

SPONSORSHIP INVITATION

CELEBRATING THREE YEARS
WITH AZ(LAND)



THREE YEARS ROOTED IN THE SONORAN DESERT. A RIVER RISING WITH US.

FISCALLY SPONSORED BY



AZ(LAND)

AZ(LAND) 3-Year Anniversary
Saturday, Nov 7, 2026

Protectors of the Salt River is an Community-led stewardship movement caring for the Rio Salado in South Phoenix. As our fiscal sponsor AZ(LAND) turns three, join us as a sponsor of the pilot's next chapter: cultural signage led by GRIC O'otham community members, farming coaching for residents, and local agriculture as climate infrastructure.

615+

volunteer shifts on the Rio Salado in one pilot year

740+

bags of trash and invasive plants removed

~3

acres of riverfront under active community stewardship

1

ancestral crop, i'toi onions, held in community seed banks



PICTURED: PROTECTORS STEWARDS AND VOLUNTEERS ALONG THE RIO SALADO

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION & FUNDRAISER · SATURDAY, NOV 7, 2026

An evening celebrating three years of community-led environmental justice in South Phoenix and the people and partners making the Rio Salado bloom.

Give now → secure.actblue.com/donate/rio-salado-pilot

Since April 30, 2023

THREE YEARS OF COMMUNITY LED CARE FOR THE SALT RIVER.

Protectors of the Salt River (Onk Akimel Ha Nukutham) began on April 30, 2023, when neighbors and relatives started gathering at the river in South Phoenix. Three years later it is an Indigenous-led stewardship movement restoring right relationship with the Salt River. Community members lead the work as stewards and architects. Ceremony, language, food, and art sit alongside the shovels and trash bags.

"WE ARE RESTORING NOT ONLY THE RIVER, BUT OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER."

PROTECTORS OF THE SALT RIVER

HOW WE WORK

Weekly stewardship and invasive plant removal · Language and cultural knowledge carried by Indigenous community members · Food sovereignty with local growers and seed keepers · Gatherings and shared meals that turn volunteers into returning stewards.

WHAT THREE YEARS BUILT

1 ACRE

Fundraised toward the Rio Salado Transformation Site highlighted in the AZ Environmental Convening

NEAR ZERO

invasive stinknet in the primary target area after multi-year hand removal

RIO PHX

our stewardship model is featured in the City's Rio Salado policy plan

OUR FISCAL SPONSOR · AZ(LAND)

AZ(LAND) was founded in 2023 by educator Reggie Carrillo, born and raised in the desert barrios of South Phoenix. As a 501(c)(3) environmental justice organization, AZ(LAND) holds and stewards every sponsorship gift for Protectors, with public 990 filings, professional accounting, and dual oversight of sponsored funds. This November, AZ(LAND) celebrates its own third anniversary.

2025 - 2026 Pilot

ONE RIVER. FIVE COMMUNITY-LED GROUPS. A YEAR THAT PROVED WHAT'S POSSIBLE.

From 2025 through July 2026, five organizations (Protectors of the Salt River, AZ(LAND), Cultural Signage Design, Empowerment PHX, and Foodways) tested a simple idea along the Rio Salado: river stewardship, cultural knowledge, food sovereignty, art, and design all grow stronger when they move as one integrated system. Partners included Gila River Indian Community members, City of Phoenix, Audubon, and the Indian Health Service.

Full pilot learnings report: protectorspilotlearningsjuly2026.netlify.app

615+

volunteer shifts completed on the river

740+

bags of trash and invasive species removed

~3 ACRES

under active stewardship, Transformation Site to 3rd Street bridge

35

artists engaged; 13 local venues activated

1

ancestral crop, i'ittoi onions; held in community seed banks

15

networking groups formed; 16+ local vendors supported

WHAT WE LEARNED

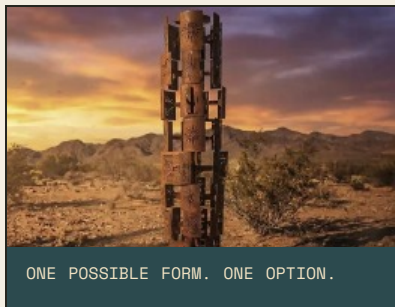
- ◆ **Belonging is infrastructure.** When diverse communities feel welcome, a cleanup becomes stewardship, and stewards stay.
- ◆ **Place changes minds.** Standing at the waterway itself transforms how people understand rivers and their own role in them.
- ◆ **Consent sets the pace.** For cultural signage honoring Indigenous knowledge, formal community consent is the deliverable; timelines follow community approval.
- ◆ **Rotating, stipended leadership works.** It grew volunteer decision-makers and an intergenerational pipeline.
- ◆ **Shared resources multiply impact.** Equipment and venues shared across five groups stretched every dollar further.

THE COMMUNITY'S MOST CONSISTENT REQUEST: "MORE GATHERINGS, MORE OFTEN, IN MORE PLACES ALONG THE RIVER."

The Next Chapter

WHAT YOUR SPONSORSHIP MAKES POSSIBLE

Sponsorships fund three priorities the community named for the year ahead.



ONE POSSIBLE FORM. ONE OPTION.

01 CULTURAL SIGNAGE LED BY GRIC O'OTHAM COMMUNITY MEMBERS

LaVerne Jackson, Protectors founding member and GRIC member, leads the design of watershed signage that brings O'otham language and knowledge to the river. The work moves through the Community's own cultural and language authorities. Formal consent comes first, and fabrication follows consensus. Your gift funds community design sessions, translation review, and fabrication once approved.



HOME GARDENS AND DESERT CROPS

02 FARMING COACHING LED BY ROBERT STONE

Robert Stone, an Akimel O'otham elder, farmer, and seed keeper from the Gila River Indian Community, coaches South Phoenix residents to grow desert-adapted food at home. Families learn to build soil, conserve water, and save seed, then return seed to community seed banks. Your gift funds coaching stipends, seed, soil, and tools.



FOODWAYS: SEED TO COMMUNITY

03 LOCAL AGRICULTURE AS CLIMATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Gardens, shade trees, and local growers hold water in the soil, cool the blocks around them, and keep food close to home. In one of the hottest urban corridors in the country, a neighborhood garden is infrastructure. Your gift grows the network behind it: i'toi onions grown from community seed and held in community seed banks, 16+ local vendors, and more growers each season.

Also on the river: the Rio Salado Transformation Site, the run, walk, and bike the Rio series, and more gatherings in more places.

WHY YOUR INVESTMENT IS IN GOOD HANDS

- ◆ **Held by AZ(LAND):** a 501(c)(3)
- ◆ **Trusted by partners:** from the Arizona Community Foundation to the City of Phoenix and Tribal, and conservation partners.

100% to the Pilot

ONE GIFT. ONE RIVER. 100% TO THE PILOT.

We have made giving simple. Every gift goes to AZ(LAND), restricted to the Protectors of the Salt River pilot, so 100% of what you give works on the Rio Salado. Give at any level below, online or with the form on the next page.

ANNIVERSARY GOAL

\$4,800

Give online
[secure.actblue.com/
 donate/rio-salado-pilot](https://secure.actblue.com/donate/rio-salado-pilot)



WHAT YOUR GIFT ENABLES

FEED THE CREW

\$250

VOLUNTEER MEALS

- ◆ Covers a shared meal for a full volunteer shift on the river, prepared by local vendors who uplift desert produce
- ◆ Feeds the stewards doing the work and puts dollars into South Phoenix food businesses at the same time

LEAD A WATERSHED TOUR

\$500

EDUCATION ON THE RIVER

- ◆ Sponsors an educational watershed tour: transportation, guides, and materials for a busload of residents and students
- ◆ Standing at the waterway changes how people understand rivers; this is the pilot's most proven teaching tool

POWER A MERCADO

\$1,000

MARKET ON THE RIO

- ◆ Underwrites a Mercado at the Rio Salado: artisan and farmer vendor support, art, and music at the river's edge
- ◆ Builds the local vendor ecosystem the pilot has grown to 16+ small businesses

LAUNCH RIDE THE RIO

\$2,500

SIGNATURE EVENT

- ◆ Launches the run, walk, and bike the Rio event: route, safety, permits, and community celebration
- ◆ The pilot's next big invitation, bringing new neighbors to the river as recreation becomes stewardship

Every gift, every level: an invitation to the November 7 celebration, recognition there, and a copy of the pilot learnings report. Gifts of any amount move the goal, and in-kind support is welcomed too. To direct your gift to cultural signage or farming coaching, mark it on the form or email us.

Return by Oct 9, 2026

YES, COUNT US IN.

Give online at secure.actblue.com/donate/rio-salado-pilot, or return this form by Friday, October 9, 2026 to be recognized at the November 7 celebration.

- ☐ Feed the Crew · \$250
 ☐ Lead a Watershed Tour · \$500
☐ Power a Mercado · \$1,000
 ☐ Launch Ride the Rio · \$2,500
☐ Another amount: \$_____ · In-kind support: _____

Direct my gift to: ☐ Cultural signage ☐ Farming coaching ☐ Where needed most

All gifts are restricted to the Protectors of the Salt River pilot on the Rio Salado.

BUSINESS / ORGANIZATION NAME (AS IT SHOULD APPEAR)

CONTACT NAME & TITLE

PHONE

EMAIL

WEBSITE / SOCIAL HANDLE

SIGNATURE

DATE

HOW TO GIVE

Checks payable to **Azland Fund** (memo: Rio Salado pilot). Online gifts at secure.actblue.com/donate/rio-salado-pilot. For invoicing or recurring giving, contact us below and we'll make it easy.

Protectors of the Salt River
protectorsofthesaltriver@gmail.com



SCAN OR CLICK
TO GIVE NOW

Protectors of the Salt River is a fiscally sponsored project of Azland Fund (AZ(LAND)), a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, EIN 93-2743911. Contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law; no goods or services beyond nominal recognition benefits are provided unless noted. Gifts are restricted to the Protectors of the Salt River pilot on the Rio Salado. Online gifts are processed by ActBlue Charities and granted to AZ(LAND).