 Arizona counties.
- Tourism is a primary driver of Arizona's retail tax base, stimulating \$1.7 billion dollars of yearly revenue that flows into our State and local economies.
- Arizona's top three visited National Parks and the top three Arizona State Parks are tied to the health and flow of the Colorado River.
- In 2007, Arizona State Recreation Parks produced \$156 million in economic output, with \$23 million of that in state and local taxes. Of those 14 recreation parks, 11 are river-based recreation areas.



Western yellow-billed cuckoo  
Photo Credit: Steve Baranoff



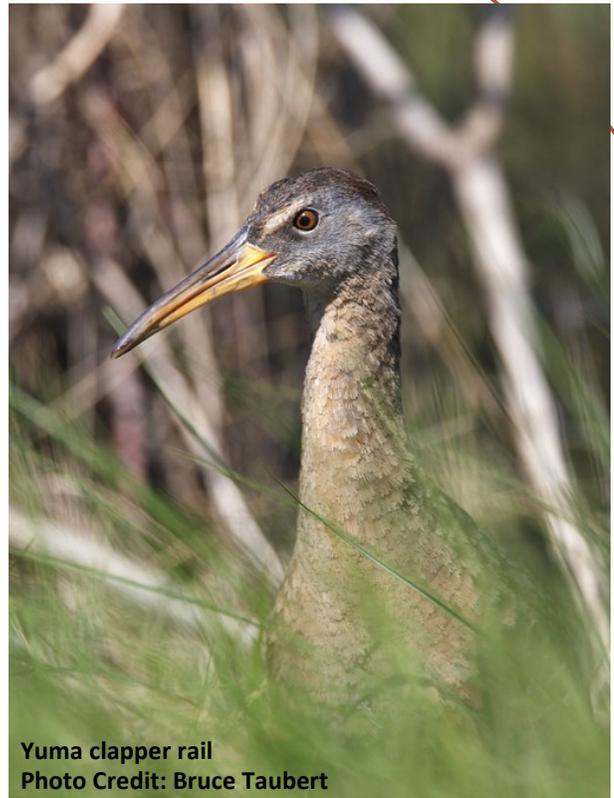


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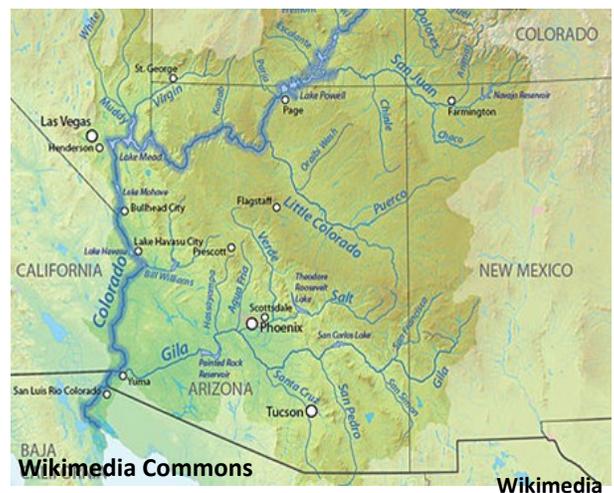
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#### ... an Economic Engine

- A 2011 national survey estimated that bird-watching in the United States generates \$107 billion in annual economic output, impacts 660,000 jobs and contributes \$6 billion dollars to State tax revenues.
- Bird watching in Arizona accounts for up to \$1.5 billion in annual economic output.
- River restoration projects increase employment by creating construction jobs, jobs connected to new river recreation opportunities and others.
- River research is on the rise in Arizona and elsewhere and that has led to the infusion of new grant dollars into local communities.
- Numerous studies (including one recently conducted in the Verde Valley and another in the Santa Cruz River Basin) support the thesis that rivers and riparian areas are an amenity that fosters community attractiveness and value.
- Research shows that properties adjacent to river corridors may be valued up to 30% higher than comparable properties off the river. A 2012 national study found that proximity to National Wildlife Refuges increased residential property values by 4-9%.
- Of the 33 million overnight guests at Arizona hotels more than 70% are non-residents and 15% are international visitors. Their expenditures represent new tax dollars to local economies and are particularly valuable to rural areas of our state.



Yuma clapper rail  
Photo Credit: Bruce Taubert



Join Audubon's Western Rivers Action Network as we rise to this historic challenge to create healthier western rivers for birds, other wildlife, and people.

[http://audubonaction.org/western\\_rivers](http://audubonaction.org/western_rivers)

For more information contact Arizona's WRAN coordinator Sarah Luna at [lsarah@msn.com](mailto:lsarah@msn.com)

Visit our website: <http://az.audubon.org/western-rivers-action-network-0>

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