



# Prescott Audubon Society

*A Chapter of the National Audubon Society*

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**P. O. Box 4156; Prescott, Arizona 86302**

August 16, 2024

Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

Our organization recently became aware of a plan by the Prescott Parks and Recreation Department to pave a section of the West Granite Creek Park (WGCP) into a parking lot. West Granite Creek Park was established as a riparian natural park and car-free Greenways Trail by Resolution No. 3274 of City Council in July 2000 as part of the West Granite Creek Park Master Plan. Paving this area of West Granite Creek Park disregards the city of Prescott's own resolution.

Additionally, paving this area would permanently sever the car-free Greenways Trail which connects downtown Prescott with Granite Creek Park and the Dexter neighborhood. This pedestrian/bike path is used regularly by the near-by neighborhood and by commuters traveling to downtown Prescott for work. The mature trees in this area provide shade and habitat for birds and wildlife. Paving this area would destroy the beautiful natural park land and the connectivity of a human pedestrian/bike path. Closing off this area to cars and shifting the parking to other paved areas close by would preserve the park and reconnect the Greenways Trail. Not paving the area and providing a designated walkway from the parking to the nearby playground and splash pad would provide for the safety of the families recreating in this area.

The Prescott Audubon Society has sponsored field trips to Granite Creek Park and West Granite Creek Park to observe the birds which inhabit this riparian corridor. Besides the resident birds that call the park home, many migrating species also spend their time in Prescott in this area. The park provides water and mature trees that many species require for safe nesting and raising of their young. Summer and Western Tanagers are two migrating species that are frequently seen in the park in the summer. The sweet song of the Yellow Warbler can be heard on summer mornings. The Common Black Hawk, not really so common, spends time in Granite Creek Park in the summer months. Cooper's Hawks have nested in West Granite Creek Park and waterfowl are frequently seen in the creek in the winter. Other wildlife observed traveling the creek corridor include deer, coyote, javelina, raccoon, and fox.

The Prescott Audubon Society respectfully requests the city of Prescott honor the West Granite Creek Master Plan by restoring the permanent barrier protecting WGCP from vehicular traffic entering at the end of Granite Street and restoring the connectivity of the Greenways Trail, providing safe access to the recreational facilities for all users.

Thank you for your consideration.

Prescott Audubon Society Board