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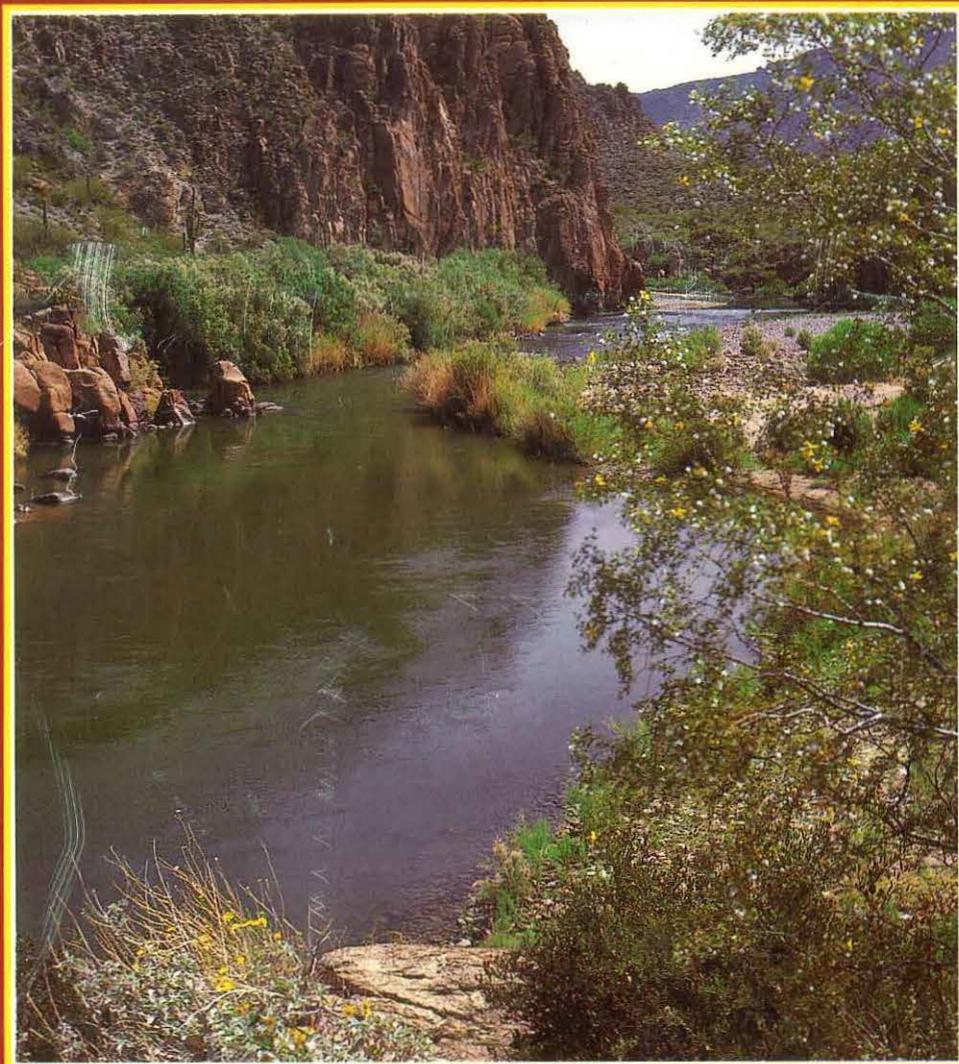
# A R I Z O N A

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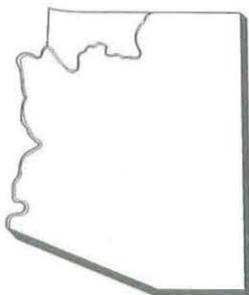
## *Rivers and Streams*

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### GUIDE



# Arizona Rivers and Streams Guide



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First Printing 1989  
Second Printing 1993  
Third Printing 1995  
Fourth Printing 1998





## SALT RIVER—US 60 to Gleason Flats

LENGTH: 19.7 miles

SEASON: March & April

ACCESS: Paved road/dirt road (HCV) ELEVATION: 3350' - 2840'

FEATURES: Exciting white water, scenic desert surroundings

CAUTIONS: Difficult access, remote conditions, technical rapids

MAPS: USGS - Mule Hoof Bend, Picacho Colorado

USFS - Tonto National Forest visitor's map, Recreation Opportunity Guide.

**T**his stretch, and the one downstream, combine to make up Arizona's most technical white water run. The rapids are exciting and complex. They should be run only by experienced boatmen or, at low water, under the guidance of a professional. The big-water rafting season is short, generally from early March to late April. Recently, however, commercial trips have begun running this stretch in small inflatables at low levels. Using this technique they have managed to extend the season.

This stretch of the river flows through upper Sonoran Desert habitat with Indian land on one side and Forest Service land on the other. The Fort Apache Tribe requires a daily permit that serves for boating and camping.

**ACCESS:** Upper: Take US 60 north out of Globe 40 miles to the Salt River Bridge. Lower: From the Salt River Bridge, drive 19.4 miles down Fort Apache Indian Reservation Road #1, then left on RR #4 for 4.1 miles, right 0.2 miles and left to the river. Alternate access is available at Cibique Creek and Salt Banks. Or (for 4WD's) turn left off US 60 at the Jones Water Campground onto FR 303, drive 13.5 miles then left on 303A, and left again on 303B, 4 miles to the river.

**FACILITIES:** There are primitive camps at Mule Hoof near the US 60 Bridge and at Exhibition, 3.3 miles in. Other facilities are available along US 60 and in Globe.

**WILDLIFE:** Javelina and black bear are seen frequently along this stretch. A number of different bird species inhabit the riparian area. Osprey and eagles soar above it.

**CAUTIONS:** The rapids are complex and hazardous. Flow levels vary greatly. When in doubt, scout. All unpaved access roads can be impassable when wet. A permit is required from the Fort Apache Tribe for each day on the river. Permits available at the store at AZ 60 Bridge.

**INFORMATION:** Tonto National Forest; White Mountain Game & Fish Dept.

USES:

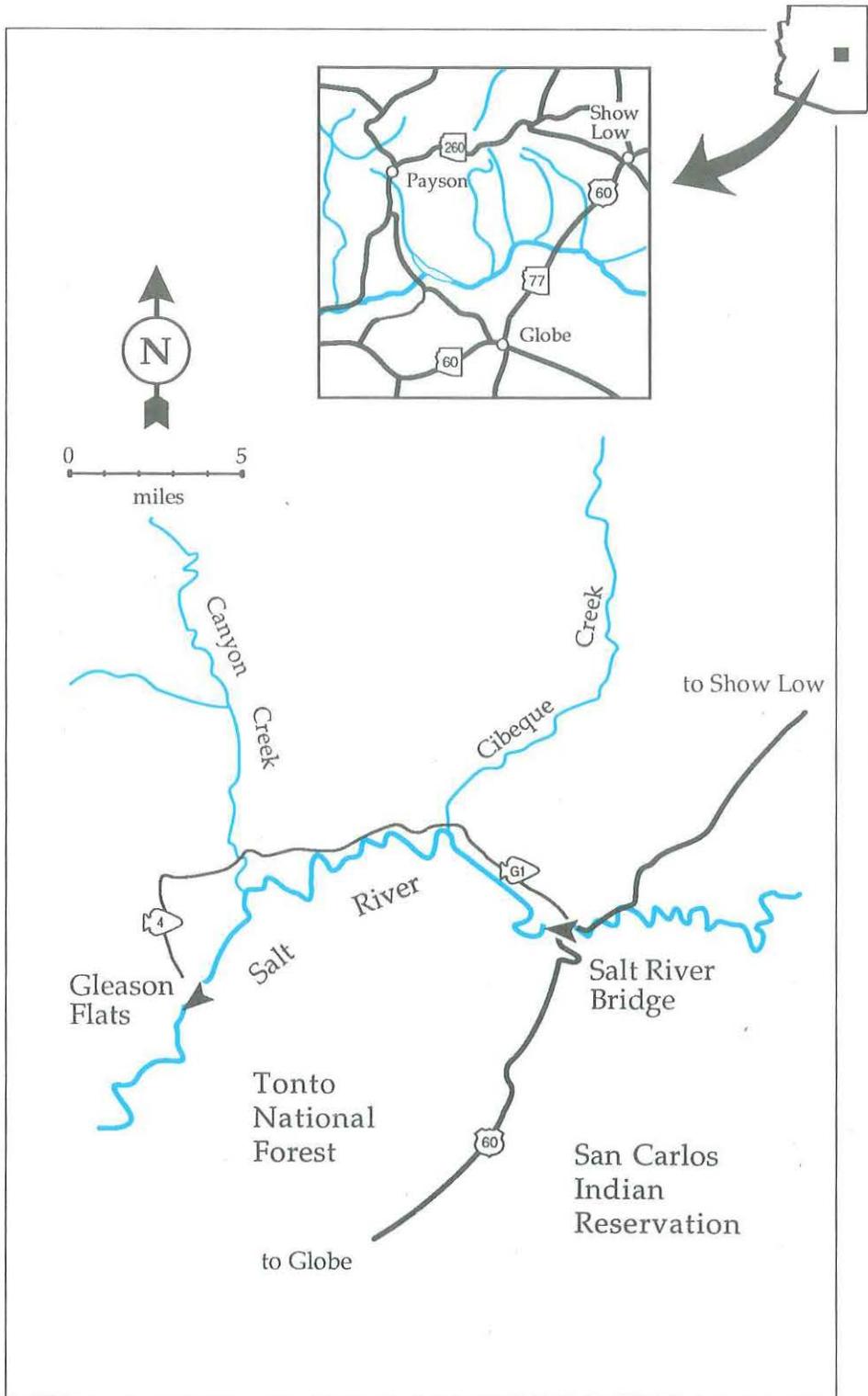


Class III+



warm





East



## SALT RIVER — Gleason Flats to Horseshoe Bend

LENGTH: 19.1 miles

ACCESS: Dirt road (HCV)

FEATURES: Exciting whitewater, scenic desert surroundings

CAUTIONS: Many technical rapids, difficult access

MAPS: USGS - Picacho Colorado, Haystack Butte, Dagger Peak

USFS - Tonto National Forest visitors map

SEASON: March & April

ELEVATION: 2840' - 2400'

**D**ifficult rapids continue and should only be attempted by experienced river runners or with a commercial guide. At high water it can be deadly. The Forest Service restricts the number of people entering the Wilderness each day. Applications are accepted from Dec. 1- Jan 31.

The rafting season is short, generally lasting from early March through April. However, experienced paddlers using small inflatables have made this run in nearly all months of the year. The surroundings are upper Sonoran Desert. The Tonto National Forest has a detailed guide available for the upper Salt River.

**ACCESS: Upper:** Follow FR 203 east from AZ 288 (just north of the Salt River Bridge) for 14.9 mi. then right on FR 96 until it becomes Reservation Road #1. Follow it 2.2 mi. then right on RR #3 for 3.9 miles and right again 0.5 miles to the river.

**Lower:** From Globe follow AZ 88 north 6.3 miles. Turn right onto Hicks Drive for two miles, then right on FR 219 for 8 miles. River access is down a steep trail around private land.

**FACILITIES:** People camp on the river bank at Gleason Flats. There are developed facilities along US 60, in Globe, and in other nearby towns.

**WILDLIFE:** Javelina and other desert animals are seen along this

stretch. One river runner reports waking up in the morning here to find mountain lion tracks around his bed.

**CAUTIONS:** Many rapids deserve your respect, especially Corkscrew, just below Quartzite; Black Rock and The Maze. The daily permit required from the Fort Apache Tribe for using their land is available at the store at the AZ 60 Bridge. Group size is limited to 15 within the USFS wilderness.

**INFORMATION:** White Mtn. Game & Fish Dept. (for permits); Tonto National Forest (for river guide permit applications)

USES:

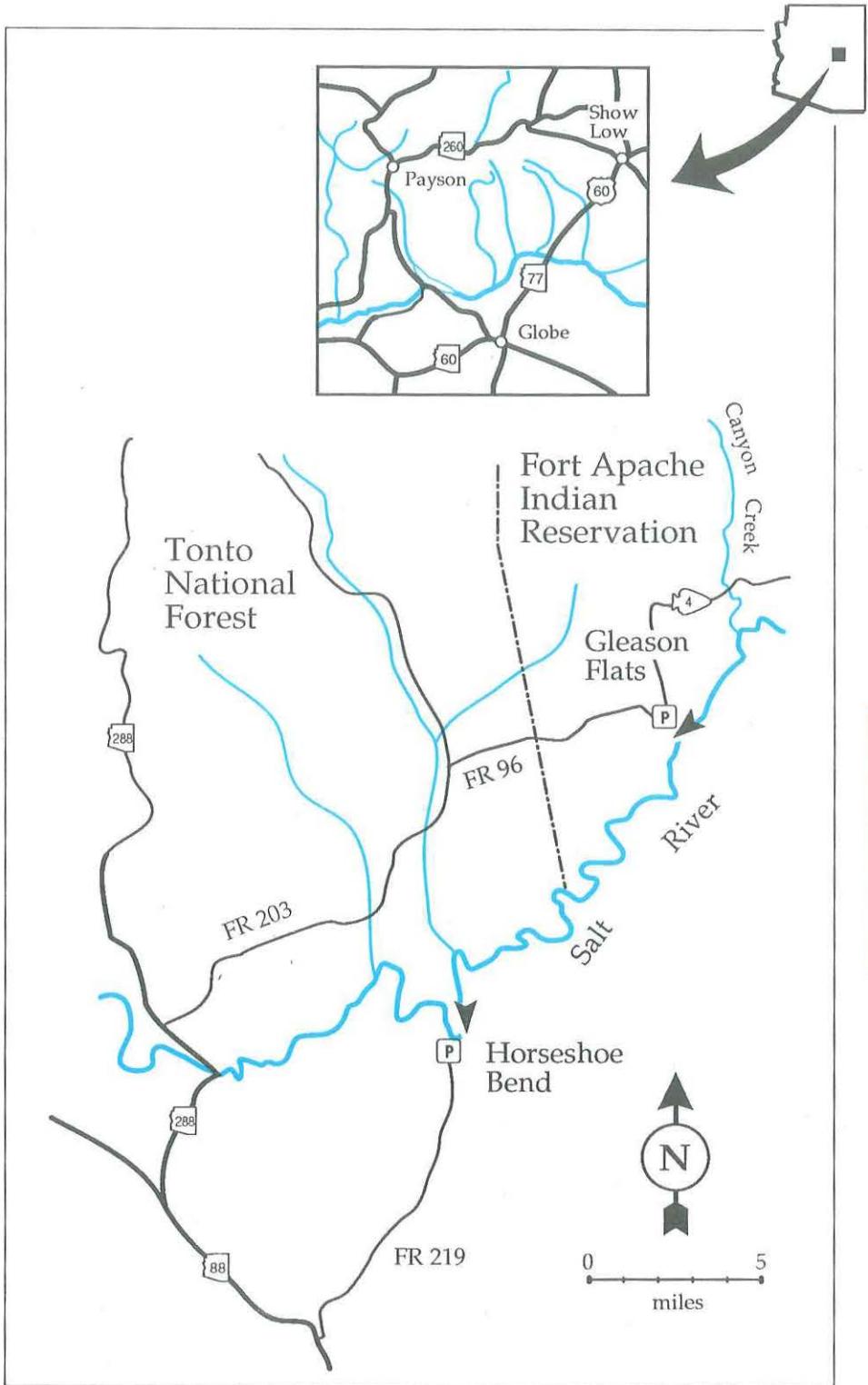


Class III-V



warm







## SALT RIVER — Horseshoe Bend to Diversion Dam

LENGTH: 13.8 miles

SEASON: March-April *inconsistent*

ACCESS: Dirt road/paved road

ELEVATION: 2400' - 2200'

FEATURES: Long season, scenic desert surroundings, desert bald eagles

CAUTIONS: Wildlife closure, diversion dam (unrunnable)

MAPS: USGS - Dagger Peak, Windy Hill, Roosevelt Dam

USFS - Tonto National Forest visitor's map, Recreation Opportunity Guide-Upper Salt River

**B**elow Horseshoe Bend the canyon broadens and its rapids mellow. The river is more like a frisky spring colt than the rodeo bull it resembles upstream. Though the rafting season is limited to March and April, this stretch can be run by low water boaters year-round. Access to this portion of the Wilderness is restricted by the Forest Service. Applications accepted Dec. 1-Jan. 31.

The Sonoran desert vegetation is exceptionally lush in this area. Giant saguaro cactuses dot the slopes that rise from the river. The riparian area serves as home to a pair of southern (desert) bald eagles, one of only twenty-six nesting pairs in the world (no stopping near their nest).

The 288 Bridge River Access Point is the last place to take out.

**ACCESS:** Upper: From Globe-Miami, follow AZ 88 north 6.3 miles. Turn right onto Hicks Drive for two miles then right on FR 219 for 8 miles. River access is down a steep trail around private land. Lower: Follow AZ 88 to AZ 288 which leads north to the river. A short side road before reaching the bridge drops to the river.

**FACILITIES:** The nearest facilities are located along the highway, in Globe and in other nearby towns.

**WILDLIFE:** Along with the bald eagles, the river otter (another rare

southwestern inhabitant) has also been reported in this area. Javelina and other desert dwellers are frequently spotted.

**CAUTIONS:** Do not go past the 288 Bridge RAP. A very dangerous diversion dam is only a short distance downstream. From December 1 to June 30 there is no stopping permitted between river miles 18.6 and 17.3 to avoid disturbing the nesting eagles.

**INFORMATION:** Tonto National Forest (for river guide and permit applications).

### USES:



Class II



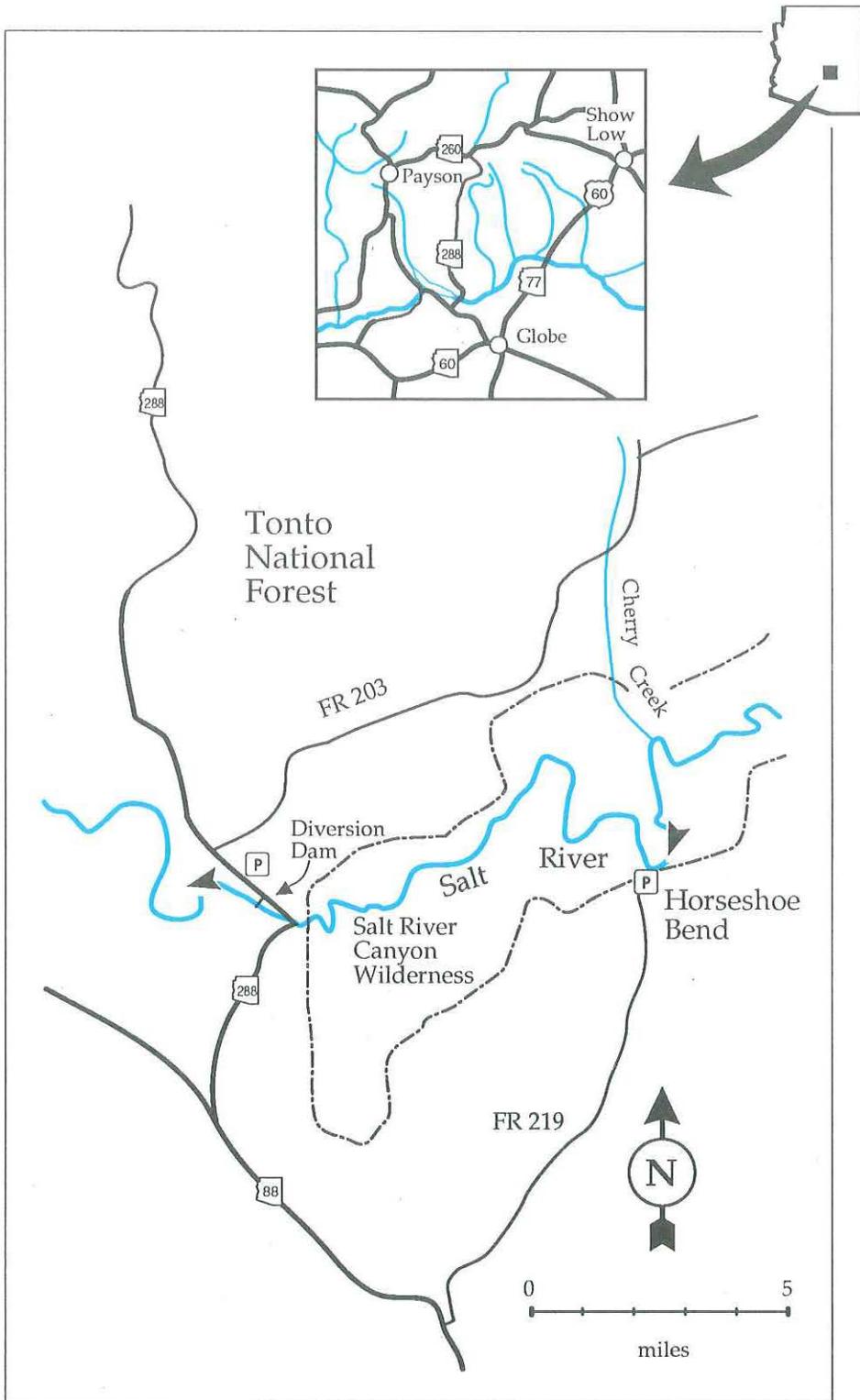
all year



warm



eagles



East



# SALT RIVER — Stewart Mtn. Dam to Granite Reef Dam

**LENGTH:** 14 miles

**ACCESS:** Paved road

**FEATURES:** Long season, easy access, close to Phoenix

**CAUTIONS:** Crowded conditions, diving hazard, camping closure

**MAPS:** USGS - Stewart Mtn. Granite Reef Dam

**USFS -** Tonto National Forest

**SEASON:** All year

**ELEVATION:** 1400' - 1300'

One of the most heavily used stretches of river in the U.S., this convenient oasis provides one million user-days per year of relief from the blistering hot summers of the 'Valley of the Sun.' In spite of heavy use, the river and its surroundings remain surprisingly beautiful. On a hot summer weekend you can practically walk its length on inner tubes filled with people. But on a weekday or during the off-season (if the litter has been removed), a backcountry experience is almost possible.

Located at the edge of the Superstition Mountains, the scenery is striking, the water is cool and clear. The number of access points make it easy to customize a run to fit a busy schedule (or to escape if the river becomes clogged with tubers). A commercial outfitter rents inner tubes and provides a shuttle bus. So smear on the sunscreen, watch the cliffs for divers, and pack out what you bring in. You can have a good time here.

**ACCESS:** Follow the Bush Hwy (FR 204) north out of Mesa. The road parallels the river and provides access at several points. Or, drive north out of Scottsdale on the Beeline Hwy 87 and then south past Saguaro Lake to the river via the Bush Hwy.

**FACILITIES:** Camping is permitted in the Lower Salt River Recreation Area during the off-season (November 1 to March 31). And everything under the sun is available just over the hill in the Phoenix-metro area.

**WILDLIFE:** The riparian area is host to hundreds of migratory and water loving birds. Dozens of desert species

live just beyond its limits. But during the summer the 'Valley of the Sun' party animal may be the most abundant form of wildlife.

**CAUTIONS:** Glass containers are prohibited here - a quick look at the river bank will tell you why. Wear sturdy shoes while wading. Every year a number of injuries and fatalities occur along this stretch as a result of people jumping or diving from streamside rocks. Avoid life ending or crippling injury - use common sense, step into the water, don't dive into it.

**INFORMATION:** Tonto National Forest (for river guide).

**USES:**

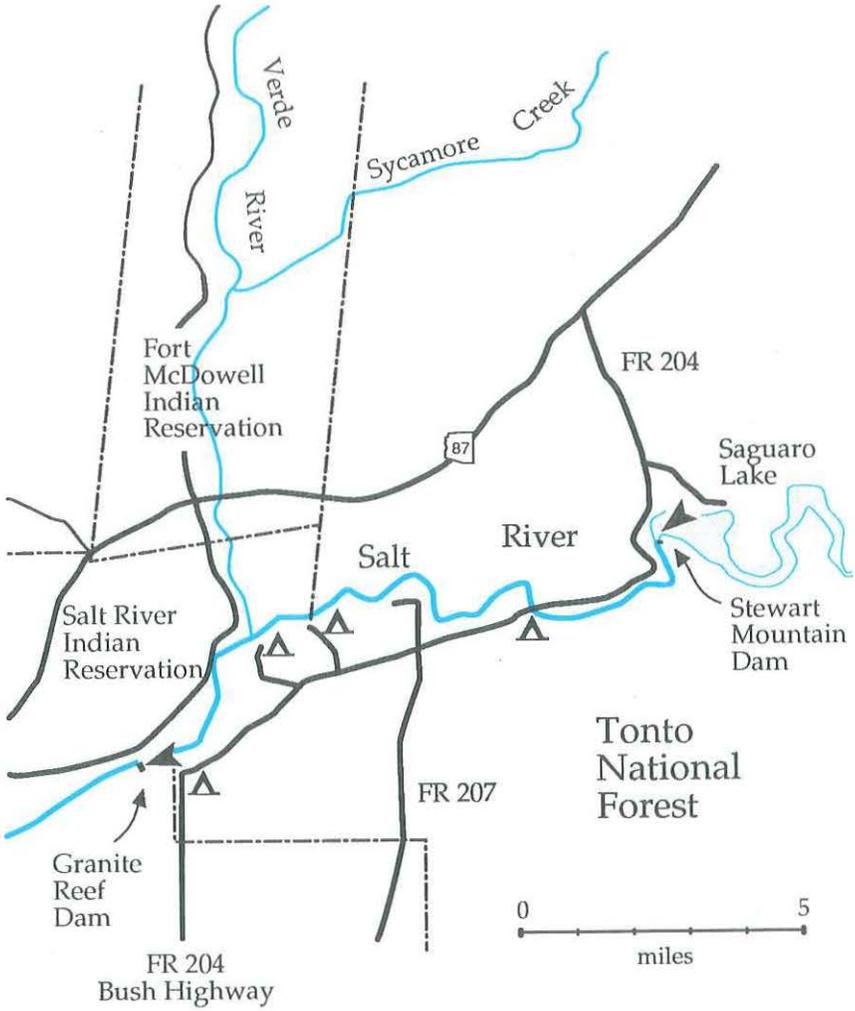
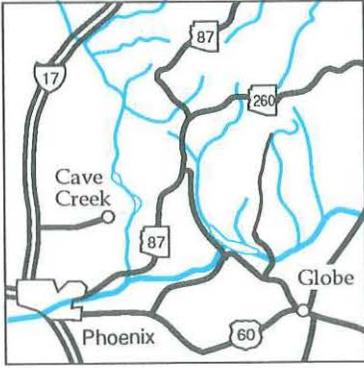


Class I/II



warm





East