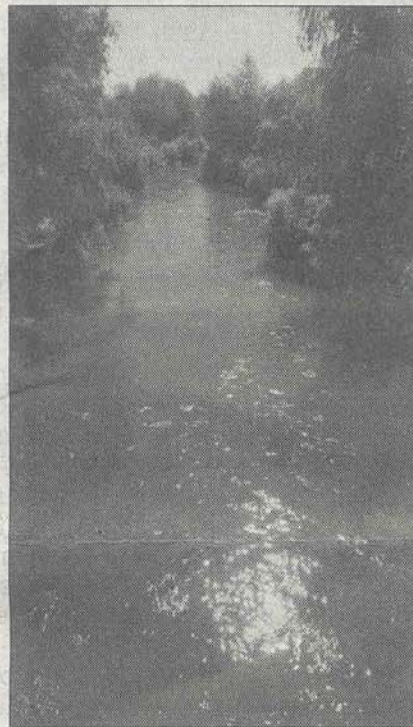


Series on rivers carries a message of hope

Congratulations on Shaun McKinnon's recent series on Arizona's "Ruined Rivers" in *The Arizona Republic*. A mixture of hope and dismay, the excellent group of articles outlines many of the forces and effects known only too well by those of us who have lived a life of appreciation for riparian systems.



MARK HENLE/THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC
The Republic's "Ruined Rivers" series carried an important message about our riparian systems, a reader says.

The Arizona Riparian Council (ARC) was founded 20 years ago by people who cared that riparian systems, and the functions they contribute to our well-being, survive and thrive. We have always communicated the importance of riparian systems, and we bring the best science available to each other and the public.

It is time for ARC and like-minded others to renew efforts to develop and promote sound policies of land and water management that have the long-term health of our ecologies as their ultimate goal. Our science is sound, if incomplete.

It is time for the best and brightest of us to offer a synthesis and vision that is rigorous and achievable. If our organization seems like a good fit, join us.

— Tom Hildebrandt, Mesa

The writer is president of the Arizona Riparian Council (<http://azriparian.asu.edu>).

What is perhaps most heartening is evidence — in subsequent editorials, letters to the editor and other reactions — that people are getting the message.

It is clear from the articles that only a mobilization of public opinion and courageous acts of foresight from our leaders will ultimately result in the positive outcomes we all desire. Demand for water is rapidly outstripping supply. The voiceless and powerless, those animals and plants in the Arizona environment that can't vote, write to the editors or hire legislative lobbyists, depend on others to represent them.

The Arizona Ri-