

Verde River Greenway Paddle Trail Guide

ARIZONA'S FIRST WILD AND SCENIC RIVER



A GUIDE TO FLOATING FROM CLARKDALE TO HORSESHOE DAM

Overview and How to Use This Guide

The Verde River is an ever-changing waterway that courses through the heart of Arizona. Some portions are accessible to casual floaters, other sections challenge experienced boaters with remote wilderness whitewater, and finally some stretches are almost never run due to overgrown vegetation, poor access, or prohibitively low waterflow. This guide covers sections that can fall in any of these three categories, so each paddler must do their research and make no assumptions about the boat-ability of any segment along the Verde on the day of their trip.

This guide covers 104 miles of the Verde River from a few miles upstream of Clarkdale to Horseshoe Dam. Combining for the first time all of the regularly paddled stretches of the Verde River, a descriptive narrative of features along the river accompanies 25 sequential segment maps with features noted at river miles, counted downstream from mile zero at Sullivan Dam. The river maps are oriented from a paddler's point-of-view, with downstream being at the top of the page, i.e. north is not "up". Each map is oriented in a different direction, so reference the compass shown on each map if compass directions are needed. The opposite pages feature points of interest and read from the bottom up as you float via the map from the bottom to the top of the page, therefore this guide is best used in printed form. The Verde River is dynamic, and water levels, obstacles, and hazards can change on a daily basis from snow melt, monsoon rains, and irrigation draws and returns. This guide, accordingly, only gives a snapshot of the river, and will include inaccuracies as the river changes over time.

LEGEND

-  River Miles
-  Alert
-  Bridge
-  Campsite
-  Dam
-  Hazard
-  POI
-  Portage
-  RAP
-  Rapid
-  Scout

River Description

In 1984 the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act established the portion of the Verde River from Beasley Flat downstream to the confluence with Red Creek, as Arizona's first Wild and Scenic River. Although the Verde's claim to fame is this wilderness section, the river is often paddled by casual boaters via day trips between the many access points near the towns of Clarkdale, Cottonwood, and Camp Verde.

Verde River flows can vary widely during any year or season. Estimating flow can be difficult, as irrigation can divert much of the water between Tuzigoot Bridge and Beasley Flat, making the USGS stream flow data ["Above Clarkdale"](#) and ["Above Camp Verde"](#) insufficient for giving an accurate reading of the flows in between. Low flows (<100 cfs) are typical, with boating becoming challenging when flows are under 50cfs. Lower TAPCO RAP (river access point) to Tuzigoot RAP is sometimes the only segment with substantial enough flow for boating during the driest, or biggest irrigation seasons, such as May through July due to that section's position above almost all diversion structures. Autumn through spring months provide the best boating flows in all segments. Floods can occur during spring snowmelt, after rain-on-snow events, or following summer storms. Do not paddle during flood events. When flash flood conditions occur in the Verde drainage or its tributaries, flows can vary wildly and quickly rise to dangerous levels. High flow events may hide or change obstacles and hazards in unpredictable ways.

From Clarkdale to Beasley Flat, the river generally runs at lower speed and volume and has few rapids, offering a better experience for beginner paddlers with many options for access points. The main hazards are irrigation structures and trees hanging low over the water. Day trip opportunities abound when flows are low to medium. In very low flows (<50 cfs), the river can become too shallow to paddle in many places. The Tuzigoot RAP to Flycatcher Road segment in particular is overgrown and has so little flow below the Cottonwood Ditch Diversion Dam that it can rarely be floated. In flows over 500 cfs, paddling between Clarkdale and Camp Verde is not advised, and the Town of Clarkdale will close its river access points when flows crest 600cfs.

Below Beasley Flat, the river enters a wilderness area with few access points, and offers multi-day trip options for experienced river paddlers. Rapids range from riffles to Class IV, so prudence is necessary. Scouting details may accompany rapid descriptions in this guide. Road access to the river is often via long unpaved roads, and in some spots river banks may be seasonally closed to landing near eagle nesting sites. Flooding, as with other stretches of the river, can change the features on the river overnight, making the descriptions here-in outdated. Research current closures and road and river conditions before getting on the river.

Types of Water Craft

Descending the Verde River is much different than a flatwater or seaside paddling experience. Currents can be swift, corners can be tight, and obstacles can reduce boatable channels to be narrower, shallower, or with less head clearance than comfortable. Choosing the right craft for the segment is key. Boats over 12 feet long can be too long for narrow corners. Sit-in kayaks without skirts can become dangerous when overtopped or rolled, potentially filling them with hundreds of pounds of water in seconds. Sit-on-top hard-sided kayaks are often the best for beginners, with no risk of filling with water and requiring the least depth to float. Another great option are durable inflatable sit-on-top kayaks which offer the same safety factor, while also being easier to haul to and from the river. Some sections of the river can suit larger crafts like canoes when handled by experienced paddlers, including the segment from White Bridge to Beasley Flat which has historically been the course for the Verde River Runoff canoe and kayak race. Stand up paddleboards (SUPs) can be suitable for those with experience on sections with only minor riffles, however helmets are strongly recommended for paddling a SUP on a river. All floaters will benefit from taking a swiftwater rescue course prior to tackling the Verde.



Make a Goal to Make it Home: Practice Safety

- Never paddle alone
- Inform friends and/or family of your paddling plans
- Check conditions before you go (contact parks, forests, and outfitters along the river and check weather and stream flow)
- Dress appropriately for the expected weather
- Wear a life jacket/personal flotation device (PFD) - [Find state regulations here](#)
- Know your watercraft's limitations
- Paddle within your skill level
- Avoid paddling during floods
- Scout any hazard about which you have doubts
- Dispose of all trash properly; Leave No Trace
- Don't boat while intoxicated
- Respect private property along the river: it is an act of trespass to disembark along the river on private property without permission

Regulations in Verde Wild and Scenic River Segment

Click Here to Find Current Regulations (Beasley Flat to Red Creek Confluence)

- Group size is limited to no more than 25 people from Beasley Flat to Childs RAP and no more than 12 people from Childs to Red Creek (upriver from Sheep Bridge).
- All trips must possess a fire pan and contain open fires within it or camp stove. Ash must be removed from the area.
- Wood collection is limited to dead and down material only. Cutting or stripping limbs from trees is strictly prohibited.
- All trips must possess a portable toilet system to collect all solid human waste for proper disposal at an appropriate waste facility. All solid human waste must be carried out of the river corridor (including toilet paper and personal hygiene items).
- No one may land or beach their watercraft within the bald eagle nesting area (Verde Falls to Sycamore Canyon Confluence), from December 1st - June 30th with an exception only for scouting rapids.
- Possession or transportation of any part of native plants is prohibited.
- Pack out all food remains, and trash (orange peels, seed shells and cigarette butts are considered litter).
- Boaters are required to have a US Coast Guard approved wearable PFD (personal flotation device) in their boat, and those 12 years old and under must wear a PFD while underway. [Find out more here.](#)

Recreate Responsibly

Follow the Leave No Trace 7 Principles. When your group utilizes one of the beaches in the river corridor as a picnic area or campsite, it is the responsibility of your group to leave that site as clean or cleaner than you found it. For more detailed information, [click here or go to **www.LNT.org**](#)

Sanitation / Human Waste: Urinate directly into the river. Urine deposited on land has a strong odor and can attract insects. Urine on wet sand can encourage algae growth. All boating groups must pack out all solid human waste.

Campfires: Protect river beaches by containing all campfires, coals, and ash within a fire pan. Burn charcoal instead of wood for cooking purposes. Wood collection is restricted to dead and down material only. Cutting or stripping limbs from live trees is prohibited. Burn your fire down to white ash, let it cool, and pack out all remnants of the fire. Observe fire restrictions currently in place.

Kitchens: Pack it in, pack it out! If you smoke, dispose of your cigarette butts properly. Items such as tin cans, aluminum foil, and glass are not burnable and must be packed out. Dispose of wastewater into the main river current. This includes bathing and dishwashing water as well as liquids from canned foods and beverages.

Breaking Camp: It is important to naturalize the campsite before you leave. Disperse wood piles, rocks used to stabilize tents, etc. Pick up all micro-trash. Check the area to make sure you have left nothing behind. Leave the camp as if no one had been there.

Leave What You Find: Removing/moving/relocating potsherds or other artifacts from cultural sites is against the law. Do not touch any rock art such as pictographs and petroglyphs. The oils and acids in our hands can cause deterioration of the site.

Respect Wildlife: Quiet groups see more wildlife; both on the river and in camp. Eagle nesting areas are legally quiet zones. It is important not to stop within line of sight of the nests or within the current habitat closure areas. An adult eagle that is disturbed and flies from its nest cannot protect eggs or eaglets from heat or predators. Fishing line kills and maims wildlife, especially raptors. Please help out the creatures of the river ecosystem by disposing of any fishing line you come across.

Be Considerate of Others: Thoughtful users are considerate of other boaters and recreational users by respecting their "space". Communicating with other river parties when you meet them can minimize congestion at the put-in, take-outs, attractions sites, and on the river.

Disclaimer: Use this Guide at Your Own Risk

The information provided here is for general informational purposes only and is not meant to be a statement of conditions at any one time. Conditions can vary greatly in relation to temperature, weather, water level, and other factors. All persons intending to paddle the Verde are responsible for personally assessing these conditions, as well as their own ability to cope with them. All recreational use of rivers involves a degree of risk, and persons engaging in this activity assume the risk associated therewith. The information in this guide is used entirely at the reader's discretion, and is made available on the expressed condition that no liability, expressed or implied, is accepted by Arizona State Parks & Trails or any of its associates, employees, branches or subsidiaries for the accuracy, content or use thereof.

Shuttle Distances by Estimated Drive Time:

River miles between River Access Points (RAPs)	Lower TAPCO	Tuzigoot	Flycatcher Rd DHRSP	Owl Road DHRSP	Skidmore	Prairie Lane	Black Canyon	Bignotti	Sheep's Crossing	Newton Lane	Parson's Preserve	Black Bridge	White Bridge	Clear Creek	Beasley Flat	Gap Creek*	Childs	Sheep Bridge*
FR 9515*	4.1	6.8	7.6	9.5	17.1	17.4	17.8	18.5	20.2	26.9	30.2	32.1	34.4	39.8	44.1	52.1	61	94.4
Lower TAPCO	2.7	3.5	5.4	13	13.3	13.7	14.4	16.1	22.8	26.1	28	30.3	35.7	40	48	56.9	90.3	
Tuzigoot	0.8	2.7	10.3	10.6	11	11.7	13.4	20.1	23.4	25.3	27.6	33	37.3	45.3	54.2	87.6		
Flycatcher Rd DHRSP	1.9	9.5	9.8	10.2	10.9	12.6	19.3	22.6	24.5	26.8	32.2	36.5	44.5	53.4	86.8			
Owl Road DHRSP	7.6	7.9	8.3	9	10.7	17.4	20.7	22.6	24.9	30.3	34.6	42.6	51.5	84.9				
Skidmore	0.3	0.7	1.4	3.1	9.8	13.1	15	17.3	22.7	27	35	43.9	77.3					
Prairie Lane	0.4	1.1	2.8	9.5	12.8	14.7	17	22.4	26.7	34.7	43.6	77						
Black Canyon	0.7	2.4	9.1	12.4	14.3	16.6	22	26.3	34.3	43.2	76.6							
Bignotti	1.7	8.4	11.7	13.6	15.9	21.3	25.6	33.6	42.5	75.9								
Sheep's Crossing	6.7	10	1.9	14.2	19.6	23.9	34.9	40.8	74.2									
Newton Lane	3.3	5.2	7.5	12.9	17.2	25.2	34.1	97.5										
Parson's Preserve	1.9	4.2	9.6	13.9	21.9	30.8	64.2											
Black Bridge	2.3	7.7	12	20	28.9	62.3												
White Bridge	5.4	9.7	17.7	26.6	60													
Clear Creek	4.3	12.3	21.2	54.6														
Beasley Flat	8	16.9	50.3															
Gap Creek*	8.9	42.3																
Childs	33.4																	
Sheep Bridge*																		

*RAPs on rough roads where high-clearance/ four-wheel-drive are highly recommended

Approximate Float Times:

All travel times are approximate and vary greatly with many factors including type of craft, your group's pace, wind, and weather.

RIVER MILE	RIVER ACCESS POINT (RAP)	RIVER MILES TO NEXT RAP	APPROXIMATE TIME TO FLOAT		
			LOW FLOW (50-150CFS)	MED FLOW (150-600CFS)	HIGH FLOW (600+ CFS)
42.7	FR 9515	4.2	4 hr	1.5 hr	Not Advised
46.9	Lower TAPCO	2.7	2 hr	45 min	Not Advised
49.6	Tuzigoot	0.8	Not Advised	Not Advised	Not Advised
50.8	Flycatcher Rd	1.8	1.5 hr	1 hr	Not Advised
52.6	Owl Road	7.7	6.5 hr	3 hr	Not Advised
60.3	Skidmore	0.3	30 min	15 min	Not Advised
60.6	Prairie Lane	0.4	30 min	15 min	Not Advised
61.0	Black Canyon	0.8	1 hr	30 min	Not Advised
61.8	Bignotti	1.8	2 hr	30 min	Not Advised
63.6	Sheep's Crossing	6.6	3 hr	2 hr	Not Advised
70.2	Newton Lane	3.3	2.5 hr	1.5 hr	Not Advised
73.5	Paron's Preserve	2.0	1.5 hr	1 hr	Not Advised
75.5	Black Bridge	2.3	2 hr	1.25 hr	Not Advised
77.8	White Bridge	5.5	5 hr	2.5 hr	1.5 hr
83.3	Clear Creek	4.5	3 hr	2 hr	1 hr
87.8	Beasley Flat	7.9	5.5 hr	3.5 hr	1.75 hr
95.7	Gap Creek	9.2	1.5 days	3 hr	2.5 hr
104.9	Childs	32.8	4.5 days	2.5 days	1.5 days
137.7	Sheep Bridge	8.8	3.5 hours	2.5 hours	2.5 hours
146.5	Ocotillo Boat Launch	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Float Distance between River Access Points:

Est. Shuttle Time (minutes) between River Access Points (RAPs)	Lower TAPCO	Tuzigoot	Flycatcher Rd DHRSP	Owl Road DHRSP	Skidmore	Prairie Lane	Black Canyon	Bignotti	Sheep's Crossing	Newton Lane	Parson's Preserve	Black Bridge	White Bridge	Clear Creek	Beasley Flat	Gap Creek*	Childs FR 16*	Sheep Bridge*
FR 9515*	12	17	28	26	36	35	36	40	39	46	54	51	50	57	68	94	241	189
Lower TAPCO		6	14	16	22	20	22	26	26	32	39	35	35	40	55	75	229	190
Tuzigoot			14	14	20	18	20	24	22	31	36	30	30	40	50	75	227	190
Flycatcher Rd DHRSP				4	16	14	18	20	20	29	33	28	28	35	45	70	224	183
Owl Road DHRSP					16	14	18	20	20	27	32	28	28	35	45	70	223	183
Skidmore						5	9	12	12	17	22	20	20	26	40	65	213	180
Prairie Lane							3	10	10	15	21	18	18	24	38	63	212	178
Black Canyon								10	10	15	21	21	21	26	35	61	212	180
Bignotti									9	16	21	21	21	28	40	65	212	180
Sheep's Crossing										16	21	24	24	28	35	65	212	180
Newton Lane											13	12	12	18	32	57	204	172
Parson's Preserve												7	10	19	31	55	203	160
Black Bridge													4	13	25	49	203	167
White Bridge														12	24	48	202	166
Clear Creek															12	40	209	180
Beasley Flat																35	220	190
Gap Creek*																	245	210
Childs FR 16*																		143
Sheep Bridge*																		237

Real-time flow for the Verde River

"Verde River near Clarkdale" (Station No. 09504000)	"Verde Rvr Blw Tangle Creek, Abv Horseshoe Dam, AZ" (Station No. 09508500)
"Verde River Above Camp Verde" (Station No. 09504950)	"Verde River Below Bartlett Dam, AZ" (Station No. 09510000)
"Verde River near Camp Verde" (Station No. 09506000)	"Verde River Near Scottsdale, AZ" (Station No. 09511300)
"Verde River Below East Verde River Near Childs, AZ" (Station No. 09508000)	General webpage: http://waterdata.usgs.gov/az/nwis

Real-time flow for tributaries

"Oak Creek Near Cornville, AZ" (Station No. 09504500)	"East Verde River Near Childs, AZ" (Station No. 09507980)
"Beaver Creek NR Lake Montezuma, AZ" (Station No. 09505400)	"Horseshoe Reservoir at Horseshoe Dam, AZ" (Station No. 09509501)
"West Clear Creek Near Camp Verde, AZ" (Station No. 09505800)	"Bartlett Reservoir at Bartlett Dam, AZ" (Station No.09509502)
"Fossil Creek Near Strawberry, AZ" (Station No. 09507480)	National Water and Climate Center (Snow Pack)

Lake level for Horseshoe Reservoir: Add 1903.55' to the gage height to find lake surface elevation above sea level
Lake level for Bartlett Reservoir: Add 1599.46' to the gage height to find lake surface elevation above sea level

Average Flows

YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2018	74	74	71	66	63	58	81	87	67	75	69	72
2019	168	930	813	69	67	60	56	59	62	63	69	180
2020	95	83	678	73	62	56	64	60	61	65	70	75
2021	78	75	73	68	62	57	244	307	70	65	66	90
2022	81	70	72	71	63	58	66	118	74	73	69	73
2023	227	167	2743	400	70	62	63	68	70	68	64	61
2024	61	76	100	93	63	58	56	68	63	63	66	69
MEAN	112	211	650	120	64	58	90	110	67	67	68	89
Measurements are cubic feet per second (cfs) measured by USGS at Verde River near Clarkdale Monthly Mean values are calculated from 2018-2024												

Directions to River Access Points (RAPs)

FR 9515 RAP - From Cottonwood, take Broadway north, or from Clarkdale, take Broadway south and turn east onto Tuzigoot Road to cross the river. Take a left just after the bridge on Sycamore Canyon Road for 5.6 miles, then take a left on FR 9515 and follow to its end, about 1.5 miles. The RAP is down a steep hike that drops 120 feet or more into the canyon and is a difficult carry for most boats.

Lower TAPCO RAP - From Cottonwood, take Broadway north, or from Clarkdale, take Broadway south and turn east onto Tuzigoot Road to cross the river. Take a left just after the bridge on Sycamore Canyon Road for 2.1 miles and arrive at the RAP.

Tuzigoot RAP - Same as above, but after crossing the river, take a right at the sign for the “Verde River @ Clarkdale, Tuzigoot River Access Point”.

Flycatcher Road RAP (DHRSP) - From Main St and N 10th Street in Cottonwood, head north on 10th, cross the river, and turn right to enter Dead Horse Ranch State Park (entrance fee required). After entering the park, take a left on Flycatcher Road and find the parking area in half a mile.

Owl Road (DHRSP) - Same as above, but after entering Dead Horse Ranch State Park, take the first right on Owl Road and park at the lot at the end of the road.

Skidmore RAP - At south end of Cottonwood on Hwy 260, turn east on to Prairie Lane and follow it about one mile, then turn right on East Mesa Drive. Turn right again on South Skidmore Drive, then right at the T into the parking area. The river is about 150 yards down the trail.

Prairie Lane RAP - Following directions to Skidmore, but turn right off Prairie Lane after 0.5 mile onto Brozwick Lane, then right again in 0.4 mile. The river is over 100 yards down from the parking area, making this pedestrian access only without a boat launch.

Black Canyon RAP - Turn east off Highway 260 at 0.7 miles south of Prairie Lane. Follow the road to the parking area and restroom at the end.

Bignotti RAP - From Highway 260 turn east on Thousand Trails Road (signed on highway). Make first left at 0.3 miles on Forest Service Road 147A. Follow it to the signed area with parking, restroom and picnic tables. If this is your take out be sure to reconnoiter as current is swift here.

Sheep’s Crossing RAP - Hiking required. Take AZ 260 7.6 miles west from I-17. Take a right on Thousand Trails Road and after 1 mile take a left on Alcantara Way. Park at the end of the road. The river is over a tenth mile to the east. This site is primarily for fishing access.

Newton Lane RAP - Two miles north of I-17 on Highway 260, turn east onto Horseshoe Bend Road at the roundabout, taking a left onto Horseshoe Bend after the spur. Take a right on W Verde West Drive and a left on Armorie Drive. Take a right on Newton Lane, then take the first left on an unsigned gravel road. Find the river at the end of this road.

Parson’s Preserve RAP - From I-17, take exit 289 and head west on Middle Verde Road for 0.7 miles, taking a left on Arena del Loma and travelling 1.1 miles. Take a right on Wampus Road which bends left and becomes Rustler Trail. At the stop sign with Rawhide Road, take a right to approach the gated access point.

Black Bridge RAP - From I-17, take exit 287 for Camp Verde and follow Finnie Flat Road south for about a mile before turning left to stay on Finnie Flat Road. After 1.3 miles, turn left onto Montezuma Castle Highway. In 0.4 miles, take a right just after the library on Moser Lane, then turn left into Rezzonico Park, which is located on river right just downstream from Black Bridge. It is a short, grassy walk downhill to the river from the parking area.

White Bridge RAP - This area with parking, restrooms and ramadas is at the southeast corner of the Highway 260 bridge (White Bridge) in Camp Verde. Turn west on Quarterhorse Lane and north into the facility.

Clear Creek RAP - In Camp Verde, turn south off of Highway 260 onto Oasis Road, 1 mile west of Main St. Go south on Oasis Rd and take a right at the T with Salt Mine Road.to oad (2 miles east of Finnie Flat Road; 0.4 mile west of White Bridge). Go 4.9 miles to the parking area marked “Clear Creek Day Use” on the left side of the road. The river is about 150 yards across an irrigation ditch and down a steep hill.

Beasley Flat RAP - Follow directions to Clear Creek and continue 2.4 miles to where paved road makes a hard left to Camp Verde Acres Access Road (first left after River Bend Road). Take a left at the T where the pavement ends following Beasley Flat Road to its end and find ramadas, parking, restrooms, and a launch area.

Gap Creek RAP - From Camp Verde, follow directions to Beasley Flat RAP, but go straight south on the gravel road (Salt Mine Road) instead of turning left on Camp Verde Acres Access Road. This becomes Forest Road 574. Follow the road until it ends at a ranch. There is a steep trail from a parking area ¼ mile down to the river.

Childs (FR 16) RAP - From Interstate 17, take Exit 259 for Bloody Basin Road. Follow Bloody Basin Road east, which becomes FR 269 and eventually FR 16 for 27 miles. Take a left on FR 16 for 27 miles. The road is gated ¾ miles from the river requiring a walk to reach the access point. This road is very rough. High-clearance and four-wheel-drive strongly recommended. Childs is more easily accessed from the east side.

Childs (FR 502) RAP - From Camp Verde, take AZ 260 east towards Payson. Turn south onto Fossil Creek Road/FR 708 and drive 13.8 miles. Passage through the permitted area of Fossil Creek is granted for those accessing the Verde River and not stopping by Fossil Creek. Take a sharp right and head south on Childs Power Road/FR 502 for 6.2 miles before taking a left down to the river access point at a dispersed camping area. A vault toilet is found at the access point. Visitors can view the defunct Childs Power Plant from the exterior. This road is rough and washboarded. High-clearance and four-wheel-drive recommended.

Sheep Bridge RAP - From Carefree/North Scottsdale, take Camp Creek Road northwest. About 18 miles north of Seven Springs, turn east onto Forest Road 269 and descend for 12 miles to the river access point, just north of the pedestrian Sheep Bridge.

Ocotillo Boat Launch - From Carefree/North Scottsdale, take Camp Creek Road and turn east onto Bartlett Dam Road. After 6.3 miles, head north on Horseshoe Dam Road. Follow this for 11 miles and arrive at the boat ramp on Horseshoe Reservoir.

Locations and Amenities of River Access Points (RAPs)

RIVER ACCESS POINT	GPS COORDINATES	FEE AREA	PAVED ACCESS	TOILETS	WATER	CAMPING	MAP
FR 9515	34.8244, -112.0631	N	N	N	N	N	MAP
Lower TAPCO	34.7952, -112.0584	Y	N	Y	N	N	MAP
Tuzigoot	34.7668, -112.0378	N	Y	N	N	N	MAP
Flycatcher Rd	34.7629, -112.0215	Y	Y	N	N	N	MAP
Owl Road	34.7515, -112.0176	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	MAP
Skidmore	34.6939, -111.9615	N	N	N	N	N	MAP
Prairie Lane	34.6911, -111.9668	N	N	N	N	N	MAP
Black Canyon	34.6851, -111.9644	N	N	Y	N	N	MAP
Bignotti	34.6787, -111.9543	N	N	Y	N	N	MAP
Sheep's Crossing	34.6740, -111.9411	N	N	N	N	N	MAP
Newton Lane	34.6094, -111.8962	N	N	N	N	N	MAP
Paron's Preserve	34.5902, -111.8782	N	Y	N	N	N	MAP
Black Bridge	34.5727, -111.8560	N	Y	Y	N	N	MAP
White Bridge	34.5498, -111.8507	N	Y	Y	N	N	MAP
Clear Creek	34.5062, -111.8371	N	Y	N	N	N	MAP
Beasley Flat	34.4734, -111.8015	N	N	Y	N	N	MAP
Gap Creek	34.4123, -111.7885	N	N	N	N	N	MAP
Childs FR502	34.3480, -111.6974	N	N	Y	N	Y	MAP
Childs FR16	34.3469, -111.6981	N	N	N	N	N	MAP
Sheep Bridge	34.0784, -111.7064	N	N	Y	N	N	MAP
Ocotillo Boat Launch	33.9867, -111.7222	N	N	Y	N	N	MAP

For more on RAPS, road, conditions, and general information, contact:

Prescott National Forest Supervisor's Office:

For Upper Verde to Cold Water Creek
(928) 777-2200

Town of Clarkdale:

For Lower TAPCO RAP to Tuzigoot RAP

Dead Horse Ranch State Park:

For Tuzigoot RAP to the AZ 89A Bridge
(928) 634-528

Verde River Greenway:

For Tuzigoot RAP to the AZ 89A Bridge
(928) 639-0312

Tonto National Forest River Permit Coordinator's Office

For Beasley Flat to below Horseshoe Dam
(928) 402-6236

Coconino National Forest's River Ranger's Office

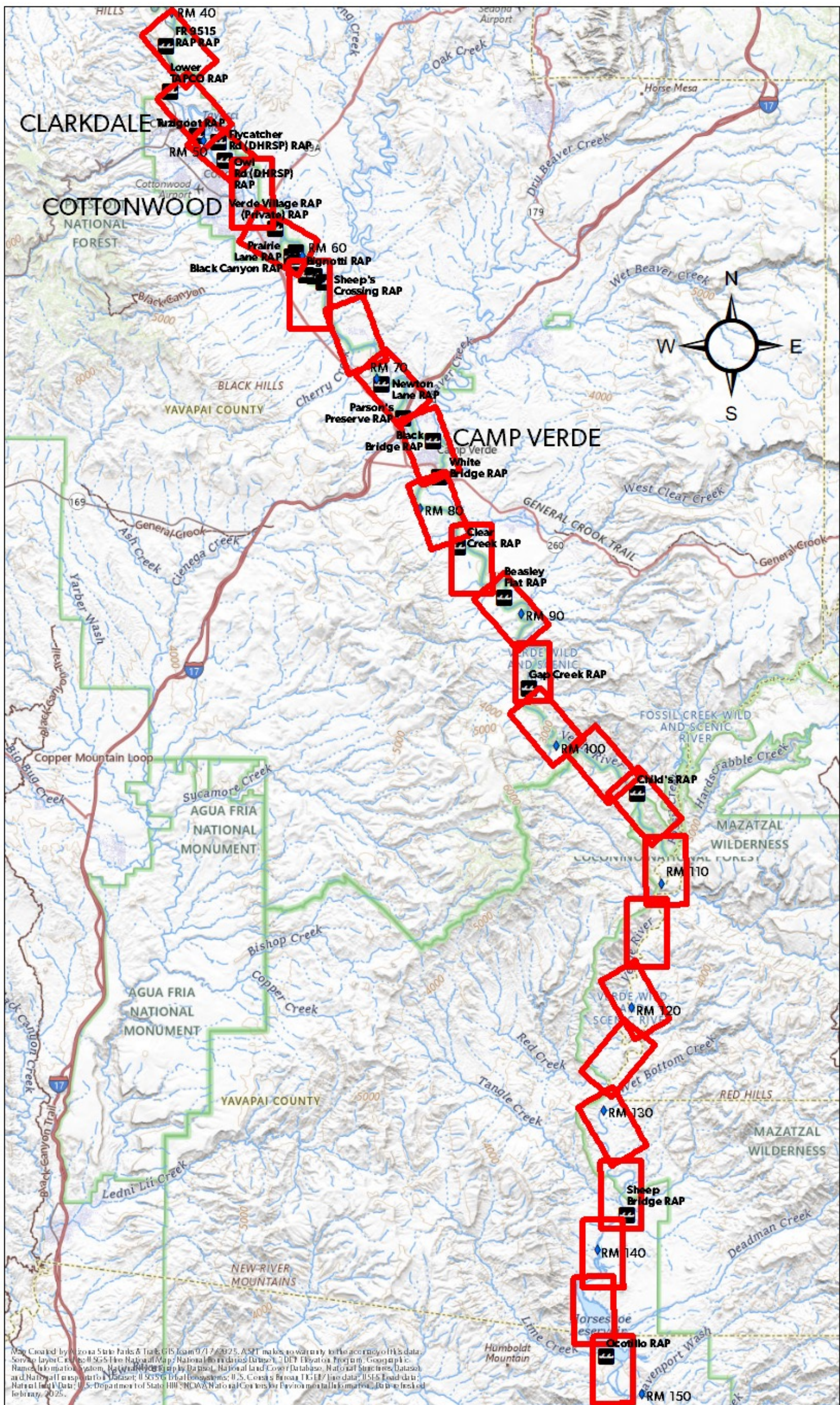
For Upper Verde to Lower TAPCO and Beasley Flat to Fossil Creek
(928) 203-7503

Additional Reading

- “Verde River Elegy” by Jon Fuller, Vishnu Temple Press (2018)
- “A Floater’s Guide to the Verde River” by Bob Williams, Prescott, Arizona (1996)
- “Verde River Recreation Guide” by Jim Slingluff, Golden West Publishers (1990)

Special Thanks to

John Parsons, who created the previous Highway 89A to Beasley Flat guide and had performed the field work with his wife Susan and Josh Wheeler. The Verde River Institute, for providing current points of interest and hazards data for the river. United States Forest Service staff, for providing updates on river features in the Wild and Scenic stretch.



Mile 46.3 Eagle Pond ends in a narrow outlet called TAPCO Chute.

Mile 46.2 Powerlines cross high over the river here.

Mile 46.1 A 90 degree right turn here is called Eagle Bend.

Mile 45.7 Sandpiper Bend features a riffle that can be complicated by strainers.

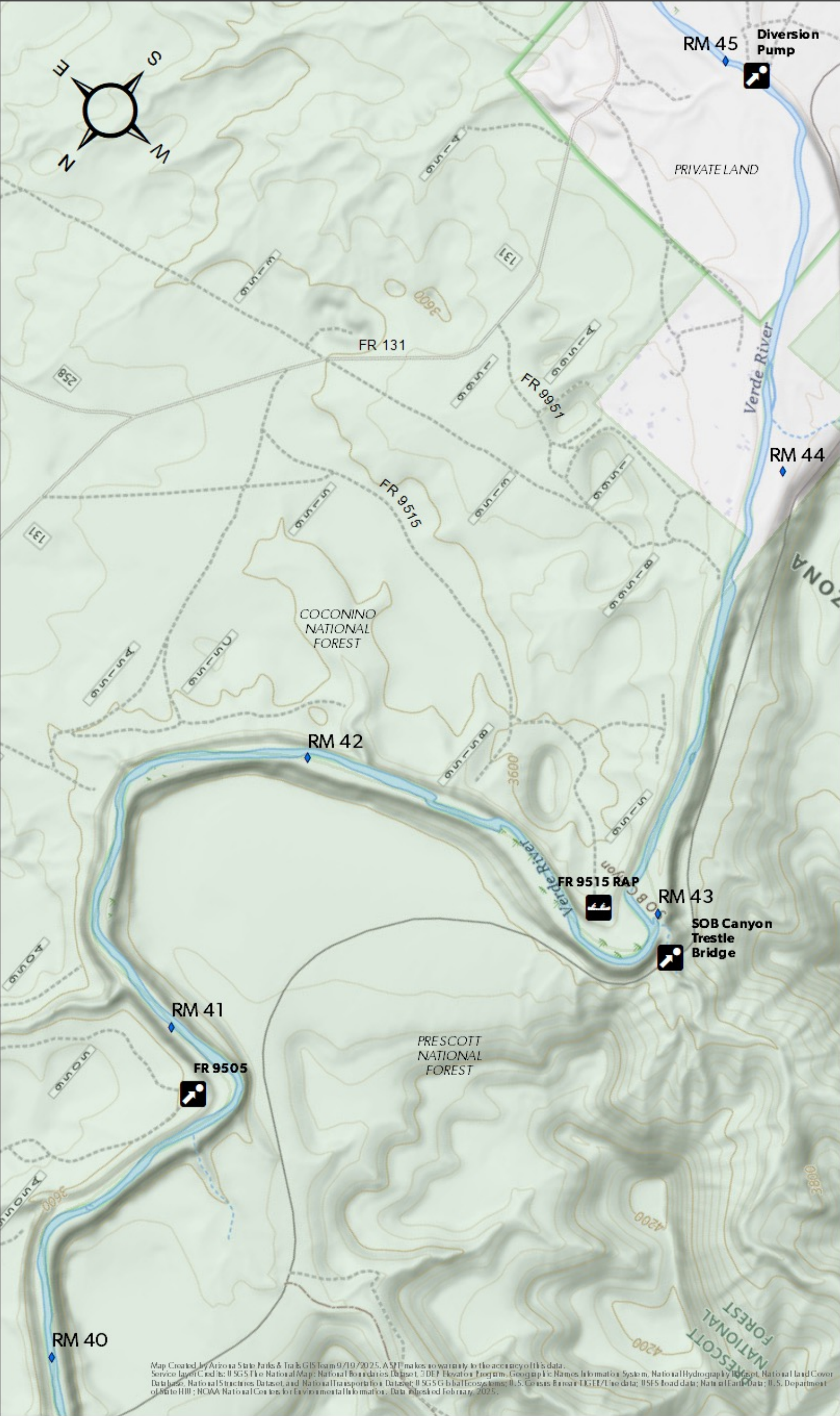
Mile 45.4 Powerlines cross the river at a riffle.

Mile 44.9 A small diversion pump sends water to agricultural land from here.

Mile 43.7 River enters private land through to Tuzigoot Bridge.

Mile 42.9 the SOB Canyon Trestle Bridge allows the Verde Canyon Railway to pass over this major wash.

Mile 42.7 Forest Road 9515 ends at a point overlooking the river and can be used as a river access point by carrying crafts over 120 vertical feet down a rocky and unmaintained trail to the river. The RAP has no services, and is located in Coconino National Forest.
*Note that some roads shown on the map may not be open. Check with Coconino National Forest to find out current road status.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS Team 9/19/2025. ASP makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service Layer Credits: U.S. Geological Survey National Map; National Boundaries Dataset; 3D Elevation Program; Geographic Names Information System; National Hydrography Dataset; National Land Cover Database; National Structures Dataset; and National Transportation Dataset; U.S. Geological Survey Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HHS; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data Refreshed February, 2025.

Mile 50.4 Trees bracket the channel not far below the diversion dam. Scout from river right.

Mile 50.4 The Cottonwood Ditch Diversion Dam is one of the largest irrigation diversion structures along the urban stretch of the Verde River. Scout on river left. The river downstream from the dam through Dead Horse Ranch State Park is rarely boatable due to low flows and overgrown channels. Consider taking out on river left and walking back to Tuzigoot RAP. River enters Tuzigoot National Monument here for 0.2 miles.

Mile 50.1 River flow splits at the top of a large island. Both channels are normally navigable at low flows. However, the left channel provides a better position for the upcoming scout. Otter Pond sits below the split.

Mile 49.8 The Hickey Ditch Diversion Dam diverts irrigation water to Dead Horse Ranch State Park. Scout on river left. A narrow gravel riffle runs on river left below the diversion.

Mile 49.7 The large pool below the Tuzigoot Bridge provides a place for novice boaters to hone their paddling skills.

Mile 49.6 Tuzigoot RAP Several areas along the stream bank provide places to launch watercraft. The RAP is managed by the Verde River Greenway State Natural Area.

Mile 49.6 Tuzigoot Bridge Constructed in the 1960's, it has a unique geometry rarely used in bridge building. River enters Verde River Greenway State Natural Area.

Mile 49.3 After a pool ends at Deception Gulch, Boulders Rapid (Class II) forms as the channel narrows with large rocks found midstream. The left run is usually preferred.

Mile 49.1 The former Main Street swing bridge abutments flank the river on both sides.

Mile 48.9 Willow Rapid (Class II) is best navigated with a left run.

Mile 48.7 Bitter Creek wash causes a riffle as the alluvial fan pushes into the channel.

Mile 48.5 The abutment from the former bridge to the smelter remains on river left.

Mile 48.3 At the end of a long pool created by a levee and Brewer's Tunnel which was formerly used to fill Peck's Lake. Sometimes there is a pass through this levee. Take this pass-through to the southwest corner of the lagoon and portage over the dam there to continue past Brewer's Tunnel Diversion. If the levee is not breached, portage over it about 50 yards upstream of the dam, paddle across the lagoon, and portage over the dam on river right.

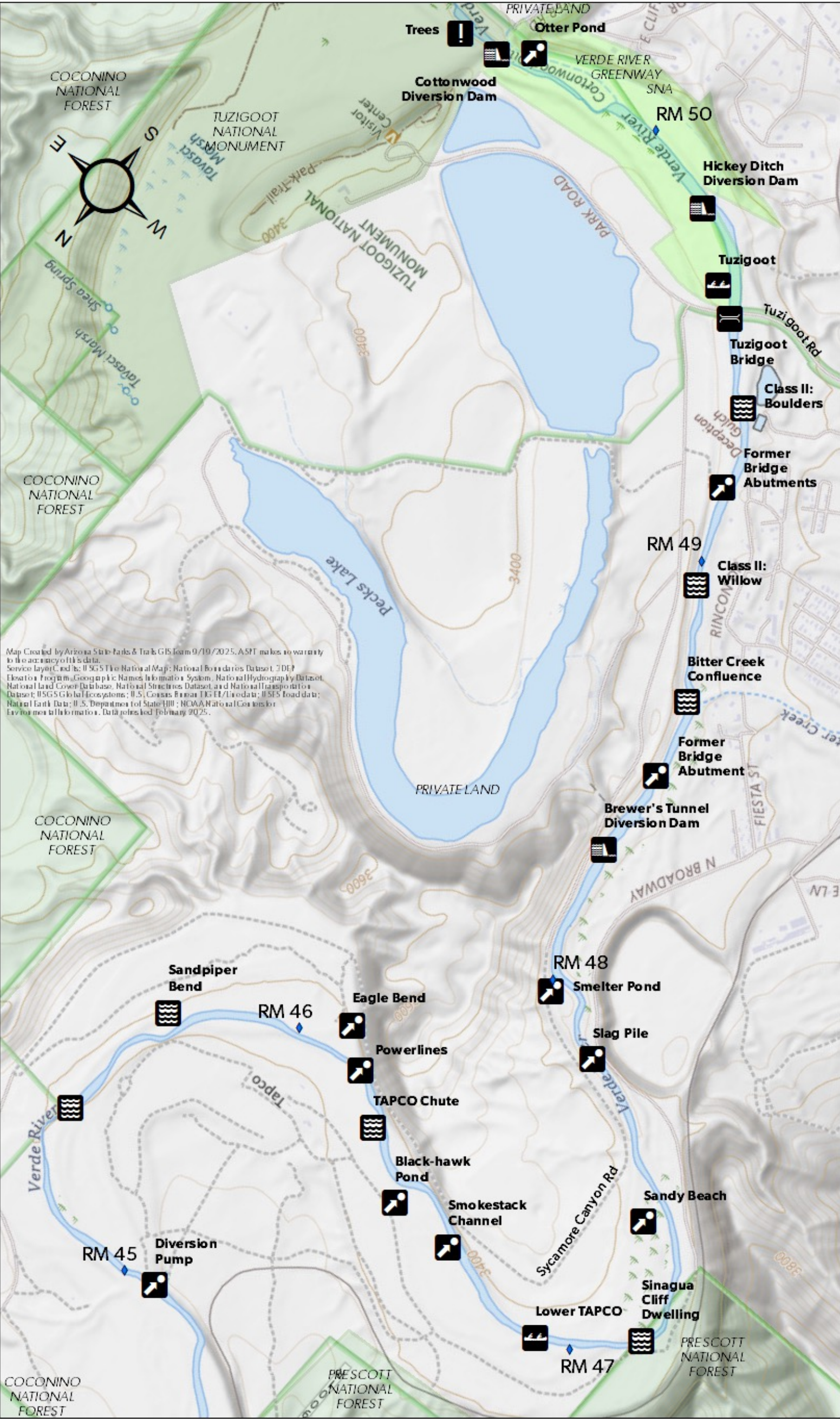
Mile 47.8 Black deposits on river right are part of the Clarkdale Slag Pile. This also marks the start of the Tuzigoot IBA (Important Bird and Biodiversity Area), the first area to be designated as such in Arizona by BirdLife.

Mile 47.4 On river left, find a sandy beach adjacent to Red Root Rapid.

Mile 47.1 A single-room Sinagua Cliff Dwelling is above river right. It was possibly used as a stopover for hunters and gatherers. The dwelling marks this river curve known as Pueblo Bend where the river briefly touches Prescott NF before returning to private land.

Mile 46.9 Lower TAPCO River Access Point is located off of a paved road on private land owned by Freeport McMoRan Copper and Gold, Inc and managed by the Town of Clarkdale. The RAP is open year-round 7am to 1 hour after sunset, but closes when flows exceed 600 cfs. Check online for current hours and fees. Portable toilets are located in the parking lot. The river from here to Tuzigoot Bridge can be completely changed by a single flood event, so expect riffles, forks, and obstacles not found in this guide.

Mile 46.5 Common black-hawks are often seen on river right of Black-hawk Pond.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS team 9/19/2025. ASPT makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HILL; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data collected February 2025.

Mile 53.5 River turns sharply left in a small chute between trees.

Mile 53.1 River channel turns right then left. A diagonal tree grows in the middle of the turn.

Mile 53.0 Broken concrete is being used to prevent shoreline erosion here.

Mile 52.8 This riffle turns almost 90 degrees right and sends current into erosion control boulders on the shoreline. Scout left.

Mile 52.7 A small riffle turns sharply left amid a cat tail patch.

Mile 52.7 Large steel beams called jacks protrude from the river left shoreline. They were installed after the 1993 flood for erosion control and can be a hidden hazard in high flows.

Mile 52.6 The Dead Horse Ranch State Park River Day Use Area serves as the Owl Road RAP, providing parking, restrooms, and water off a paved access road. Check online for hours and fees for the State Park. Boating this section is often challenging due to an overgrown channel and minimal flow after irrigation diversions.

Mile 52.3 Bridge provides access to Dead Horse Ranch State Park. It was built in 1993 to replace a low water crossing. The river now abuts Riverfront Park on the right for 0.8 miles.

Mile 52.1 A cottonwood forest straddles the river channel here. Scout from river left.

Mile 52.0 The river channel continues to be obstructed with prolific riparian species revegetating a former gravel pit. Proceed with caution and scout often.

Mile 51.9 Heavy vegetation including cat tails, willows, reeds and cottonwoods appear to block the river channel here. Scout from river left.

Mile 51.8 The stream gradient of the Verde River lessens here. Riffles in this vicinity can become very shallow and clogged.

Mile 51.4 This riffle sends the current into the river right bank.

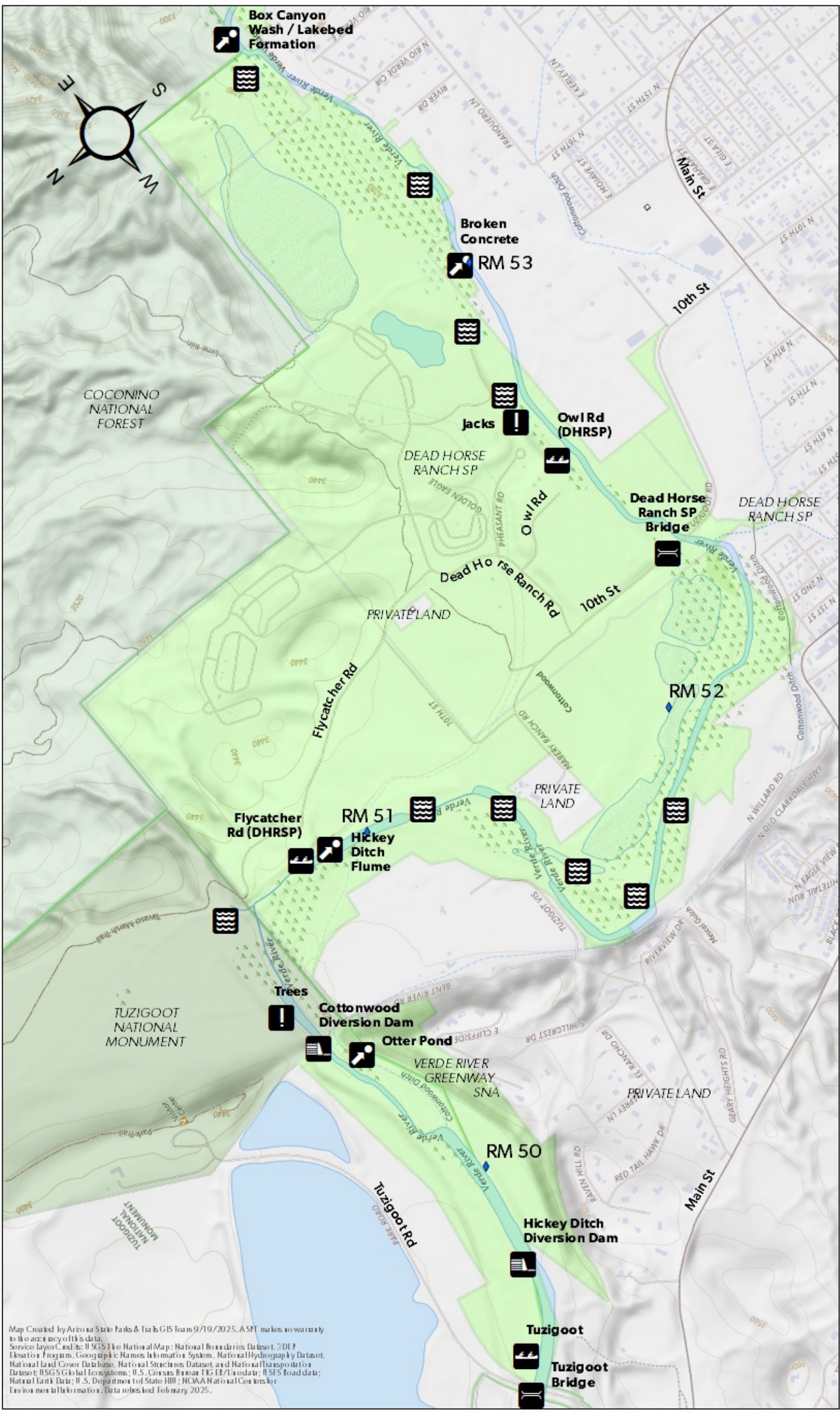
Mile 51.3 This riffle is often very shallow at low flows. Higher flows may send current into nearby trees. Old car bodies on river left are remnants of an erosion control technique that once enjoyed wide acceptance.

Mile 51.1 The large pool ends with a small, shallow riffle.

Mile 50.9 The pipe suspended over the river is the Hickey Ditch flume delivering irrigation water to Dead Horse Ranch State Park. This long section forms one of the longest pools on the river at over ½ mile.

Mile 50.8 A short trail leads to the river from the Flycatcher Road parking area. Steps help boaters access the streambank. This access point is within Dead Horse Ranch State Park. Check online for hours and entry fees for the State Park. Boating this section is often difficult as flows are diminished by the Cottonwood Ditch Diversion Dam and the channel is overgrown.

Mile 50.7 The river turns sharply right here, creating a large braided and heavily vegetated gravel bar. Scout by from the landing in the middle of the stream channel. The water flow entering the river here is from Tavasi Marsh. Excellent views of Tuzigoot National Monument are noted here as the river enters Dead Horse Ranch State Park for 1.8 miles on both sides, 2.9 miles on river left.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS Team 9/19/2025. ASP makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: USGS The National Map; National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HHS; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed February 2025.

Mile 57.0 The first major irrigation return on river right provides some extra stream flow at the upper boundary of the Verde Village subdivision. This returns water from Cottonwood Ditch.

Mile 56.7 This stretch can be a dangerous area requiring a portage. Floods, high winds, beavers and chain saws can often drop large limbs and tree trunks into and across the river channel. Be prepared for unexpected blockages due to changes in stream bank vegetation.

Mile 56.2 Highway 89A Bridge in Cottonwood. The unincorporated community of Bridgeport takes its name from this river crossing. At one time it was a low water crossing for horse-drawn wagons coming from Sedona and Rimrock. The current bridge dates back to 1992. Private Land borders the river for the next 1.7 miles.

Mile 56.0 Nice riffle below bluff on river left coincides with more of the Verde River Greenway SNA on river right for 0.2 miles to the bridge. River left is still private land.

Mile 55.6 River enters private land for 0.4 miles.

Mile 55.3 A large island gravel bar provides two channels. Paddle into the pool on river left to scout from the island. The left channel often features one or more log obstructions as well as beaver-chewed tree stumps. A narrow band of land surrounds this 0.3 mile section as part of the Verde River Greenway SNA.

Mile 55.0 This large, still pool can be slow going with headwinds.

Mile 54.9 A small gravel bar can be shallow at low flow.

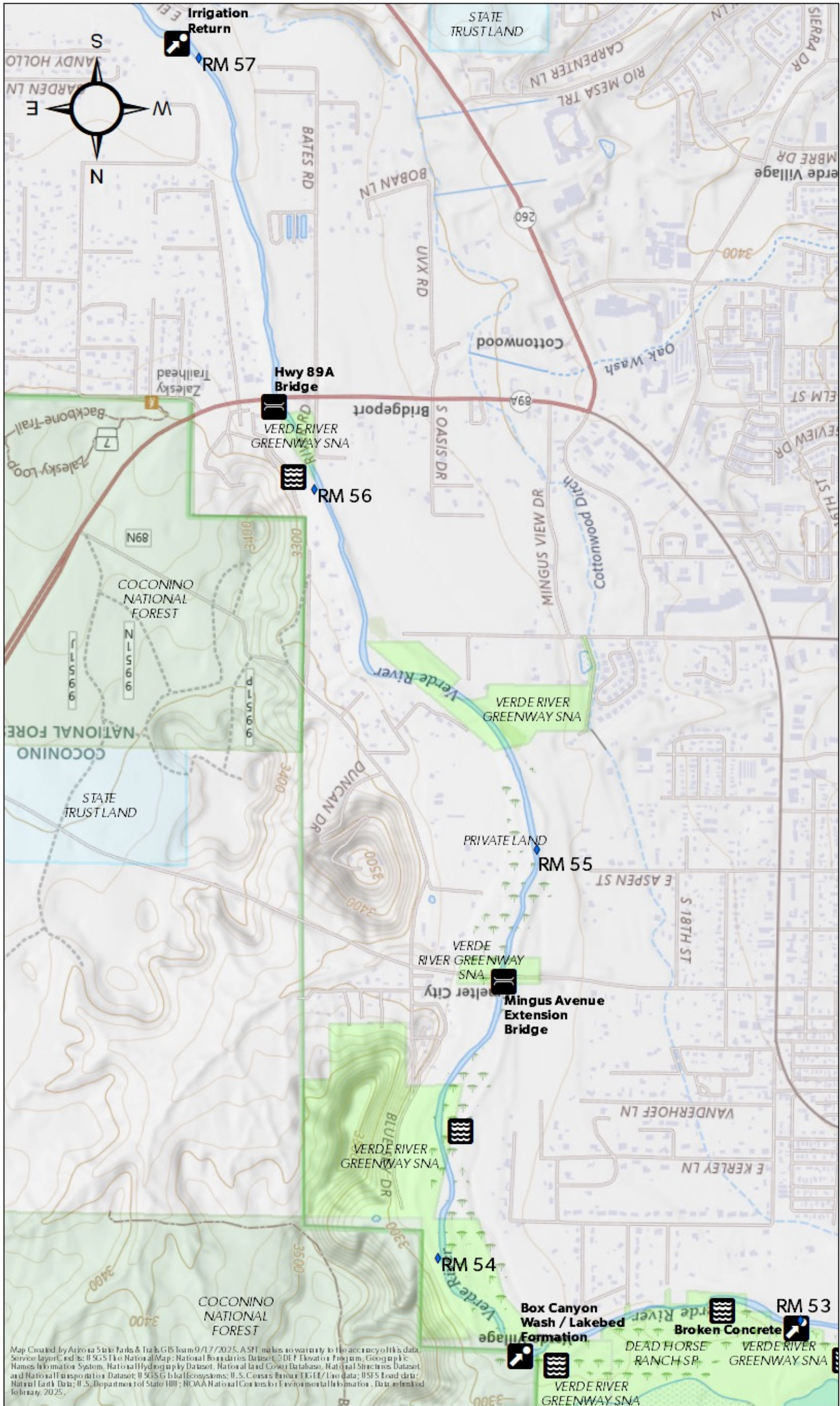
Mile 54.7 The Mingus Avenue Extension Bridge was completed in 2005. There is NO public river access on either side of the river at this crossing. The river bends sharply right under the bridge. The current flows into a tree and debris pile on river left.

Mile 54.3 River enters private land for half a mile starting at this riffle.

Mile 53.8 River enters Verde River Greenway State Natural Area for 0.5 miles.

Mile 53.6 River turns 90 degrees to the right. Verde River Lakebed Formation exposed at river level. Deep pool is a popular fishing and swimming hole. Both sides of the river enter Coconino National Forest for 0.2 miles.

Mile 53.6 Box Canyon Wash enters the river. Willows block left channel. Scout on right.



Mile 61.0 There is a small parking area and a restroom at Black Canyon RAP. The extensive Black Canyon drainage can carry high flows during large monsoon events. There is a nice alluvial fan here filled with small pebbles and some sandy areas, created by Black Canyon on river right. The long pool above this RAP is one of the best areas on the river to learn how to paddle a canoe or kayak. There are many fun riffles downstream before you reach the Bignotti RAP.

Mile 60.6 The steep and lengthy trail from the parking lot at Prairie Lane RAP to the river is better suited for hiking access. There are no other amenities at this Prescott NF site.

Mile 60.3 It is about 150 yards from Skidmore RAP, a Prescott National Forest facility, to the river. There are some picturesque cliffs on river right downstream. Prescott National Forest manages river right for 1.8 miles.

Mile 59.6 This area of the Verde River can be extraordinarily dangerous at higher flows with complete channel blockage. The river makes a 90-degree turn to the right, losing momentum and allowing debris to pile up. At the bottom of this obstruction, there are lots of old steel jacks from past bank stabilization programs. Scout on river right and portage if necessary. River enters private land for 0.8 miles on river right, and 1.5 miles on river left.

Mile 59.5 River briefly passes through a portion of Coconino National Forest.

Mile 58.1 River passes through private land for 1.4 miles.

Mile 58.0 Great Verde lake bed limestone caves on river left with pebble beach on right. The Verde River channel flows through ancient lake bed sedimentary formations from Clarkdale to Beasley Flat.

Mile 57.9 River enters Prescott National Forest for 0.2 miles.

Mile 57.6 The Verde Village RAP on river right is a private access point for the neighborhood. Please respect private property and do not use this RAP without permission.

Mile 57.3 The rock bar here is a naturally occurring obstruction with large rocks. There is generally a clean channel on the right.

Mile 65.0 The river splits here with more flow going right. Thick willows that grew in after the 1993 Flood may cause a tree fence in the split channels that may need to be portaged around to pass safely.

Mile 64.9 Prescott National Forest is found on the right bank for 0.7 miles.

Mile 64.3 River crosses through private land and state trust land for 0.6 miles on river right.

Mile 64.1 The OK Ditch Diversion Dam creates a half mile of flat water above the dam itself which requires scouting both by boat and on foot. Most of the river current enters the ditch on river left. The diversion dam is a difficult obstruction and requires a portage back into the main river channel right of the ditch.

Mile 63.6 Sheep's Crossing RAP is a public launch point located immediately upstream from the Thousand Trails RV resort fence line. It is a difficult carry between the parking area and the river. Sheep's Crossing is named for the river crossing of the historic Sheep Driveway from the Phoenix area to the Mogollon Rim. The limestone bluffs once again rise up on river left below the confluence with Oak Creek.

Mile 63.5 Coconino National Forest sits on the left bank for the next 2 miles and Prescott National Forest on the right bank for the next 0.7 miles.

Mile 63.3 River enters private land for 0.2 miles.

Mile 63.2 The Oak Creek Confluence is one of the most beautiful spots on the Verde River between Clarkdale and Beasley Flat. This is a great spot to admire two wonderful streams as they join together at a picturesque location. Check Oak Creek's flow here. Oak Creek's watershed extends up to the Flagstaff city limits and drains Sedona and Munds Park.

Mile 63.2 Verde Limestone Formation on river left. These bluffs extend to the confluence with Oak Creek.

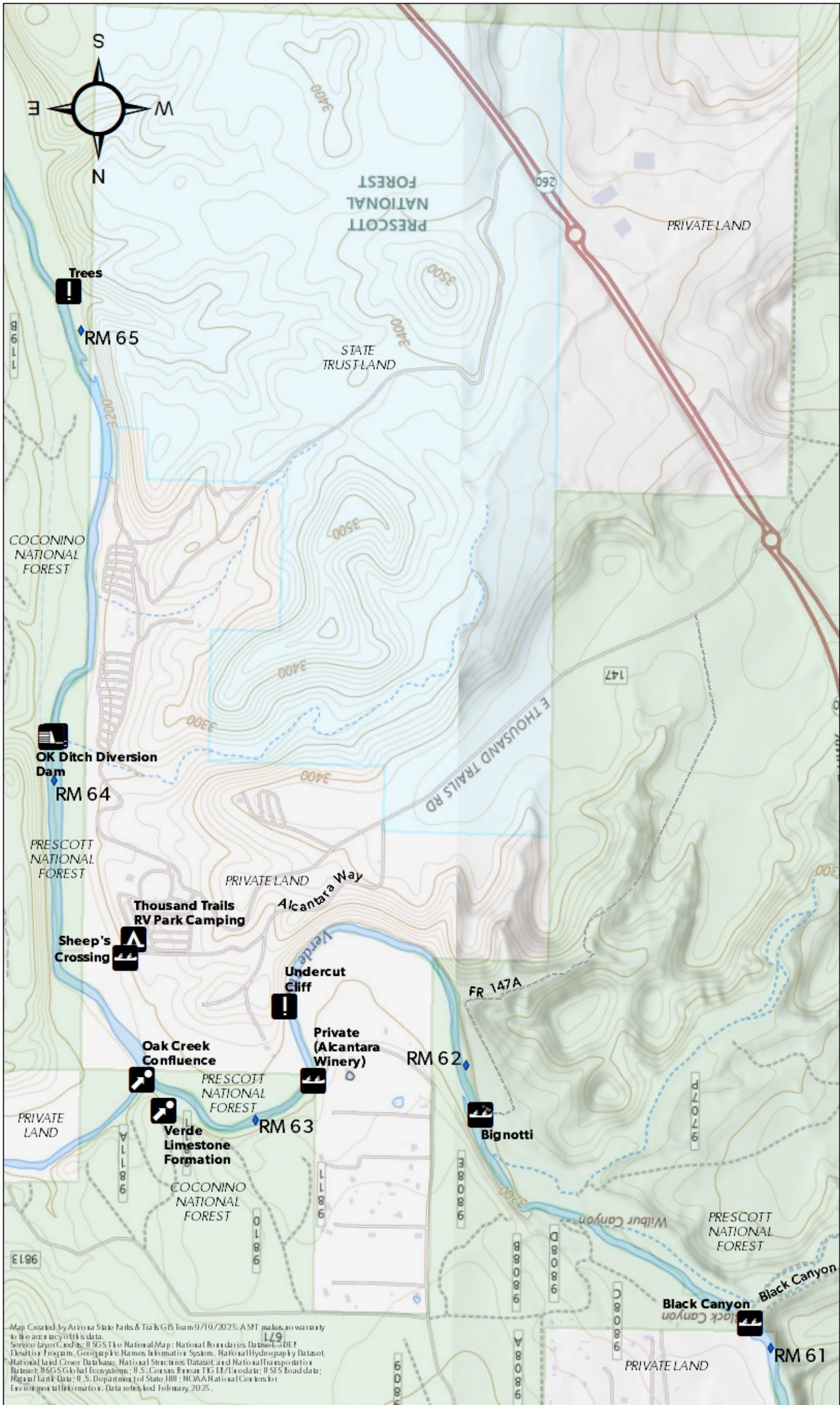
Mile 62.8 The commercial takeout for Alcantara Vineyards features a vehicle access ramp and retaining wall. This is private property and is marked "No Trespassing." About 100 yards downstream there are some tricky riffles. Around the bend from the Alcantara area there are many rocks in the channel, which makes for very busy paddling. River splits Coconino and Prescott National Forests for half a mile just after the vineyard.

Mile 62.6 At low flows the current enters a very small, narrow right hand channel which hugs the Verde Limestone formation. There are some significant undercut cliffs which could be dangerous at high flows.

Mile 62.2 Private land is found on both banks for 0.6 miles.

Mile 61.8 The Bignotti RAP, on river right, is managed by Prescott National Forest and features an excellent parking area with restrooms, picnic facilities, trails, and RV parking. The river access is informal and difficult to spot from the river, but access is relatively easy. Boaters are advised to scout the entire river right stream bank for the best available access suitable for their watercraft and abilities.

Mile 61.1 River left banks are part of the Coconino National Forest for 1.1 miles.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS team 9/19/2025. ASP makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: USGS The National Map; National Boundaries Dataset; DEP Elevation Program; Geographic Names Information System; National Hydrography Dataset; National Land Cover Database; National Structures Dataset; and National Transportation Database; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HBI; NCWA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed February 2025.

Mile 69.1 This low water road crossing on the Yavapai-Apache Nation may not be used for river access without permission from Nation officials.

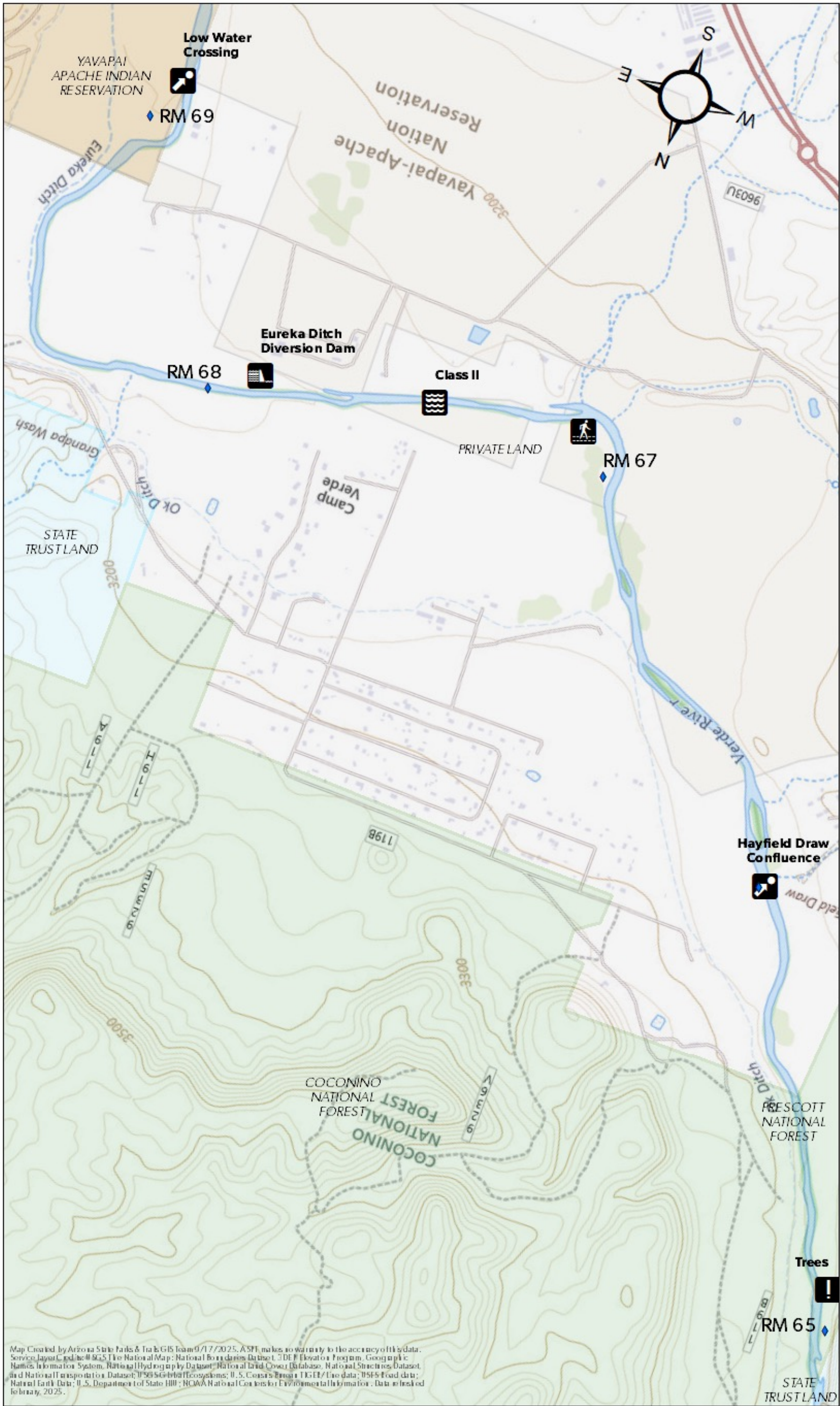
Mile 67.9 The character of the Eureka Ditch Diversion Dam, made of gravel, will probably change after each winterspring runoff season. The large white-roofed structure, an open-sided hay barn, is very visible from the river before reaching the diversion.

Mile 67.5 This rapid, formed by limestone bedrock ledges, is one of the few rapids on the Verde River between Clarkdale and Beasley Flat. In a canoe, this rapid is definitely a Class II and could easily be rated as a Class III, depending on stream flow. There is no easy way to scout this rapid. Note that the river is making a sharp turn to the left leading to the rapid.

Mile 67.1 The dense wall of willow trees is a very large, total channel blockage. A very long portage on river right is required.

Mile 66.0 Industrial development is visible on river right at the confluence of Hayfield Draw and the Verde River. There are many willows obstructing the channel below and boaters may elect to portage this area.

Mile 65.6 River enters private land on both sides for 4.6 miles.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS team 9/17/2025. ASPN makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data. Service Layer Credits: All BGST Live National Map: National Boundaries Database, 3D Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Geospatial Ecosystems; U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey; USGS Elevation Data; USGS Road Data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HHS; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data released February, 2025.

Mile 73.5 The Verde River makes several confusing twists and turns amid the bridge piers of the I-17 “Dan Bell Memorial” Bridge(s). Proceed slowly and use caution here. The southbound bridge dates to 1961 and the northbound bridge was completed in 1979.

Mile 73.5 Parson’s Preserve River Access Point is in the process of being developed and has no dedicated parking yet. Currently, river access requires a quarter mile walk from Rawhide Road paralleling the west side of Interstate 17, meeting the river under the southbound bridge.

Mile 73.2 This is a very constricted area where the river flows into a blind channel on the right. This constriction is located at the upstream end of a large willow forest which extends up from Interstate 17. Scouting is advised.

Mile 72.6 These old car bodies mark a historical oddity of past governmental authorities officially encouraging the use of old car bodies to protect the stream banks from erosion. As late as the 1980s, car bodies were visible in many places on the Verde River banks. Subsequent floods and channel changes have buried most of those car bodies. The remnants of those cars you see here are the best remaining vestige of that discontinued erosion control practice.

Mile 71.9 The left bank becomes private land for 4.1 miles.

Mile 71.7 A large amount of irrigation return from the Verde Ditch is flowing back to the river here.

Mile 71.6 A challenging channel that may be passable for experienced paddlers. Less experienced boaters may choose to portage and avoid the potential of pinning in the trees. Due to the channel configuration here, it is highly likely that this will always remain a challenging run. Scouting is recommended.

Mile 71.5 The top of a series of rocky riffles. The Verde River bends to the right beneath Verde Limestone ledges ahead. These ledges could be a very dangerous spot at high flows. After the ledges there is a huge lake-like pool.

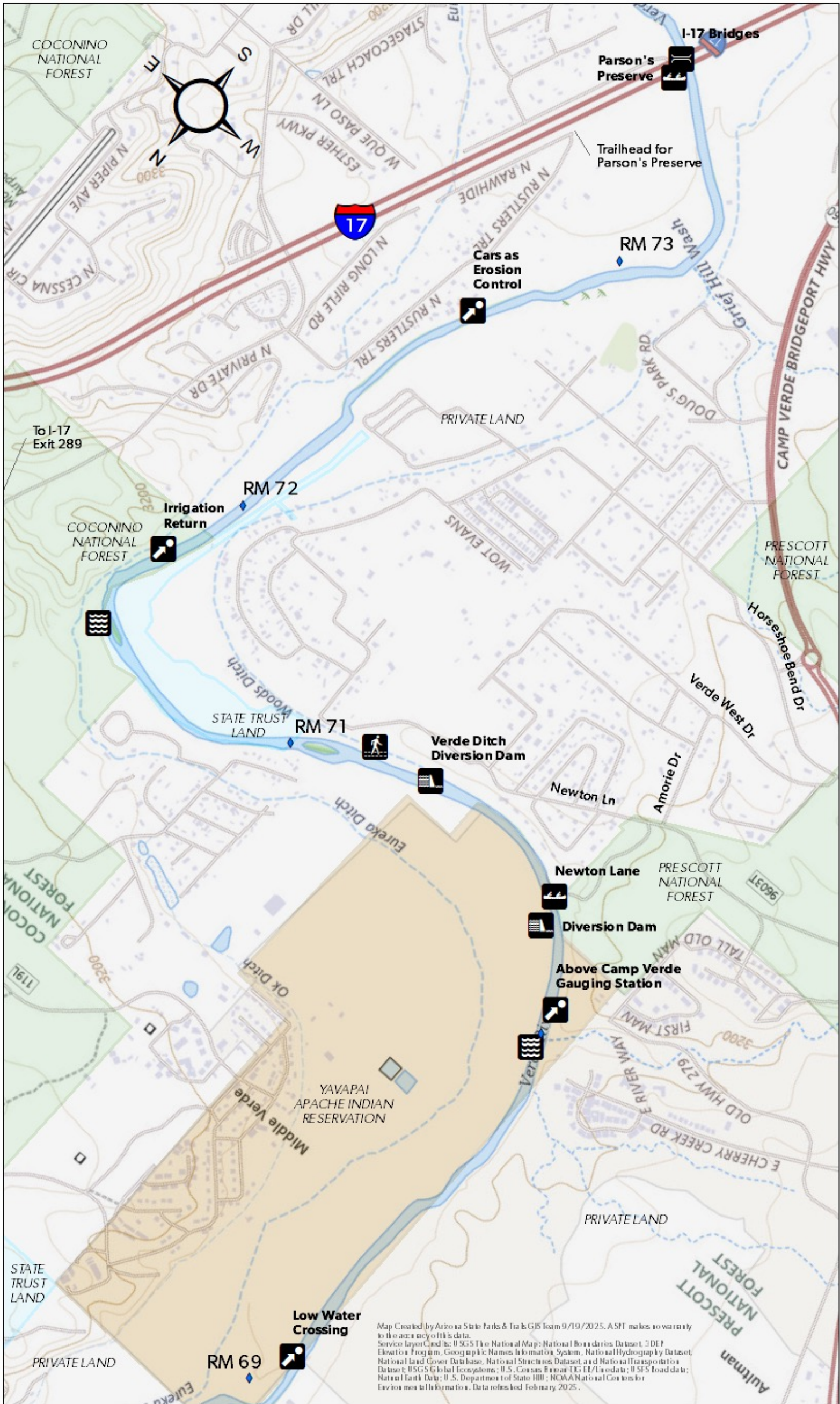
Mile 71.4 Coconino National Forest touches the left banks for half of a mile.

Mile 70.6 The Verde Ditch Diversion Dam may be one of the most difficult portages between Clarkdale and Beasley Flat. At low flows, this structure captures the entire flow of the river, sending it into the Verde Ditch channel on river right. Some of the captured flow begins almost immediately to find its way back into the river channel. A portage starts on ditch left just after the dam. Watch out for poor footing and numerous potential boat-damaging obstacles like broken concrete and metal. Running the diversion dam and the “tree fences” downstream could be very dangerous at higher flows.

Mile 70.2 The Newton Lane RAP lies just downstream from the Yavapai Apache Nation boundary in a brief section of Prescott National Forest on the right shoreline between private lands. Access to this point was developed to install and service an irrigation diversion and vertical turbine pump on river right. The final portion of the unimproved road is very steep and loose and may not be suitable for low clearance, two-wheel-drive vehicles. At low flows, the diversion itself does not represent a hazard. Paddlers coming from upstream can actually land their boats on the right area of the diversion dam. Paddlers putting in here will find an access friendly stream bank about 100-200 feet below the diversion structure. Private land resumes after the RAP for 1.1 miles on river left and 4.7 miles on river right.

Mile 70.0 The “Above Camp Verde” USGS gauging station, located here, provides real-time statistics of the river flow viewable online.

Mile 69.9 This rock-studded riffle was created by a summer monsoon flow event that flushed a large alluvial fan into the river from river right.



Mile 77.8 White Bridge RAP is located on river left just below the White Bridge (Highway 260). This Coconino National Forest run facility is one of the most heavily used Verde River access points. It is well developed, with restrooms, picnic tables and ramadas. The White Bridge was so-named because bright white limestone was used to construct the original bridge. It was replaced by the current eastbound bridge in 1982 with the westbound bridge added in 2003.

Mile 77.2 The Diamond S Ditch Diversion Dam is easy to miss as much of the river is diverted to the left and the dam itself is overgrown and best identified by the sound of falling water. If flow is high enough to run the dam, it is still very dangerous as there will be exposed rebar and dense vegetation. To avoid the dam, paddle the ditch for about 0.2 miles until an open area on river right and take out before a small green private bridge. From here, portage about 100 yards to the west and find a put in for the main channel by a picnic table.

Mile 76.4 This long pool is created by the Diamond S Ditch Diversion Dam.

Mile 75.6 Beaver Creek enters the Verde River on river left and has a flow monitored by the USGS. The headwaters rise to the south of Mormon Mountain many miles to the north on the Mogollon Rim. High flows from Beaver Creek can often dam the Verde River, creating a large pool of clear water upstream from the chocolate flood waters entering the river here.

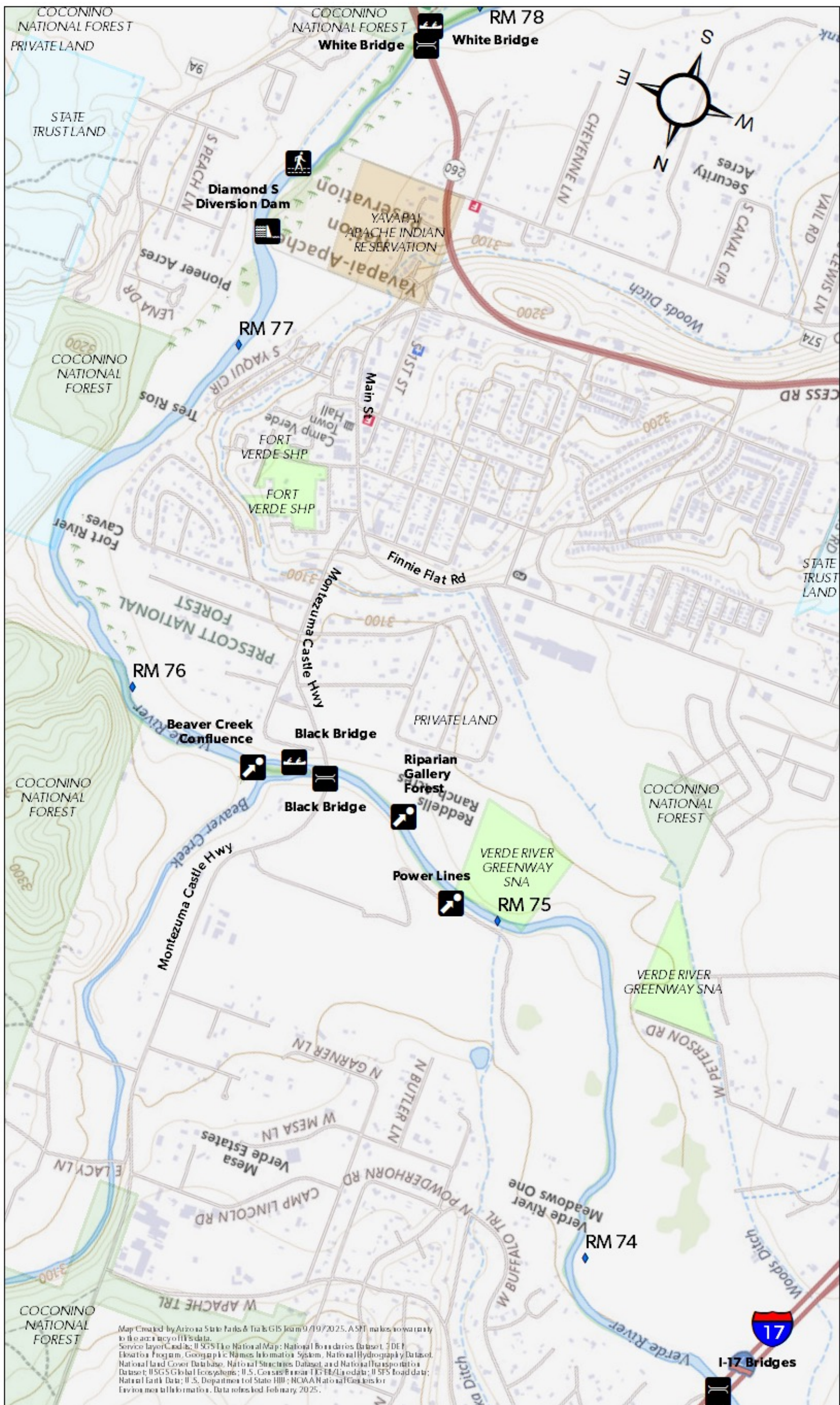
Mile 75.6 The Black Bridge RAP is located on river right just downstream from the bridge, in the Town of Camp Verde’s Rezzonico Park. A grassy hill separates the parking area and an informal launch point by about 200 feet. A portable toilet, a picnic area, parking, and a plaque marking the “Center of Arizona” are found in the park.

Mile 75.5 The Black Bridge takes its name from a black iron bridge which once spanned the river here. The bridge was originally a trestle on a narrow gauge railroad between Chino Valley and Jerome. When that railroad was dismantled in 1910, Camp Verdeans disassembled the trestle and carried it by wagon from the slopes of Woodchute Mountain to the Verde River. Remains of this bridge can still be seen on the left bank of Beaver Creek about a mile upstream from the confluence of Beaver Creek and the Verde River. The new bridge was finished in 1974.

Mile 75.3 This area contains some of the largest cottonwood trees remaining on the Verde River between Clarkdale and Beasley Flat. This type of Fremont Cottonwood and Gooding Willow riparian gallery forest is one of five remaining stands in Arizona and one of 20 such stands in the world.

Mile 75.1 Below highly visible overhead power lines, the stream bed has been stabilized with jacks made with phone poles as well as limestone boulders and old broken concrete chunks. Note the tall field fencing, which prevents a local elk herd from entering the farm fields. Both banks are predominantly private land for 4.8 miles downstream outside of the RAPs.

Mile 74.9 A portion of the Verde River Greenway State Natural Area is on the right bank for 0.2 miles.



Mile 82.6 Alongside the Verde Lake Club Estates subdivision on river right, note the stream bank stabilization project angle iron sticking out of the water. These structures were built after the 1993 Flood. At that time, the river channel was virtually barren of any vegetation here.

Mile 81.8 Riffle at the bottom of the second Windy Point rock bar, where the river comes down and piles into pottery gray clay cliffs. The first right-hand turn in this S-bend is definitely a canoe flipper if you aren't paying attention.

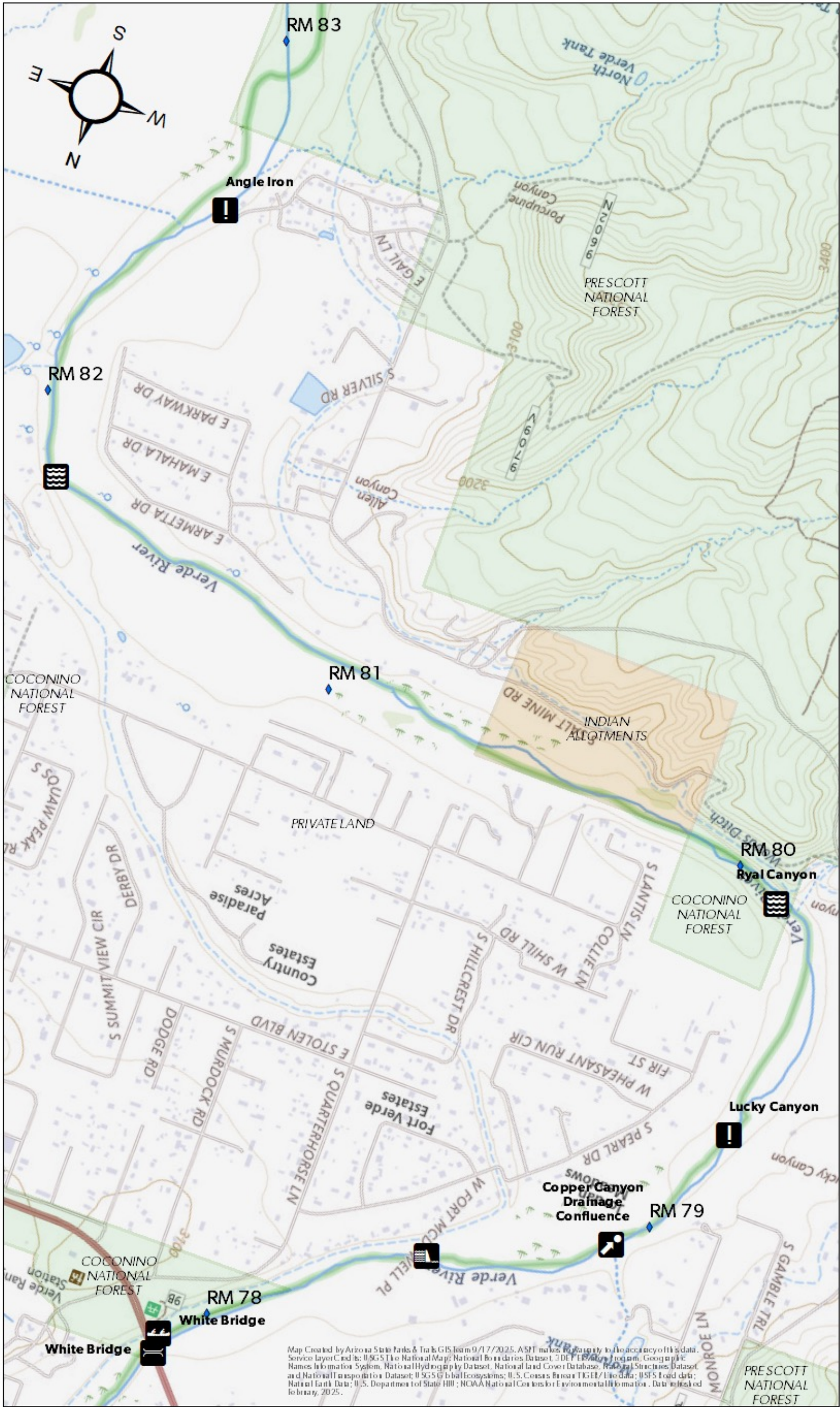
Mile 80.0 The river passes through private land for 2.8 miles.

Mile 79.8 The bottom of the first Windy Point rock bar is at the outlet of the usually dry Ryal Canyon entering from river right. The alluvial fan creates another obstacle course, with overgrown braided channels, and small drops that can change after every flood. Coconino (left) and Prescott (right) National Forests bracket the channel for 0.2 miles.

Mile 79.2 Another typically dry wash, Lucky Canyon, enters from the river right and becomes an overgrown alluvial fan. This area is known as the first Windy Point rock bar. It is a heavily vegetated section with braided tight channels, riffles, chutes, and small pools.

Mile 78.9 The usually dry outlet of Copper Canyon is located on river right. The river is constricted by a large alluvial fan here, created by flood events in this extensive drainage. Soon after, the river becomes braided and overgrown with many tight channels, riffles, and small pools for a mile.

Mile 78.5 A primitive irrigation dam forms a pool from which water can be withdrawn by a vertical turbine pump on river left. The dam itself presents as a steep drop over large stones that may require a short portage, most easily accomplished on river left.



Mile 86.7 The left bank is private land for 0.2 miles before a long stretch of public land.

Mile 86.2 Beginning of a series of enjoyable Class II riffles and pools that continue for approximately one mile. Have fun! Prescott National Forest now manages the right bank for 14 miles, and Coconino National Forest manages the left for 0.4 miles.

Mile 85.9 Private land stretches for 0.3 miles from here.

Mile 85.6 Prescott National Forest is found on both sides of the river for 0.3 miles.

Mile 85.4 The river flows back through private land for 0.2 miles.

Mile 85.2 The Prescott National Forest manages the right bank for 0.2 miles.

Mile 85.0 An enjoyable riffle through a tree tunnel starts at the end of a long pool.

Mile 84.6 The chalky white Gypsum Cliffs on river left are nearly pure gypsum. At one time, unsuccessful attempts were made to gain approval to mine these cliffs. The wooden structure on river left is the remnant of a zip line from the top of the cliffs to the river right area. The Coconino National Forest manages the left bank for the next 0.7 miles.

Mile 84.5 Most of the current makes a sharp left turn here. A few “dead-end” channels wind left through the willow trees downstream. At higher flows, keep an eye out for this opportunity to go left and miss the tree fence downstream. Both sides are now in Rockin’ River Ranch State Park for 0.2 miles, and 0.6 miles on river right.

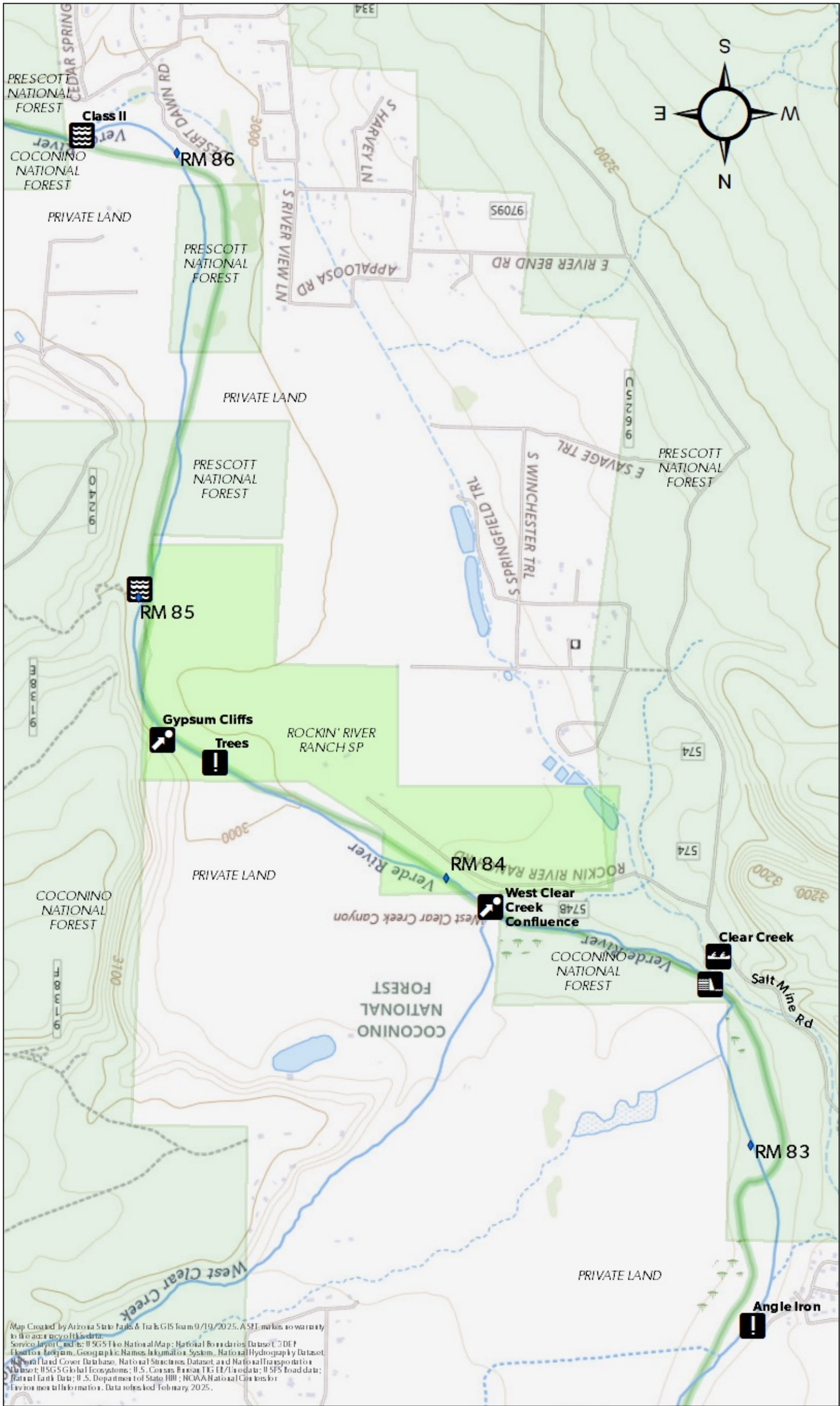
Mile 84.1 Both banks are private land for 0.3 miles.

Mile 83.8 West Clear Creek enters on river left, above the rocky riffle. At low flows, West Clear Creek spreads out across the wide alluvial fan and the flow disappears into the gravel before it reaches the river. Check West Clear Creek’s flow here. The creek drains an area of forest stretching 50 miles to the northeast of here. The river flows through Rockin’ River Ranch State Park for 0.3 miles.

Mile 83.3 Clear Creek RAP is a very popular boating access site, especially during the low water of early summer. Launch or take out on river right next to the diversion dam, which creates a pool for the irrigation pump located on river right. A short but steep trail crosses an irrigation ditch and connects the small Prescott National Forest managed parking area off Salt Mine Road to the river below. For the next half mile, Prescott (right) and Coconino (left) National Forests manage land on the sides of the river.

Mile 83.2 Private land resumes for 0.1 miles.

Mile 82.8 The river passes through Prescott National Forest land for 0.3 miles.



Mile 92.1 Sycamore Canyon drains into the river here, when flowing.

Mile 92.0 This is the end of the No Stopping Zone for Eagle Habitat, which is closed to stopping (other than for rapid scouting) from December 1 to June 30.

Mile 91.7 Rock Garden Rapid (Class II) This rapid is a ¼ mile long series of rocky drops. The rocks get larger and the drops a little steeper as you progress. The Scout for this rapid is from the left bank. Chasm Creek enters the Verde here.

Mile 91.6 The “Near Camp Verde” USGS gauging station is found on river right. Real time stream flow data can be found from it online.

Mile 90.3 Verde Falls Rapid (Class IV) One of the most technical rapids on the river, the water pours over an 8-foot ledge into a narrow bedrock channel where there is a large rock in the middle of the channel just below the pour over. The scout for this rapid is from the left bank, stopping well above Pre-Falls Rapid.

Mile 90.3 This is the beginning of a No Stopping Zone for Eagle Habitat for 1.7 miles. This area is closed to stopping from December 1 to June 30. Scouting rapids is exempt from the stopping prohibition.

Mile 90.2 Pre-Falls Rapid (Class III) The river splits above this rapid and the right channel goes through trees to bypass it. The left channel pours over a three-foot ledge creating a sometimes sticky hole. The scout for this rapid and Verde Falls is from the left bank, stopping well above the rapid. Note that land access through the eagle habitat just downstream is prohibited, unless scouting rapids, from December 1 to June 30.

Mile 90.0 Trail Access Point The Falls Trailhead is 1/10 of a mile from the river on river left. This trailhead is accessible from FS road 9244. The Ladders Trail #16 is approximately 1 ¼ mile from the river on river right. This trail is accessible from Forest Road 9709. This area is in Eagle Habitat, and roads are closed from December 1 to June 30.

Mile 89.7 This sand and bedrock camp (Capacity 25) is on river left.

Mile 89.5 Off the Wall Rapid (Class II) In this rapid, the water goes over a rock bar and then pushes current into a rock wall on river right. The Scout for this rapid is from the right bank.

Mile 88.3 This camp (Capacity 25) is on river left with a large gravel beach.

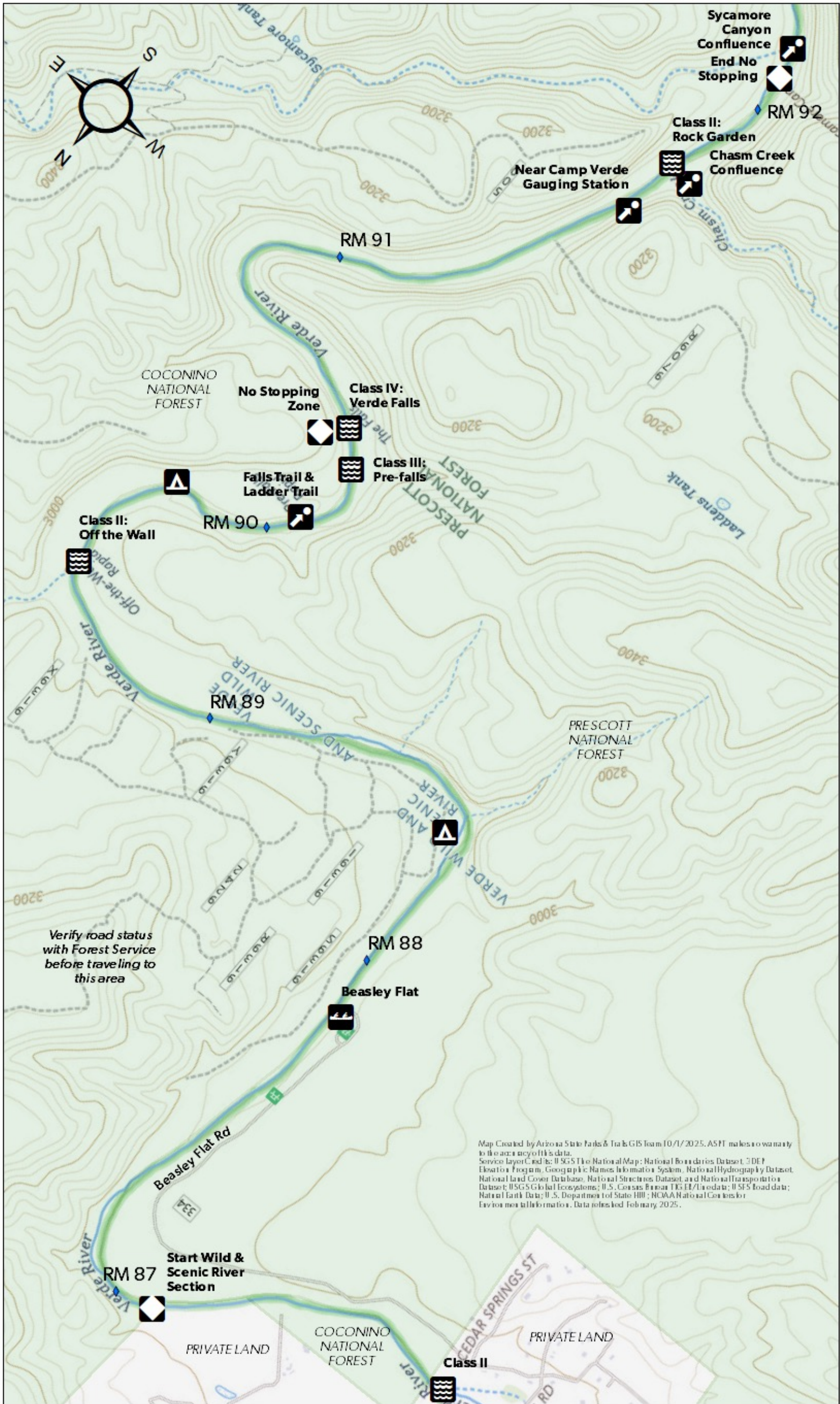
Mile 87.8 The Beasley Flat RAP marks the change from the more urban stretch of the Verde to the Wild and Scenic designated section which runs for 51 miles to Sheep Bridge. This Prescott National Forest run facility has restrooms, changing rooms, and ample parking and is a popular take out for day trips and put in for multi-day trips through the wilderness.

Downstream from here in the Wild & Scenic River section, group sizes are limited to 25 people and rapids increase in difficulty to class III/IV. Rapid ratings from here to Horseshoe Reservoir are given for lower flows, below 1,000 cfs. All rapids ratings are subjective and can easily change to be more easy or more technical as flows increase or decrease. Novice paddlers should not paddle the Wild and Scenic section.

Certain sections of the shoreline are closed to stopping in the wilderness section to protect wildlife. This guide details the closure areas at time of publication, but boaters must check on current restricted areas before floating below Beasley Flat.

Across the river from Beasley Flat are the Mindeleff Cavates, a series of archaeological sites featuring “cavates” which are cave rooms carved into the cliff.

Mile 86.9 This is the beginning of the Verde River Wild & Scenic River designated section. The Coconino National Forest manages the left bank for 15 miles.



Mile 96.2 This camp (Capacity 10) has a sand beach and is on river right just below Bushman Rapid.

Mile 96.1 Bushman Rapid (Class III) In this rapid, the water flows down a rock bar and then turns right as it piles into a rock wall on river left. After the turn, there are ledges or holes on the left side of the channel and it is best to stay right of the root ball. Some water also flows through trees to the right of the rapid. The scout for this rapid is difficult to access and is overgrown, but is accessed from the left bank.

Mile 95.9 Towel Creek enters on river right.

Mile 95.8 Camp (Capacity 15). This camp as a cobble landing across from the Gap Creek Trail has a large sycamore tree in the center of it. The beach was wiped out by a 2023 flood.

Mile 95.7 Gap Creek River Access Point On river right is the Gap Creek Trail and the Gap Creek confluence. This is a steep trail to a parking area approximately ¾ mile from the river near a ranch. This trail and parking area can be accessed by Forest Road 574 in Prescott National Forest. The majority of floaters who start at Beasley Flat take out here.

Mile 95.5 Trail Access Point. Towel Creek Trail (#67) is approximately seven miles from the river on river left. This trail is accessible from Forest Road 708.

Mile 94.8 Turkey Gobbler Rapid /Punk Rock (Class III) At the bottom of the rapid, there are two large rocks (the larger of which is punk rock). The water goes over and through these rocks, making a hole at higher water. The scout for this rapid is well above on the left bank.

Mile 94.5 This small camp (Capacity 6) on river right has a sand beach in a dry wash. There are cliff walls on both sides and a sycamore tree near the landing. Cattle often graze this area.

Mile 94.3 Bull Run Rapid (Class III) The water in this rapid runs over a gravel bar towards a 2-foot ledge on the right side of the rapid. At high water the two large boulders below the rapid become holes on either side of the channel. The scout for this rapid is from the left bank.

Mile 92.7 This camp (Capacity 10) has a sand beach and is located just below Palisades Rapid on river left. A spring flood in 2023 reduced the size of the formerly large camp.

Mile 92.5 Palisades Rapid (Class III) This rapid has a long rocky entry at low water. The water eventually funnels to the right and pours over a rock bar before hitting the rock wall on the right. The scout for this rapid is from the right bank.

Mile 92.3 This camp (Capacity 25) on river left has a sandy landing.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS team 9/19/2025. ASPMT makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: U.S. Geological Survey National Map; National Boundaries Dataset; 3DEP Elevation Program; Geographic Names Information System; National Hydrography Dataset; National Land Cover Database; National Structures Dataset; and National Transportation Dataset; U.S. Geological Survey National Map; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; U.S. Forest Service; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HHS; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed February 2025.

Mile 99.8 The river turns left and goes through trees into a narrow channel with waves on the left side.

Mile 99.6 Cold Water Creek enters from river right.

Mile 98.7 The river splits through some trees, but the left run is not passable. The right channel is overgrown and may require some bushwhacking.

Mile 98.1 The Gospel Hollow drainage enters from river right.

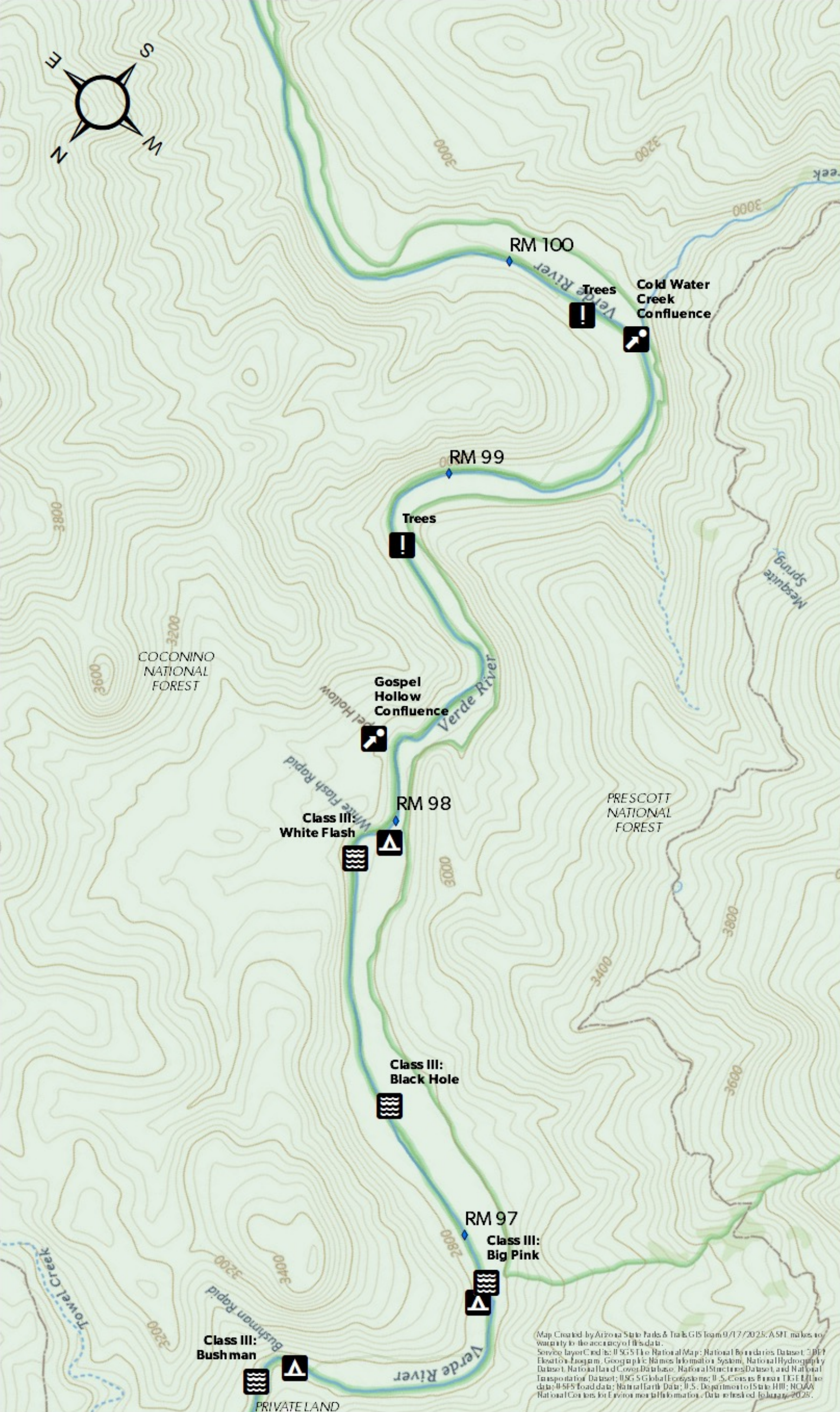
Mile 97.9 This camp (Capacity 25) is an elevated sand beach on river right just below White Flash Rapid.

Mile 97.8 White Flash Rapid (Class II) This rapid has moved upstream of the river bend in recent years. Run left along the tall grass on the bank, then get right of the large rock at the bottom.

Mile 97.3 Black Hole Rapid (Class III) This rapid is also very rocky at low water. It has a bedrock ledge at the bottom of the rapid that becomes a hole at high water. There is a long channel on the left with some trees in it that bypasses the rapid. At low water, all of the water goes down the left channel. The scout for this rapid is from the right bank.

Mile 96.8 Big Pink Rapid (Class III) This rapid is very rocky at low water. The water goes through a series of rocks, funneling towards a large pink rock at the bottom of the rapid. This rock becomes a large hole at high water. The scout for this rapid is from the right bank.

Mile 96.8 This is a large sand beach camp (Capacity 15) on river left.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS Team 9/17/2025; ASPT makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: USGS The National Map; National Boundaries Dataset; 2021
Elevation Program; Geographic Names Information System; National Hydrography
Dataset; National Land Cover Database; National Structures Dataset; and National
Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line
data; USFS Road data; Natural Earth Data; U.S. Department of State Hill; NOAA
National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed February 2025.

Mile 103.9 A hotel was built between the late 1920's and early 1930's at the Verde Hot Springs on river right. A Cherokee named Ben Copple was the caretaker of the hotel. Copple was also the guide of southwestern author Zane Grey. The Hotel burned down on Christmas Eve in 1958. What remains are concrete sidewalks, two palm trees, retaining walls, and two hot tubs; one in a small rock building, and the other outside. This is a popular stopping point in the Tonto National Forest.

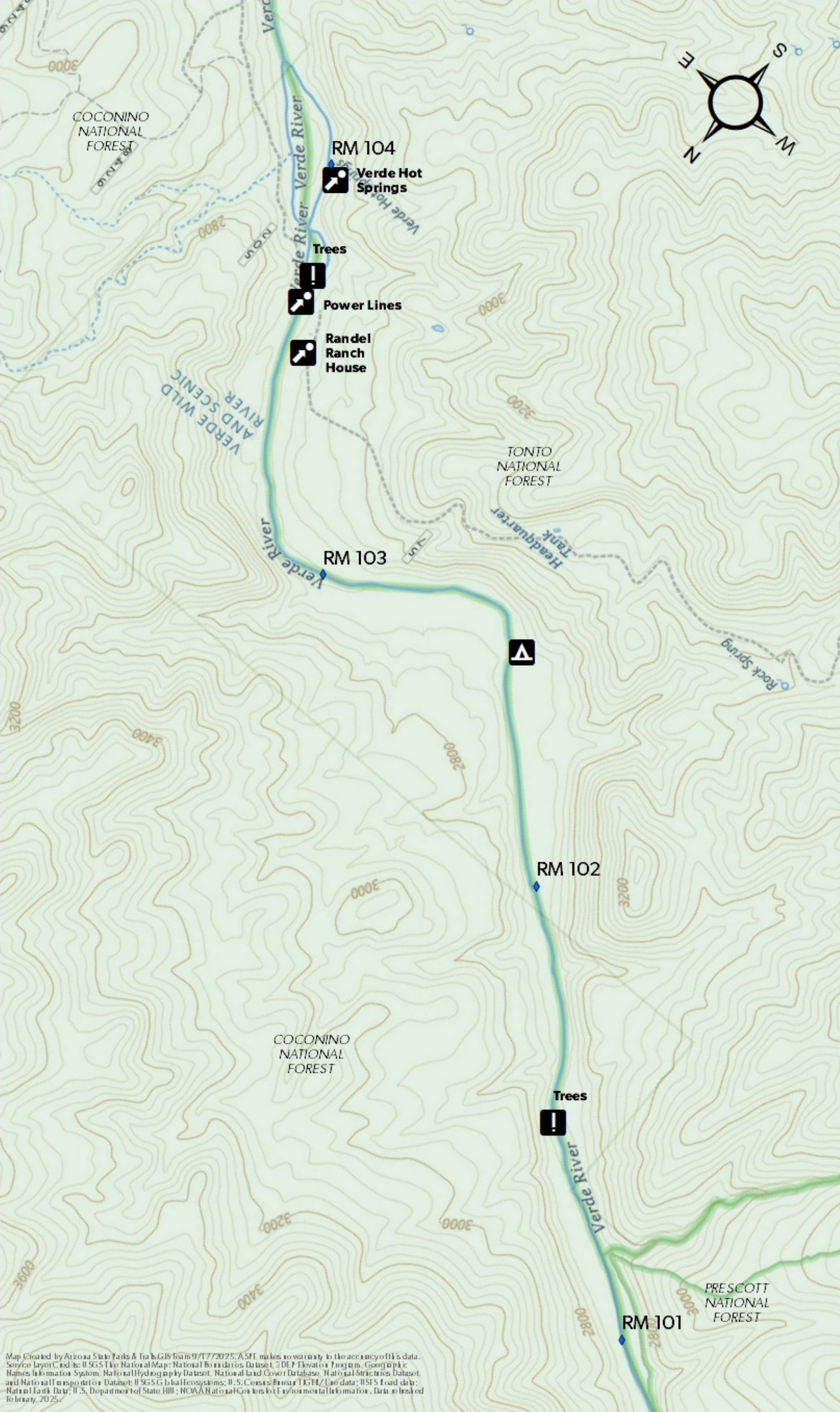
Mile 103.6 Power lines cross the river, and there are trees in the entry to the channel on river right.

Mile 103.5 On river right, spot the Randel Ranch House made from river rock. Walt Randel, one of the original ranchers in the area, had four sons who built the house in 1939.

Mile 102.5 This camp (Capacity 15) is on river right with a sand and gravel beach.

Mile 101.9 The river enters the Tonto National forest for the first time, lasting for 2.3 miles.

Mile 101.4 There is a tree on river left with a limb overhanging the water. Coconino National Forest now covers both sides of the river for half a mile.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS team 9/17/2025. ASP makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data. Source layer Credits: U.S. State National Map; National Boundaries Dataset; U.S. Elevation Program; Geographic Names Information System; National Hydrography Dataset; National Land Cover Database; National Structures Dataset; and National Transportation Dataset; U.S. Global Ecosystems; U.S. Coastal and Near Tidal; U.S. Road data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HHS; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data is listed February, 2025.

Mile 106.9 Tonto National Forest manages both sides of the river for 69 miles, covering all sections from here, through Horseshoe Reservoir, Bartlett Reservoir, on down to Box Bar.

Mile 106.8 The last stretch of Coconino National Forest lasts just 0.1 miles on river left.

Mile 106.2 A new rapid has formed just below Little Drop with a tight and fast run with a rooster tail. Scout from river left.

Mile 106.0 Little Drop Rapid (Class II) There are boulders on the right side of this rapid after the water pours over a rock at the top. The scout for this rapid is from the left bank.

Mile 106.0 This camp (Capacity 12) on river left has a sand beach.

Mile 105.9 Baby Snaggle-Tooth Rapid (Class II) In this rapid the water funnels to the left, with a wave at the bottom of the funnel. There is a large rock just left of the center of the channel at the bottom of the rapid. The scout for this rapid is from the left bank.

Mile 105.3 This is the beginning of the Verde Wild River Area and the entry to the Mazatzal Wilderness. This is a very remote area, so plan ahead and be prepared. Group size is limited to twelve people.

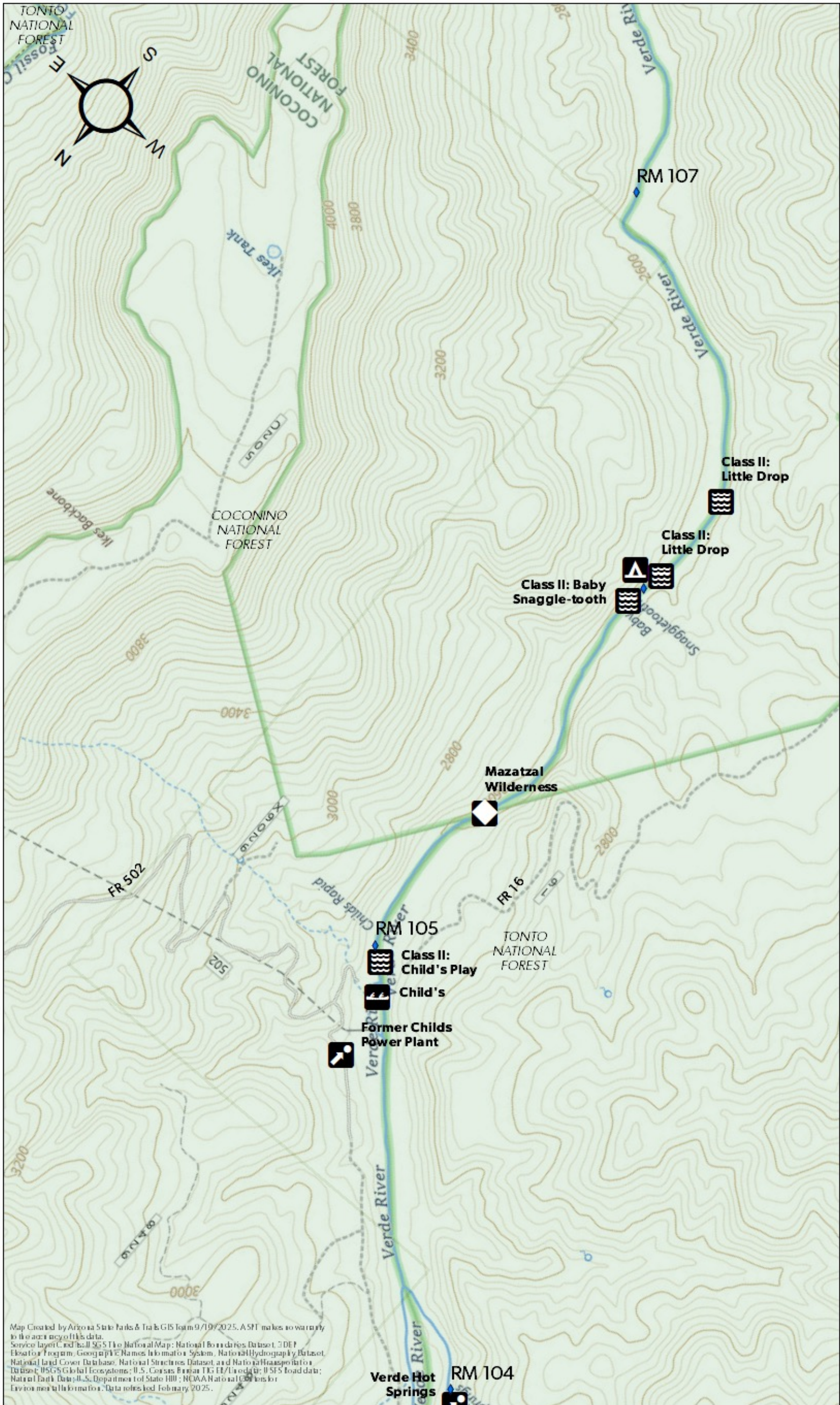
Mile 104.9 Childs Play Rapid (Class II) The water goes through some trees at the entry to this rapid, and then opens up to some waves below. The scout for this rapid is from the left bank.

Mile 104.9 Childs River Access Point Access to the river here on river left/east is by Forest Road 502. Facilities include a campground and a vault toilet. Access on river right/west is from Forest Road 16. Both sides are on very long and rough unpaved roads hours from Camp Verde or Scottsdale, respectively, with the FR 16 side being challenging to reach even by OHVs. The FR 502/river left side is more popular as it is a much shorter drive from all other river access points on the Verde with the exception of Sheep Bridge. In winter months, the dispersed site on river left is sometimes excepted from the ban on campfires in the Wild & Scenic section of the river. Check with the Coconino National Forest for current restrictions.

Mile 104.7 The former Childs hydroelectric power plant on river left began producing power in 1909, and was dismantled in 2005. The majority of the power was used to power mining operations in nearby Jerome. Construction of the plant and the road leading to it began in 1906, and took 600 men (most of them Apache and Mojave), 150 wagons, and 450 mules.

Mile 104.5 Both sides of the river are within Tonto National Forest: river left for 2.3 miles, and river right for 71.4 miles (well beyond Bartlett Dam), however the Coconino National Forest does manage access to some sites on the left of the river like Childs.

Mile 104.2 Coconino National Forest briefly manages both sides of the river for 0.2 miles.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS Team 9/19/2025. ASP makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: All SFS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HHI; NCWA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed February 2025.

Mile 113.2 A camp (Capacity 10) on a sand beach on river left has some willow trees in the center that may provide some shade.

Mile 113.2 From the confluence of Houston Creek and the Verde River, it is one and a half miles up the Houston Creek Trail to Forest Road 16.

Mile 112.0 The river splits into two channels here; the left channel is open and the right channel is blocked, and dries up at low water.

Mile 112.0 Across from the confluence of the East Verde River is a small sand and gravel beach camp (Capacity 8).

Mile 112.0 On river left, at the confluence with the East Verde River, you can access the Verde River Trail #11. From here, it is approximately 8 miles north to the trailhead near Strawberry, and approximately 16 miles south to Sheep Bridge. Check that stream's flow here. The East Verde watershed covers a large area extending up to the Mogollon Rim from Pine to well northeast of, and including, Payson.

Mile 111.3 Behind the brush at this lagoon, there is a small camp (Capacity 8).

Mile 111.0 Rockin' Center Rapid (Class II) Here the river turns to the right, then pours over a bedrock ledge with a large rock just right of center. The Scout for this rapid is from the left bank.

Mile 109.8 A cool and fast drop here ends in a big wave. Call it Big Wave Rapid.

Mile 109.5 This large sandy beach is a camp (Capacity 12) on river left.

Mile 109.3 A rock garden makes the end of the left channel difficult opposite the Dog's Foot Rapid which was in the right channel. Call it Dog's Left Foot Rapid.

Mile 109.2 Water has ceased to reliably flow in the right channel where the former Gnarly Little Rock Bar rapid was. A steep two-part rapid descends the left channel as Gnarly Left Rapid.

Mile 108.8 Nasty Little Dog Leg Rapid (Class III) The entry to this rapid is very rocky at low water, but can be run in pack rafts. The water goes over a rock bar into the right bank, where there are trees and rocks, and makes a sharp turn to the left. The scout for this rapid is from the right bank.

Mile 108.6 This sand and gravel beach is on river right with a camp (Capacity 12). It is difficult to see from the water and has a steep and brushy landing.

Mile 108.5 Fossil Creek, Arizona's only other Wild and Scenic River other than the Verde, enters the river on the left and forms a rapid on river right that drops between a rocks and a root ball. Check the tributary flow here. This acts as the divide between what is known as the "Middle Verde", which starts at Sycamore Creek above Clarkdale, and the "Lower Verde" which runs to the Salt River. Fossil Creek drains a relatively small area that starts on the Mogollon Rim just west of Strawberry.

Mile 108.1 This camp (Capacity 12) on river right has a rocky landing and a short walk to a sand beach.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS team 9/19/2025. ASPT makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: USGS The National Map; National Boundaries Dataset; 3DEP Elevation Program; Geographic Names Information System; National Hydrography Dataset; National Land Cover Database; National Structures Dataset; and National Transportation Database; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; Natural Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HHI; NCWA National Conservation Environmental Information. Data refreshed February 2025.

Mile 117.2 This camp (Capacity 12) on river right is a small sand beach with shrubs.

Mile 116.8 Goat Camp Creek enters on river left.

Mile 116.7 This camp (Capacity 8) on river left has a sand and rock beach and a rocky landing.

Mile 115.9 Warm Springs Warm water flows fifteen feet down to the river. Please resist the temptation to modify this natural feature.

Mile 115.6 Here the river enters a narrow channel with trees on both sides. At the bottom of the channel there are overhanging tree limbs on the left. The scout for this is from the right side of the channel.

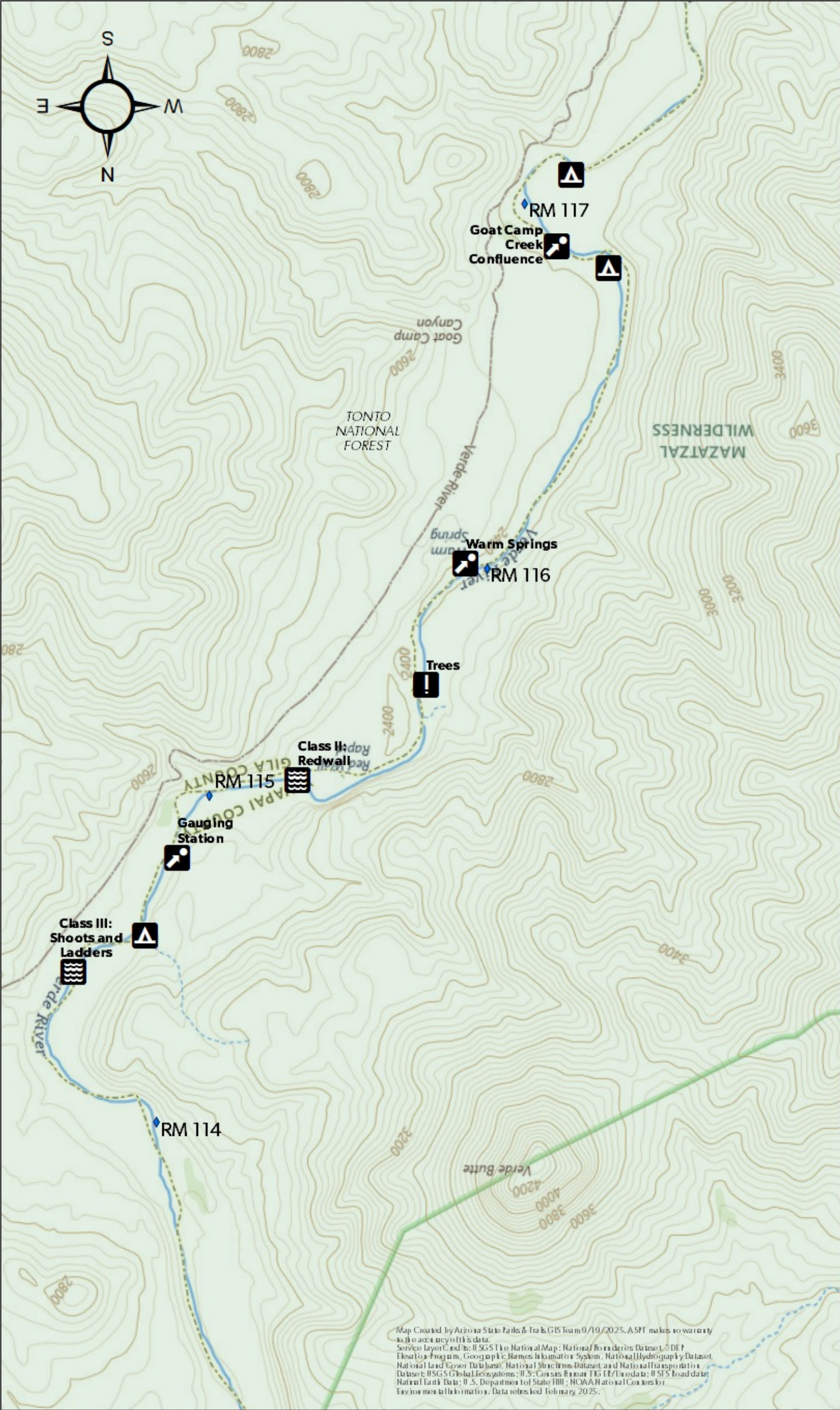
Mile 115.2 Red Wall Rapid (Class II) In this rapid the water drops down a long open channel, and runs straight into a cliff wall as it turns left. The scout for this rapid is on river left.

Mile 114.8 The “Verde River Below East Verde River Near Childs, AZ” USGS gauging station on river right is an authorized Wilderness intrusion. Real-time flow data from it can be found online. Note that only gauge height, and not cfs, is currently monitored at this station. This is also very close to the geographical center of Arizona, by some centroid measurements.

Mile 114.6 This camp (Capacity 12) has a sand and gravel beach and is on river right.

Mile 114.4 Shoots and Ladders Rapid (Class III) At low water, the water pours over a large rock in the center of this rapid, forming some large waves. At high water, the current runs over a rock bar and pushes into a rock wall on the left, forming large waves at the bottom. The scout for this rapid is from the left bank.

Mile 114.2 Bootlegger’s Cabin Jim Huffman built this small, dilapidated log cabin, hidden in the mesquite trees on river right. He lived there in the days of prohibition, making bootleg whiskey. The well next to the cabin was hand dug by pioneer cowboy Bill Helm.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS Team 9/19/2025. ASP makes no warranty as to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: USGS The National Map; National Boundaries Dataset, 3-DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HRU; NCWA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed February 2025.

Mile 122.6 This camp (Capacity 12) on river right has a large sand beach.

Mile 121.6 Canyon Creek enters on river left.

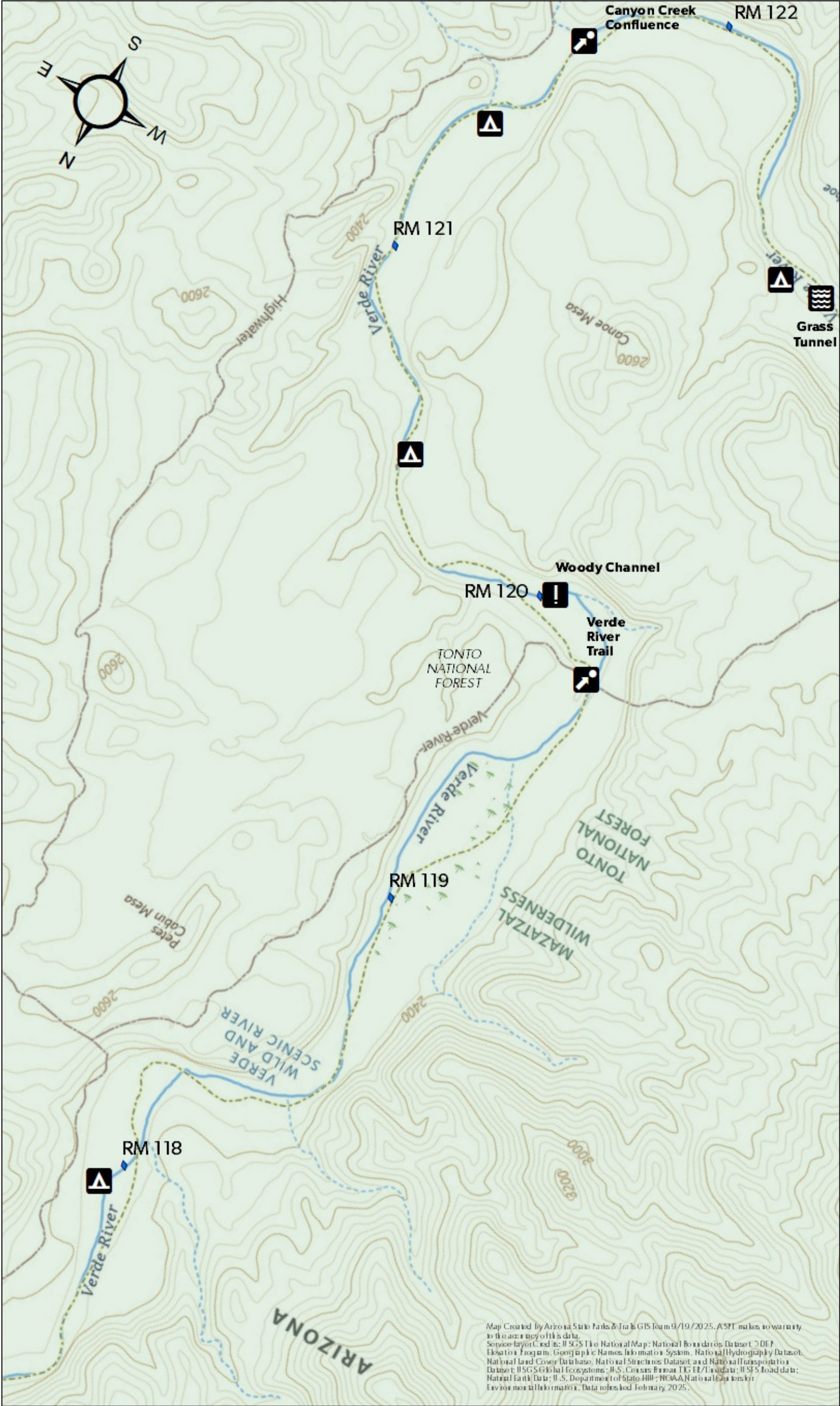
Mile 121.3 This camp (Capacity 12) on river right has a rocky landing with a fifty-foot trek to a sandy beach.

Mile 120.5 This camp (Capacity 12) on river right has a large sand beach near a big rock.

Mile 120.0 The river has a strange woody channel. Keep left.

Mile 119.7 The Verde River Trail # 11 crosses the river here. This trail traverses 31 miles from Sheep Bridge in the south to Twin Buttes Trailhead in the north, just south of Strawberry.

Mile 117.9 This camp (Capacity 12) on river left has a large sand beach near a cliff wall.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS Team 9/19/2025. ASPT makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Source layer Credits: USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 2 DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USGS land data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HHS; NOAA National Ocean Service Environmental Information; Data released February 2025.

Mile 128.0 Red Creek Rapid (Class II) Formed by Red Creek, this is a longer than average rapid that is very rocky at low water. Scout this rapid from the right bank.

Mile 128.0 The Verde River Trail #11 crosses the river here at the confluence with Red Creek. This is the end of the Verde River Wild and Scenic River section.

Mile 127.4 This camp (Capacity 12) on river right is a sand beach with a bedrock landing. It has some willow trees that may provide some shade.

Mile 126.4 This camp (Capacity 12) on river left has a sand and rock beach.

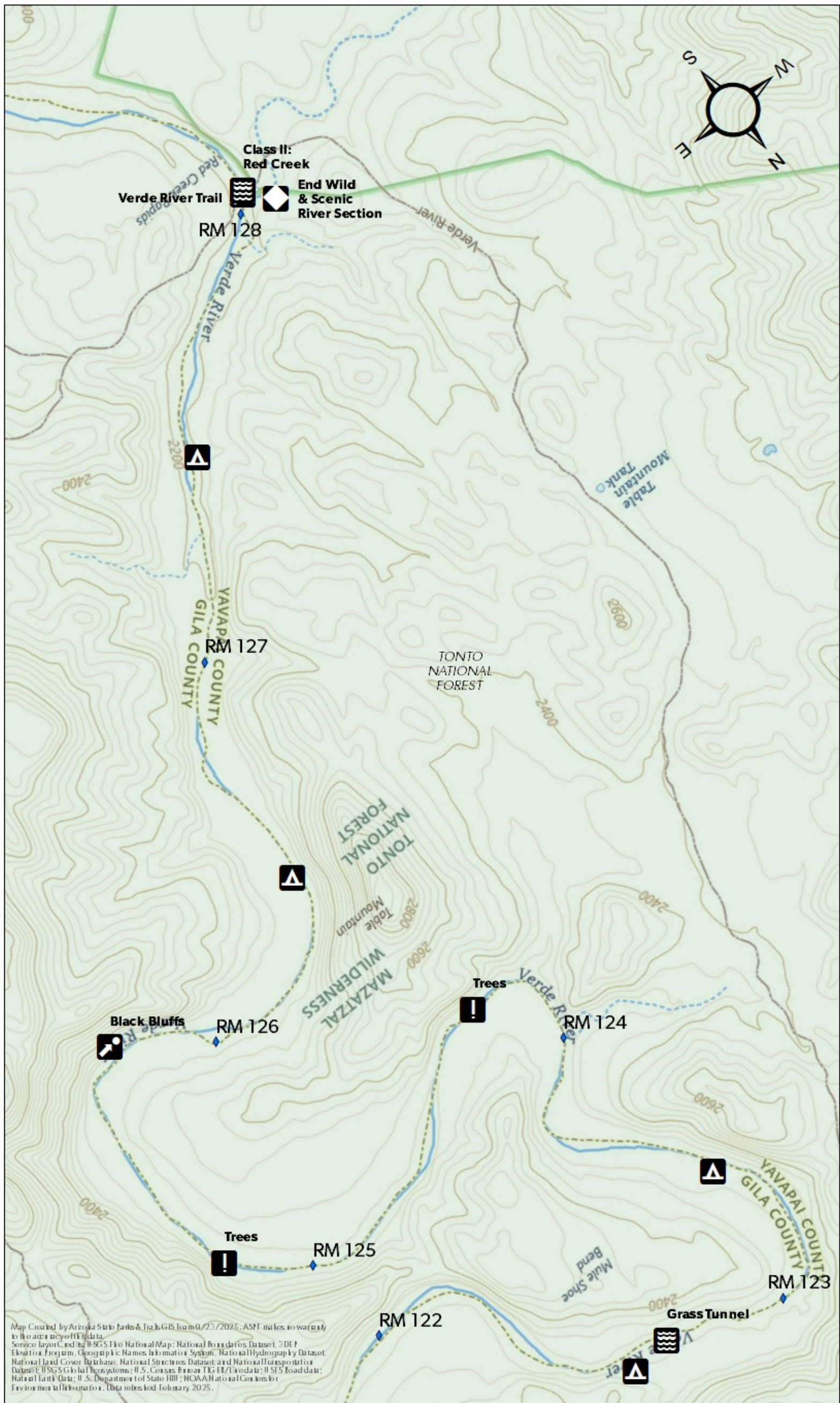
Mile 125.8 Black Bluffs are seen on river left.

Mile 125.1 The river narrows here and there are overhanging trees from both right and left banks.

Mile 124.2 Here the river runs into the right bank where there are some overhanging trees that have some underwater limbs extending into the current.

Mile 123.4 This camp (Capacity 12) on river left has a large rock and sand beach.

Mile 122.7 A small rapid sits here at the end of a fast and long grass tunnel with limited visibility.



Mile 133.1 This camp (Capacity 12) is on river left and has a sand beach and a steep landing with trees and shrubs.

Mile 132.6 There are trees overhanging the river from both sides of the river here.

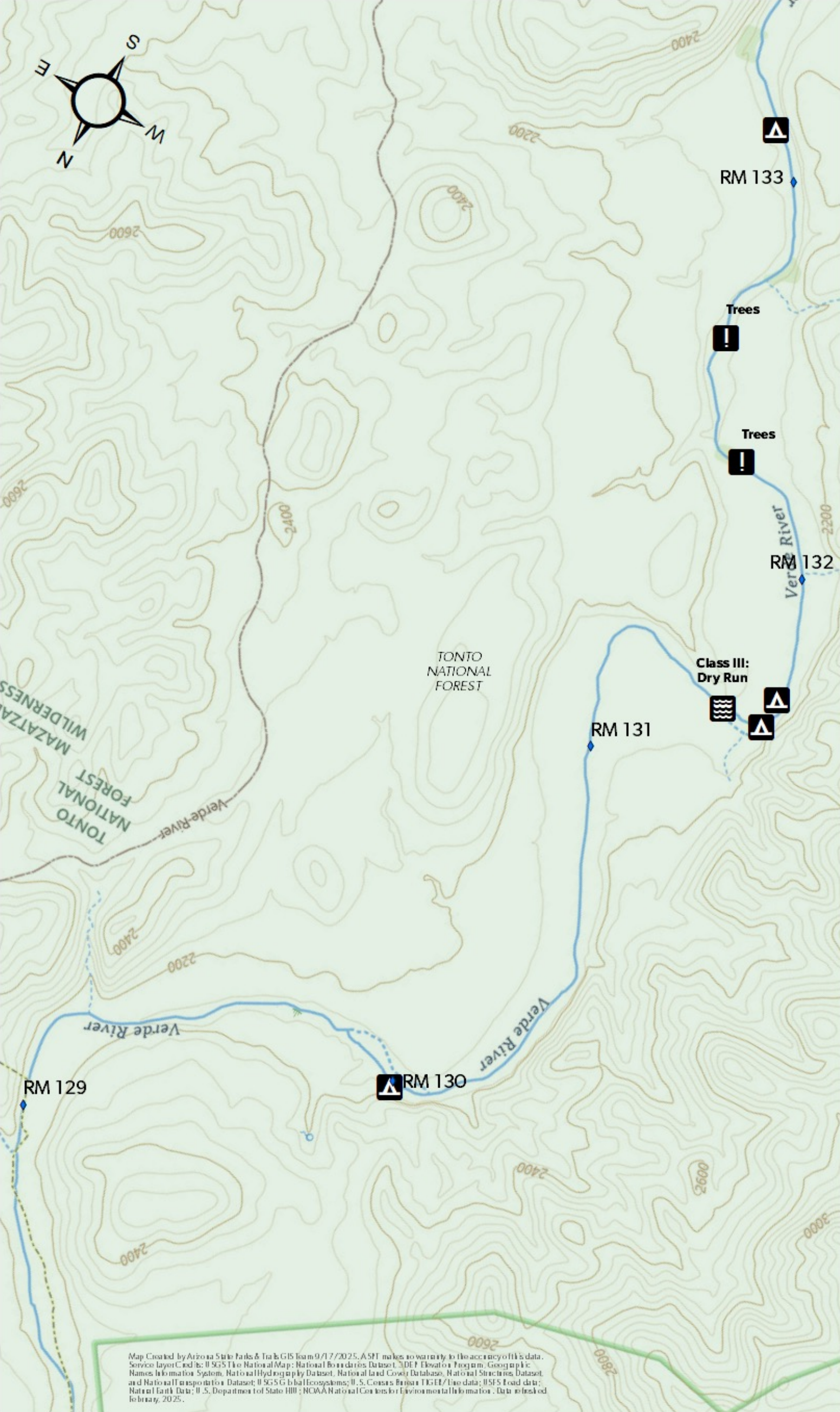
Mile 132.3 Here there is a narrow channel with overhanging trees on river right.

Mile 131.7 This camp (Capacity 12) has a large sand beach on river left.

Mile 131.6 This camp (Capacity 10) is on river right below Dry Run Rapid, and has a sand beach that is elevated from the river. It has some willow trees that may provide a little shade.

Mile 131.5 Dry Run Rapid (Class III) At high water the water runs over and through bedrock boulders. At low water it goes around these boulders to the right. The scout is from the right bank.

Mile 123.0 This camp (Capacity 12) on river right has a large sand beach, and is difficult to spot because it is elevated from the river. The landing is very steep with swift moving current.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS team 9/17/2025. ASPT makes no warranty to the accuracy of its data. Service layer Credits: U.S. Geological Survey: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; U.S. Geological Survey: Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau: TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; Natural Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HII; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed February, 2025.

Mile 138.5 The “Verde Rvr Blw Tangle Creek, Abv Horseshoe Dam, AZ” USGS gauging station is located on river right. Find real time flow data from this station online.

Mile 138.4 The river appears to go straight here, but will end in a gravel bar. The main flow is on the right where the water goes through trees into a narrow channel.

Mile 138.3 This camp (Capacity 10) on river left has a sand beach. From this point on the availability of camps varies greatly with the level of Horseshoe Reservoir.

Mile 137.8 The historic Sheep Bridge was originally constructed in 1943 by the Flagstaff Sheep Company and was known as the Red Point Sheep Bridge. It was entered into the national register of historic places in 1978. In 1988, weakened by age and a series of floods, the bridge was disassembled. In 1989, the current bridge, which is reminiscent of the original, was erected by the Forest Service, and recalls the ingenuity of the historic sheep herders.

Mile 137.7 On river right is the end of the Bloody Basin Road and the Sheep Bridge RAP. From here it is 38 miles to I-17, and 33 to Cave Creek by way of the Seven Springs Road. The Verde River Trail #11 terminates on river left here. Sycamore Creek enters on river left, shortly followed by Horse Creek also on river left. A Hot Spring is located up from the takeout.

Mile 137.0 Tangle Creek joins the Verde on river right. The next 0.6 miles is heavily vegetated and the channel convoluted and difficult to navigate. The left channel is the preferred route.

Mile 136.6 In terms of the river corridor, this is where the Mazatzal Wilderness ends.

Mile 135.6 This camp (Capacity 10) has a sand and gravel beach on river left.

Mile 135.6 Honey Chute Rapid (Class II) The water funnels into the left bank here. The scout for this rapid is from the left bank.

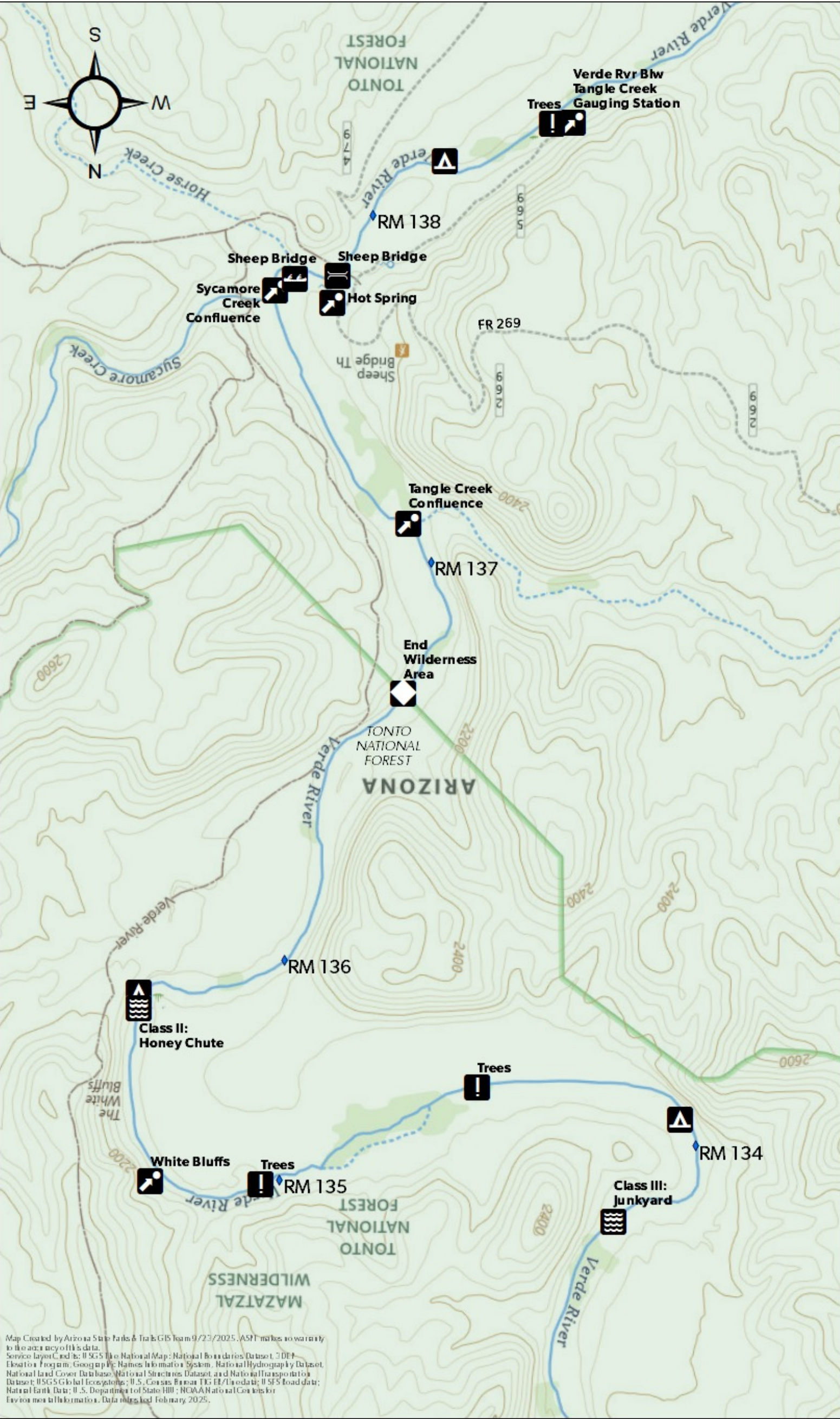
Mile 135.2 The White Bluffs can be seen on river right.

Mile 135.0 The river enters a long narrow channel with trees overhanging from the left bank.

Mile 134.5 A split in the river here has two viable options, but the left has more overhanging trees.

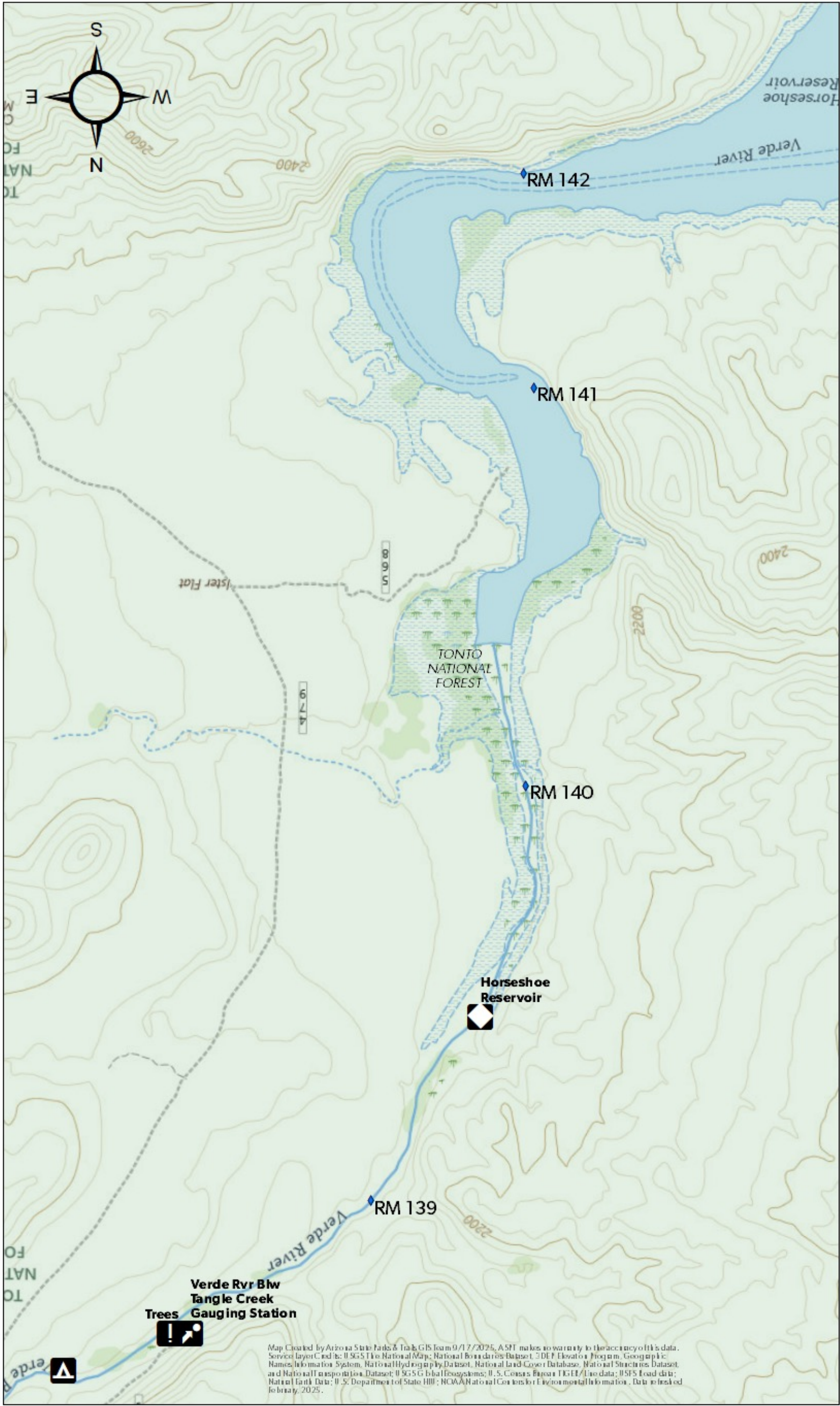
Mile 134.0 This camp (Capacity 12) on river left has a large sand beach.

Mile 133.7 Junkyard Rapid (Class III) The water goes over a pour over in the middle of the river and towards a tree on river left. The scout for this rapid is from the right bank.

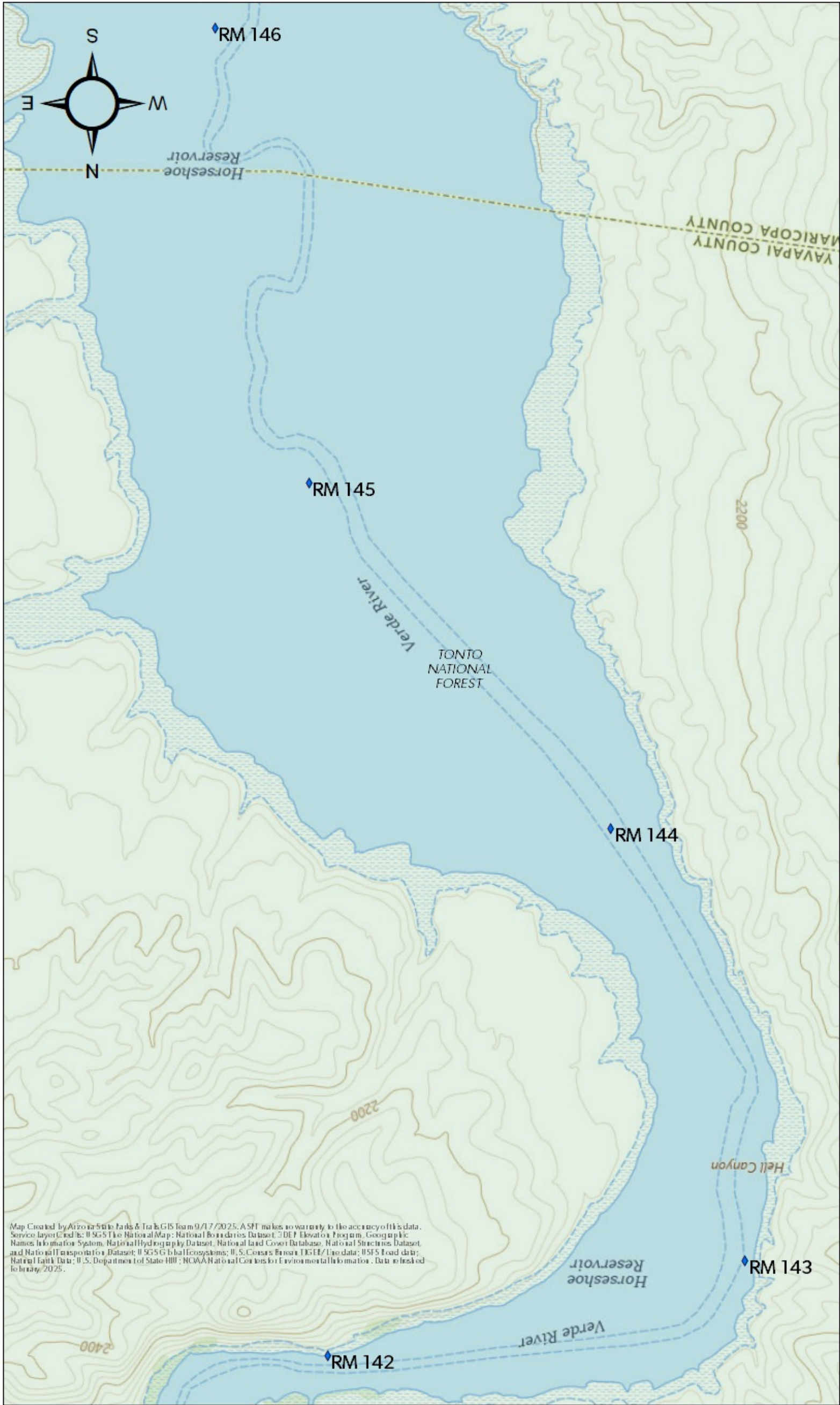


Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS Team 9/23/2025. ASP makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3D Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HHI; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data released February 2025.

Mile 139.4 This is the start of Horseshoe Reservoir, when the lake is full. On Horseshoe Reservoir the amount of camping opportunities, river current, and time spent traveling depend on the level of the reservoir. If the reservoir is full, there can be 5 or 6 miles of flat water. If the reservoir is 40% to 50% full there may be 2 to 3 miles of flat water. If the reservoir is 10% to 20% full, there may be only one mile of flat water. The start of the lake bed can be braided and muddy when the reservoir is not full, making this a tricky section to paddle. Downed trees will often pile up and clog the channel at the start of the lake.



Mile 142-146 Enjoy the flatwater paddling for a whole page!



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS Team 9/17/2025. ASP makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: U.S. Geological Survey: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic
Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset,
and National Transportation Dataset; U.S. Geological Survey: Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau: TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data;
National Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HRD; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed
to January 2025.

Mile 148.6 Mesquite Campground also has 12 sites with picnic tables, fire rings, and a restroom building. Sites are generally shadier than at Horseshoe Campground. This is a Tonto National Forest fee area, and the nearest payment Tonto Fee Machine is at the Cave Creek Ranger Station. All sites are first-come first-served and the campground is open year-round. Drinking water is not available.

Mile 147.9 Horseshoe Campground is located below Horseshoe Dam and has 12 campsites with picnic tables, fire rings, and a restroom building. Sites 11 and 12 offer direct access to the river and are shadier than the rest of the campground. This is a Tonto National Forest fee area, and the nearest payment Tonto Fee Machine is at the Cave Creek Ranger Station. All sites are first-come first-served and the campground is open year-round. Drinking water is not available.

Mile 147.2 Horseshoe Dam holds back Horseshoe Reservoir. Finished in 1946, the lake contributes to Phoenix’s water supply. The 144 foot high dam takes its name from a horseshoe shaped bend in the river where the dam was constructed. This is the first of two major reservoirs on the Verde River, with the lower being Bartlett Lake.

Mile 146.5 Ocotillo Boat Launch is the only established access point on Horseshoe Reservoir. Find it to the river right of the dam and spillway. Vault toilets are on site. From here it is a 17 mile drive over unpaved roads to Cave Creek Road in the far north end of Scottsdale. All boaters will need to exit here whether it is the end of your trip, or if you intend to portage past the dam and float down to Bartlett Reservoir, a stretch which is not covered in this guide and can be one of the most difficult sections to float to to overgrown channels.



Map Created by Arizona State Parks & Trails GIS Team 9/23/2025. ASPT makes no warranty to the accuracy of this data.
Service layer Credits: USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3D Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Coastal Binary TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; Natural Earth Data; U.S. Department of State (DHS); NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed February, 2025.



azstateparks.com