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A.M. P.M.

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While on a field review of the Terrestrial Ecosystem Survey (TES) program, we discussed the situation of ephemeral channels that support mostly upland vegetation, but with facultative riparian species occasionally present throughout the system. The TES team had made notes about the “riparian” plants which were in upland species that were growing larger and in a more dense stand than in the adjacent uplands. The team pointed out that deergrass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*) was only found along the banks of the channel, should be considered riparian. Wayne agreed that the area adjacent to the ephemeral channel was indeed different than the nearby uplands, and certainly very important because of the differences, but being different did not make it riparian. Wayne quoted from the Forest Service Manual (2526) to define riparian areas as those that are “comprised of the *aquatic* and riparian ecosystems”, and riparian ecosystems as the “transition area between the *aquatic* ecosystem and the adjacent terrestrial ecosystem; identified by soil characteristics or distinctive vegetation communities that require free or unbound water.” He went on to describe the area we were looking at as an “ephemeral fluvial system supporting upland vegetation.” There is no aquatic component to these systems, unless there is precipitation or snowmelt occurring. Therefore, they should not be referred to as “riparian”.

RECORDED BY: Robert E. Lefevre, Soil Scientist for the Coronado National Forest