

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Clarkdale Opens Lower TAPCO River Access Point**

Clarkdale, AZ (June 18, 2014) – The Town of Clarkdale officially opened the Lower TAPCO River Access Point during a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Wednesday, June 18, 2014. Town Manager Gayle Mabery opened the ceremony with introductions of elected officials and those who have played key roles in the site development to date. Hazel Siow represented the Yavapai-Apache Nation and offered an opening blessing followed by a blessing of the river itself. Mayor Von Gausig offered a keynote address and noted:

“This park is dedicated to the Verde River, to teaching, recreating, birding, sitting quietly and listening to the ripples and rapids, feeling the cool water on our feet and watching the seasons change. It is dedicated to bringing the wonders of the Verde into the lives of the people who live around it. It is dedicated to thrilling children with tadpoles and dragonflies and turtles and mud squishing through their toes. It’s dedicated to dogs who love to chase sticks, and to Great Blue Herons and Yellow-billed Cuckoos, who inhabit its banks and eat from its pantry. This park is dedicated to the people of Clarkdale and the people of the Verde Valley, so they can kayak and swim and watch birds and hike and love a river. Look up in the cliffs around us and see dwellings built there by the Sinagua – a people whose lives depended upon the health of a flowing river. Our lives depend on it, too. And this park is dedicated to helping us all appreciate how much this river means to us, and what a tragedy it would be to lose it.”

Robert Quintanar represented Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc., the landowner who has generously licensed the Town of Clarkdale the 110 acres of land that make up the Lower TAPCO RAP. He conveyed their company’s support for the vision of the Verde River @ Clarkdale, and expressed confidence that the site would offer visitors a safe opportunity to enjoy the rich environment that the Verde River has to offer.

In closing, Town Manager Gayle Mabery shared a quote from former Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt. Considered the Father of the Verde River Greenway, Governor Babbitt was present at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Verde River Days event at Dead Horse Ranch State Park in 1988, and stated, “Protection of the river represents the most important task for local leaders in the years to come. We still have a chance here in the Verde Valley. That chance is gone on the San Pedro, the Gila and much of the Salt (rivers). It’s not enough to have a State Park; it’s not enough to have a riparian corridor; what we have to do now is

work to protect the Verde River from start to finish.” Town Manager Mabery stated that Clarkdale is extremely proud to open the Lower TAPCO RAP to the public, and play a part in continuing to advocate the vision that so many have laid out over the past 3 decades in the Verde Valley.

Following the formal remarks, the crowd of nearly 60 attendees gathered on the bank of the river for the official ribbon cutting.



Pictured from left to right: Robert Quintanar-Freeport McMoRan, Yavapai County Supervisor Chip Davis, Clarkdale Town Manager Gayle Mabery, Clarkdale Vice Mayor Richard Dehnert, Clarkdale Mayor Doug Von Gausig, George Christenson- Dead Horse Ranch State Park Manager, Hazel Siow-Yavapai Apache Nation, and Max Castillo-Verde River Greenway and a crowd of about 60 people who attended the ceremony.