

# Workshop to develop plans for rec area

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Proposals for using recreation areas along the Agua Fria River Corridor are expected to be developed today at a workshop of community members.

The goal is to end the day with workable development plans that can be made public for discussion, said Roger Baele, board president of Friends of the West Valley Recreation Corridor.

"Now we need to go get this thing built," said Baele, whose group organized the Saturday workshop at Estrella Mountain Community College in Avondale along with Arizona Foundation for Resource Education.

Community members will devise designs for land use in the 33-mile corridor in the West Valley that runs along the Agua Fria River.

The area starts as far north as Lake Pleasant and continues south to the Gila River in Avondale.

The sites involved include a wetland area adjacent to Avondale's Friendship Park, a reclaimed sand and gravel pit in the southwest Valley, and the McMicken Dam Outfall area just north of Bell Road.

All three sites are part of the Maricopa County Agua Fria Watercourse Master Plan, which is a project to control the river while creating community parks.

The final redevelopment will benefit residents who live in the communities along that corridor, including Avondale, El Mirage, Glendale, Peoria, Phoenix, Tolleson, Surprise and Youngtown, as well as large unincorporated areas of Maricopa County.

The workshop will include creating individual planning groups that include teachers; environmental experts; mining, gravel or water representatives; landscape architects; community leaders; engineers; architects; user groups; and even high school or college students.

The workshop is also aimed at giving teachers instructional tools they can use to create lesson plans that meet the state standards. A number of teachers will participate in the morning session, then meet in the afternoon to break the session into learnable skills.

Larry McBiles, executive director of the Arizona Foundation for Resource Education, said teachers taking part in the workshop will see firsthand what it's like to participate in a community process while learning how to work in a group setting.

"They will see how to involve kids very interactively and think about finding solutions to problems," he said.

For more information on the project, contact the Friends of the West Valley Recreation Corridor at (623) 695-4602 or visit [www.friendsofwvrc.org](http://www.friendsofwvrc.org). AFRE can be reached at (602) 266-4417 or at [www.afre.org](http://www.afre.org).