

Watershed Alliance for the Rio de Flag

Charter

October 16, 2023

Background

The Watershed Alliance for the Rio de Flag (WARF) came together around the idea that the Rio de Flag and its watershed is an ephemeral river and riparian corridor connecting the Flagstaff area community providing a multitude of environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits, and that coordinating efforts to maintain and improve the Rio de Flag would benefit the community. The Friends of the Rio received a Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART grant to develop a watershed group which became the WARF, and the *Rio de Flag Watershed Plan* was developed, which includes improvement projects for the Rio de Flag Watershed. The WARF will act as a self-governing umbrella organization in association with Friends of the Rio de Flag as the sponsoring organization.

Purpose of the WARF

The WARF promotes watershed health, benefits human and ecological communities, and increases public engagement through the development and implementation of the *Rio de Flag Watershed Plan*. The Alliance provides value by convening and coordinating dialogue among community members and leaders, government agencies, indigenous tribes and nations, and non-profit organizations, and by providing an opportunity to coordinate projects along the Rio de Flag. It is a forum and a working group for information sharing, education and outreach, planning and policy reform and for encouraging investment in collaborative watershed preservation and restoration/stewardship projects. The WARF harnesses the collective knowledge and networks of community members working on the watershed, ecosystem preservation, watershed function, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Through these efforts, the Watershed Alliance seeks to ensure continuing the many important environmental and public health benefits of green and open space conservation.

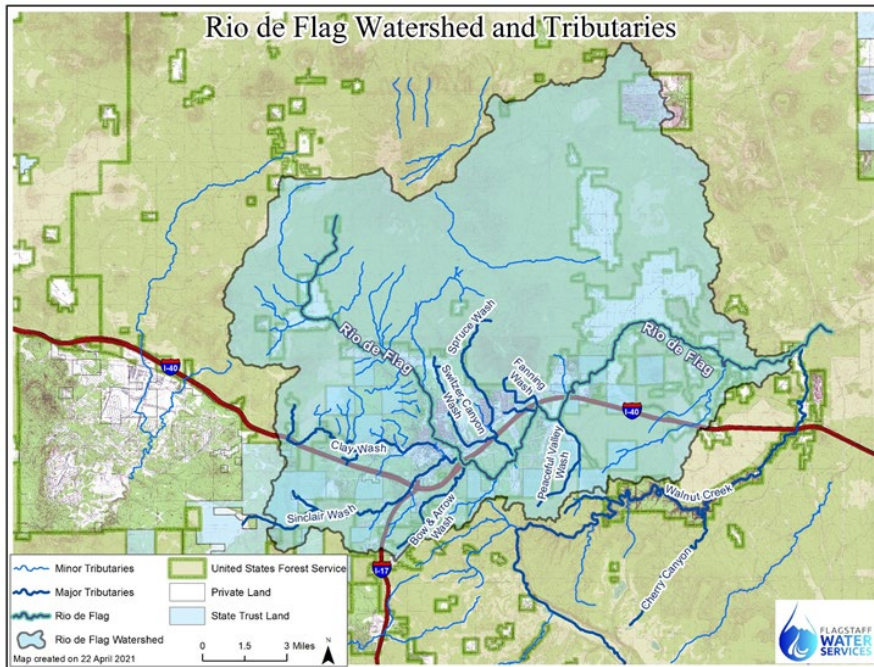
The WARF will coordinate partnership efforts on issues related to water supply, water quality, watershed function and ecological integrity, environmental justice, public use, education, awareness and engagement, by acting as a hub of information sharing, project planning, and collaboration.

The WARF may amend, add to and delete from the Rio de Flag Watershed Plan priority projects as becomes appropriate over time. The WARF may partner with other organizations to accomplish its objectives and complete projects. The sponsoring organization can be changed by mutual agreement of the WARF and the current sponsoring organization.

WARF mission statement:

“The Watershed Alliance for the Rio de Flag promotes watershed health, benefits human and ecological communities, and increases public engagement through the development and implementation of the Rio de Flag Watershed Plan”

Geographic Region and Operating Scale



Guiding Principles

As a long-term collaborative effort, the Steering Committee and Working Groups commit to following basic principles of successful collaboration. These include:

- Balance and inclusiveness
- Transparency
- Shared leadership, shared responsibility, shared funding, shared credit
- Outcome orientation and focus on collective impact
- Constructive and active participation
- Consensus-based decision making
- Treat one another with civility, respecting each other’s points of view

Alliance Governance

The WARF is a multi-stakeholder collaborative effort open to any individual, organization, or public agency that shares a commitment to the goals and objectives of the WARF.

The WARF will meet at least quarterly. Meetings can include briefings or presentations of interest to the group, discussion of priorities and funding, general project prioritization, and review of progress on specific projects or the general direction of the WARF. Additional meetings may be called in response to funding opportunities or special needs of stakeholders. The purpose of the WARF is to promote grant opportunities for individual stakeholders, there is little expectation of general funding being available to the WARF or through the WARF.

Steering Committee/Core Team

The Steering Committee (SC) is the WARF's primary guiding body. The SC meets quarterly to advance the goals of the Coalition, share information, plan, evaluate its work and impact, celebrate its successes, and adapt its approaches to meet changing needs.

- **Purpose:** Provides strategic leadership for the Alliance, coordination among the partners, and guidance to the working groups.
- **Number of members:** 4 to 6
- **Qualifications/Expertise:** Diversity in member's areas of essential expertise and experience is desirable. Collectively, members provide racial, cultural, gender, socioeconomic, and other forms of balance.
- **Terms:** Members for the SC will be elected by the WARF for a two-year term.
- **Decision-making:** Decisions will be made by consensus whenever possible. Consensus is reached when everyone agrees they can accept whatever is proposed after every effort has been made to meet the interests of all participants. If consensus cannot be reached, points of agreement and disagreement will be noted, and SC will work with WARF members to determine how best to proceed.
- **Funding:** SC members may lead or support fundraising efforts for the WARF and its priorities.
- **Recruitment:** Elections of Steering committee members will be held at the first WARF meeting of the year. Approximately one half of the SC members will be up for election each year.
- **Removal of a SC member:** If a member of the Steering Committee is unable or unwilling to follow the guiding principles and/or fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the charter, they may resign from their position and/or be asked to vacate their seat. Any member who misses half or more of the meetings in a year without an excuse, may be asked to resign.

Project Implementation Coordination

Funding

- Initial funding to support the development of the Alliance was provided by the BOR WaterSMART program.

- The WARF may pursue grants and other forms of additional funding with the concurrence of the governing board of the sponsoring organization.
- The sponsoring organization will be responsible for handing and accounting for funding received by the WARF unless another member organization agrees in advance to handle the funds and accounting for a specific project or group of projects.
- The WARF may enter into agreements with other parties to implement projects in line with the purposes for which WARF was founded.

Communications

One of the primary tasks of the WARF is to communicate with partners and with the broader public. It is the responsibility of the Steering Committee to ensure consistency in this messaging. Communication with the public may include, but is not limited to: Special features in the Arizona Daily Sun, Earth Notes, social media, community open houses along the Rio de Flag where proposed projects would occur, special exhibits at Willow Bend, NAU, the Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff Festival of Science, the Arboretum at Flagstaff, and Friday Art Walks.

Amending this Charter

The contents of this document reflect current conditions and context, opportunities, and interests of the partners. The Charter will be reviewed annually and may be modified, as needed, through agreement by the Steering Committee. Any modifications will have to be approved and formalized by the member organizations of the WARF before being approved.

Current members of the Steering Committee

- a. Representatives of the land owners, managers and water rights holders including the following:
 - City of Flagstaff – Water Services
 - Coconino County - Community Development
 - USDA Forest Service - Coconino National Forest
- b. Representatives of local NGOs, including:
 - Friends of the Rio de Flag
 - Local interested residents elected by the members of the WARF – none at this time.