

# WHAT ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES?

- Don't dispose of debris in or adjacent to washes, ditches or other waterways. Even twigs can plug up these waterways eventually causing flooding. Keep the washes free of debris.

- Don't overfill trash receptacles - what falls out could eventually end up in a drainage ditch or waterway.

- Don't throw trash out of your vehicle, carry a litter bag in your car and use it. Don't toss your cigarette butts on the ground. Not only is this a fire hazard but a cigarette butt takes 5 years to decompose.



- Dispose of diapers, left over food wrappers, cups, paper, cigarette butts and other debris in trash receptacles. Take a trash bag with you when hiking or going for a drive. Put trash in it rather than throwing it on the ground or in the Creek. Don't pour drink on the ground or in the Creek. Pour drink down sinks or put it in the trash.

- Be sure to carry doggie poop baggies to clean up after your pets and dispose of it in a trash receptacle or pet waste station.

- Please don't disturb or play on hay bales in ditches. These are placed to catch sediment.



**THE LEAVE NO TRACE** program establishes a nationwide code of outdoor ethics. It was developed to help minimize your impact while enjoying the outdoors. Please practice its principles. When walking your animal, pick up its waste and dispose of it in the trash or pet waste stations.

Camp, hike and travel on designated durable surfaces. Pack it in and pack it out. Remove human and pet waste or use designated toilets when available. Protect and conserve water resources.

Stay on the trail - don't bust the crust! It's alive. The black patches of knobby crust are made up of lichen, moss, and fungi that prevent erosion and retain water. It is easily broken. One footprint can kill a decade's worth of growth.



Keep natural areas clean - dispose of diapers and trash properly...stay on trails...don't disturb natural habitats...maintain beauty - the things you should take out with you are trash, pictures and beautiful memories! Take responsibility to protect the scenic beauty of the Sedona area.

This is a wilderness area. Keep it wild and remember, YOU are the visitor and you do make a difference! Leave it clean for future visitors.

Development of this brochure funded by a grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality Revised by City of Sedona 2014



## KEEP IT CLEAN

### AS A VISITOR YOU PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART!

Pollution of stormwater runoff is often the result of the daily activities of residents and tourists.

### WHAT IS STORMWATER RUNOFF?

Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation from rain or snowmelt flows over the ground rather than soaking into it. Impervious surfaces like parking lots, driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground.

### HOW DOES STORMWATER BECOME POLLUTED?

As the volume of stormwater increases, it can pick up debris, chemicals, bacteria, dirt, and other pollutants. For instance, when stormwater contacts animal feces, chemicals or erodes dirt, it becomes polluted. This flow is discharged untreated into waterbodies such as Oak Creek. Pollution is a concern because we use these water bodies for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water.



# THE EFFECTS OF STORMWATER POLLUTION

Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals, and people.

- Sediment can cloud the water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow. Sediment also can destroy aquatic habitats.
- Excess nutrients can cause algae blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose in a process that removes the oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms can't exist in water with low dissolved oxygen levels.
- Bacteria from feces and other pathogens can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards, often making creek closures necessary. Bacteria may be the result of diapers, trash or of your pet's droppings when not disposed of properly. Bacteria, such as E. coli, is a significant pollutant concern in Oak Creek.
- Debris such as diapers, plastic bags, six-pack rings, bottles and cigarette butts washed into water bodies can choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic life like ducks, fish, turtles, and birds.



- Household hazardous wastes like insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, used motor oil, and other auto fluids can poison aquatic life. Land animals and people can become sick or die from eating diseased fish and shellfish or ingesting polluted water.
- Polluted stormwater often affects drinking water sources. This, in turn, can affect human health and increase drinking water treatment costs.



# WHERE DO YOU FIT IN?

## YOUR ACTIONS IMPACT

The City of Sedona welcomes tourists and requests that they help keep Oak Creek a beautiful place. Oak Creek is special because it is designated a *Unique Waterway*. You can help us keep it as beautiful as it is by following some tourist etiquette both within and outside the City. This will minimize your impact in the most visited wilderness area in Arizona. Please, *don't destroy what you came to enjoy by leaving litter or debris.*

## LIVING WATER

The geology, plants, and precipitation all shape the condition of the Oak Creek watershed. Likewise, humans also affect the watershed with the things we do and don't do.



High water quality in Oak Creek supports a thriving chain of life. Key factors are turbidity (water clarity), temperature, and bacteria levels. When any of these are affected, swimming closures may be required at popular recreation sites.

Good water quality is essential to the Sedona area – don't pollute the creek.

