

Minutes of the Meeting of the
Arizona Game and Fish Commission
Friday, June 24, 2011
Saturday, June 25, 2011
Arizona Game and Fish Department
5000 West Carefree Highway
Phoenix, Arizona 85086

PRESENT: (Commission)

(Director and Staff)

Chairman Robert R. Woodhouse
Vice Chair Norman W. Freeman
Commissioner Jack F. Husted
Commissioner John W. Harris
Commissioner Robert E. Mansell

Director Larry D. Voyles
Deputy Director Bob Broscheid
Deputy Director Gary R. Hovatter
Assistant Attorney General Jim Odenkirk
Assistant Attorney General Linda Pollock

Chairman Woodhouse called the meeting to order and lead those present through the Pledge of Allegiance. The Commission introduced themselves and Chairman Woodhouse introduced the Director and the Director's staff. Commissioner Harris was not present Friday morning, but joined the meeting following the lunch break. This meeting followed an agenda revision #2 dated June 22, 2011.

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Awards and Recognition

Director Voyles presented Carmen Arvizu with a Certificate of Achievement in appreciation of her excellent professional customer service to the Department. Ms. Arvizu is the Department's Day Porter and provides customized custodial support services to accommodate the unique requirements of the Headquarters daytime operations.

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Meeting recessed for a break at 8:25 a.m.

Meeting reconvened at 8:45 a.m.

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1. Legislative Engagement and State and Federal Legislation

Presenter: Anthony Guiles, Legislative Liaison

Mr. Guiles briefed the Commission on the current status of selected state and federal legislative matters. The Department provides the Commission with regular monthly updates and provided informational materials at this meeting, including a Legislative Summary Report (also available to the public). The briefing included the following:

- There will be a Forest Management meeting on June 30th followed by a tour on July 1st. The public meeting/open forum will be at the Show Low High School with invited representatives from the Center for Biological Diversity, Grand Canyon Trust and David

Tenney-Navajo County Supervisor. The Department will have representation there as well

- The first Rotenone Review Advisory Committee was held this week and was well attended
- The Department postponed the “Ceremonial First Launch on Rose Canyon Lake” due to the Coronado National Forest temporary closure. Several legislators that worked on the measure, agency personnel and the boys scout troop are expected to participate in the ceremonial launching once the closure is lifted and a rescheduled date is identified.

Congressional Legislation:

H.R.1904: Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act of 2011, sponsored by: Representative Gosar. This legislation has had a hearing and is waiting for a full committee mark up. It is expected to pass the House and we are waiting to see what will happen to this bill in the Senate

H.R.1294: Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act, sponsored by: Sen. Udall. This is an expansion of Pittman-Robertson for more monies to be used for shooting ranges.

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2. Information, Education and Wildlife Recreation Activities Briefing

Presenter: Ty Gray, Assistant Director, Information and Education Division

Mr. Gray provided the Commission with an Information, Education and Wildlife Recreation Programs Update prior to this meeting (also available to the public), which presented new information as well as progress on related activities. The update covered activities and events that occurred since the last regular Commission meeting and was provided in fulfillment of the Department’s commitment to brief the Commission on a regular basis. A Power Point presentation was provided that highlighted several items in the written report.

Additionally, Mr. Gray provided an update on Goal 12 of the Director’s Goals and Objectives to simplify the hunt and fish regulations. A team has been assembled and has created a Gantt chart to identify the necessary steps leading up to December 2011 when the Department will identify and provide the Commission with recommendations for consistent definitions and simplification of the current license fee class structure identified in Title 17-333. The team has been looking into the current license structure and at the multiple definitions of “youth” in the hunt and fish regulations. The Team will be focusing on developing recommendations for future license structure, new “youth” definition and clearer definitions of resident versus non-residents. The next steps will be to benchmark with other states on their licensing structure and definition of youth, and to hold focus groups and conduct customer surveys.

Public Comment

George Reiners, YVRGC: The definition of “bona fide” resident needs to be clarified in the regulations.

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3. Time Certain at 8:30 AM - An Update on Current Issues, Planning Efforts, and Proposed Projects on All Lands in Arizona and Other Matters Related Thereto

Presenter: Josh Avey, Habitat Branch Chief

Mr. Avey introduced Chris Knopp, Forest Supervisor, with Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest who provided the Commission with an update on the Wallow Fire, which has now grown to 535,000 acres. This was followed with an update by the Department's Region I Supervisor Jon Cooley on the Department's efforts with the fire, access issues, and preparations to deal with potential flooding from the upcoming monsoon season.

Commissioner Husted thanked the Department for all they did for the community from putting out deadline day drop boxes to protecting Sipe Wildlife Area.

Mr. Avey briefed the Commission using a Power Point presentation on Arizona's 2011 fires to date. The briefing included information on currently burning fires and their effects on wildlife, as well as some of the state's history of fires and data gathered from those fires on the effects of wildlife and wildlife habitat.

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Meeting recessed for a break at 9:33 a.m.

Meeting reconvened at 9:40 a.m.

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3. (continued) An Update on Current Issues, Planning Efforts, and Proposed Projects on All Lands in Arizona and Other Matters Related Thereto

Presenter: Josh Avey, Habitat Branch Chief

The Commission discussed that there may be a need to hold a telephonic meeting depending on how events transpire regarding the fire as it relates to wildlife, hunting, access or other potential related issues.

Commissioner Husted requested a briefing from the Department on Saturday of Units 1 and 27, in the Wallow Fire area, and that the Commission discuss whether there is some kind of remedy, or whether there should be some kind of remedy, for hunters who have tags in the burned units. The Commission was in consensus to have this discussion.

In order for the Commission to discuss and possibly take action and to meet the 24-hr requirement, the Department immediately prepared and posted an agenda revision #3 adding Saturday's item 4B, Time Certain at 2:00 PM - Discussion of options available to the Commission and Department for responding to the situations of hunters who are drawn for Game Management Units affected by the 2011 wildfires.

Mr. Avey proceeded with the regular monthly Lands Update report (attached), which was provided to the Commission prior to this meeting and was available to the public. The update addressed the latest developments relating to the implementation of land and resource management plans and projects on private, state and federal lands in Arizona and other related

matters, and included decisions or activities since the last regular Commission meeting. This update is in fulfillment of the Department's commitment to brief the Commission on a regular basis regarding decisions and actions on all State and Federal lands in Arizona.

Mr. Avey provided one additional update: The Secretary of the Interior has extended the uranium withdrawal date to December 20, 2011.

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4. Presentation on renewable energy development in Arizona. Emphasis on current permitting, existing avenues for Department involvement, water use impacts, and a broad statewide impacts analysis to the loss of recreational opportunity and how that translates into loss of hunter days.

Presenter: Josh Avey, Habitat Branch Chief

Mr. Avey provided an overview of renewable energy development in Arizona using a Power Point presentation. Information included current permitting processes on private and federal lands and an outline of the Department's existing opportunities to provide wildlife and wildlife habitat impact analyses and recommendations within the existing processes including water use impacts, loss of recreational opportunities, and loss of hunter days.

The Department has six regional leads and one statewide lead who are actively engaged with the counties, the Arizona Corporation Commission, BLM (Becoming cooperating agencies on the development of EISs and coordinating with the BLM Renewable Energy Coordination Office (RECO), and renewable energy developers. Some of the Department tools that are offered are the Guidelines, the Arizona Online Environmental Review Tool and the Geospatial Planning Tool (Species and Habitat Conservation Guide) as follows:

Department Guidelines:

- Guidelines for Solar Development in Arizona, March 12, 2010 (Provides information to help reduce impacts to wildlife from solar energy development in Arizona. They include recommendations on: 1) preliminary screening of proposed solar energy projects, 2) developing avoidance and minimization measures, 3) establishing appropriate mitigation, and 4) research opportunities
- Guidelines for Reducing Impacts to Wildlife from Wind Energy Development in Arizona, November 23, 2009 (Provide information to help reduce impacts to bats and birds from wind energy development in Arizona. They include recommendations on: 1) preliminary screening of proposed wind energy projects, 2) pre-construction study design and methods, 3) assessing direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to bats and birds in accordance with state and federal laws, 4) developing avoidance and minimization measures, 5) establishing appropriate mitigation, and 6) post-construction operations monitoring, analysis, and reporting methods

Online Environmental Review Tool:

- This tool was developed and intended for the purpose of screening projects for potential impacts on resources of special concern. <http://www.azgfd.gov/hgis/>

Geospatial Planning Tool:

- Interactive, web-based GIS tool
- Allows users to view relationships between various data layers (including wildlife information)
- Query places of interest
- Share project information with colleagues and partners.

Possible Next Steps for the Department:

- Development of Geospatial Planning Tool to publicly promote the Species and Habitat Conservation Guide
- Upgrade the Arizona Online Environmental Review Tool
- Continue to build relationships with counties (Work to include language similar to Navajo ordinance language)
- Create an incentivized program for industry (Use the SHCG...less conflict means less regulatory tape; Possibly partner with financial institutions to favor awarding projects that develop in less sensitive/less conflict areas based on the SHCG)
- Revise Habitat Compensation Policy to tier to current products (i.e. Species and Habitat Conservation Guide - Currently being considered through our mitigation team)
- Revise existing statutes for:
 - ACC (ARS 40-360 Definitions – Change definition of “Plant” to include all electric generation of 50MW or more)
 - County Permitting (ARS 49-112, Section D – Add language that requires notification to the Arizona Game and Fish Department)
 - City Permitting (ARS 9-468, Section A1 – Add language that requires notification to the Arizona Game and Fish Department)
 - ARS 17 (possibly)

Commissioner Freeman brought to the Commission and Department’s attention an APS project in Chino Valley. APS has stated that the project won’t effect wildlife but they are going to fence 300 acres, and they don’t need line siting, and they spent a whole 5 months planning. The Town planning director says Chino Valley needs the electricity but in actuality, the electricity will not even be staying in Chino Valley. The Department should have at least been asked to the table for discussions in which they might have been able to at least get public access through it. These types of projects are rapidly growing and Commissioner Freeman wants the Department to find a way to get to the table and be a part of the discussion and planning on these projects.

Anthony Guiles, Legislative Liaison, discussed with the Commission the possibilities of seeking legislation. Mr. Guiles will have some discussions and get some feedback and add this to his report at the August meeting.

Public Comment

Katherine Lara, Canyon Country Coalition, LLC: Lives in the Canyon corridor where they are faced with an industrial turbine wind energy project; this project has only had an EA at this time. Even minimal impacts to wildlife should not be taken lightly; Ms. Lara requested that the Commission continue there consideration of these issues; the future of wildlife and wildlife habitat depends on the Commissions’ actions today.

Linda A. Webb, Canyon Country Coalition: There are loopholes that are allowing these renewable energy companies to railroad these projects and get them approved quickly; the

energy produced is not reliable; they are making decisions without any real data regarding the effect on wildlife; these projects are getting through without proper public notice.

Sandy Bahr, Director, Sierra Club – Grand Canyon Chapter: The Sierra Club would be very interested in participating at the table on these projects; they should be appropriately sited and the projects that they have supported have been appropriately sited and had minimal impact on wildlife; supports the Game and Fish Department being at the table.

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5. Presentation on Current and Proposed Federal Special Land Designations and Impacts to the Department's Mission.

Presenter: Josh Avey, Habitat Branch Chief

Mr. Avey provided a Power Point presentation that included information on existing federal Special Land Designations in Arizona including designated wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, wild and scenic river areas, National Conservation Areas, National Parks, National Game Preserves, National Monuments, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, National Wildlife Refuges, primitive areas, and wilderness characteristics areas. The presentation also included information on proposed federal Special Land Designations including wilderness areas, Special Management Areas, National Wildlife Refuge Areas, and National Conservation Areas. The presentation provided information on impacts to the Department's mission resulting from existing and potential federal land designations. The presentation included the following information:

Wilderness Acreage Compared to Total Land Area:

- Arizona has 4,529,613 Wilderness Acres with a Land Area of 72,688,000 (Wilderness Acres is 6% of Land Area)
- Arizona has the 3rd highest total wilderness acreage in the U.S.

Federal Land Use Designation Summary by Agency:

- 42%: Total amount of federal land in Arizona (including DoD & Bureau of Reclamation)
- 34%: Amount of BLM, USFS, USFWS, & NPS lands with special designations.

Proposed Federal Land Designations:

- Sonoran Desert Heritage Proposal (1,479,900 acres)
- Walnut Canyon National Monument Study Area (Current Size, 2,960 acres; Study Area, 30,885 acres)
- Petrified Forest National Park Expansion (Original Size, 93,533 acres; Expansion (2004), 125,000 acres; Total, 218,533 acres)

Historical Perspective and Anticipated Future Restrictions:

- “The Department has experienced restrictions resulting from special land designations including project delays, increased costs, increased man-hours, etc. This ultimately leads to decreased efficiency in protecting and managing Arizona's wildlife resources.” (Dept. Letter 1989)
- 22 years later, this statement still applies to many Department activities on public lands where special area designations exist

Possible Next Steps for the Department:

- Ensure wildlife management language is included in all special land designations (Example: include wildlife resources as a 'wilderness value')
- Continue to work with WAFWA and AFWA to develop Policies; this affects all State Wildlife Agencies.

The Commission discussed the issues and requested that the Department bring this back to the Commission with a recommended approach for the Commission to reverse this trend.

Director Voyles will work with the Chair to develop an agenda item in which the Department can present some options on how to proceed.

Public Comment

Ben Alteneder, Arizona Wildlife Federation: Mr. Alteneder was not present, but Chairman Woodhouse expressed his comments as follows: The Arizona Wildlife Federation has been involved in land designations and they are trying to do what is best for sportsmen. They are trying to get sportsmen to the table to address the kinds of things in this presentation.

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6. Consent Agenda

The following items were grouped together and noticed as consent agenda items to expedite action on routine matters. These items were provided to the Commission prior to this meeting and the Department requested that the Commission approve these matters as presented, subject to approval or recommendations of the Office of the Attorney General. Director Voyles presented each item to the Commission and none were deemed necessary to remove for discussion.

a. Request for the Commission to Approve a Memorandum of Understanding with Regents of the University of California

Presenter: Brian F. Wakeling, Game Branch Chief

The Department works with a variety of universities who provide specialized expertise and technical services that support the Department's mission and benefit Arizona's wildlife resources. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would establish formal lines of communication and provide a legal and procedural framework for subsequent collaboration at the project level, both of which will help assure the quality and high standards of the Department's work. As Arizona's immediate neighbor, California shares a number of our State's species, mountain ranges, habitat types, and management issues. University of California, Davis conducts research that has relevance to wildlife management in the U.S. Southwest, has recognized expertise in wildlife research, and therefore, represents a valuable research partner. This MOU would establish a working partnership with Regents of the University of California for mutually beneficial research opportunities for the common purpose of guiding wildlife management decisions.

The Department recommends THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF

CALIFORNIA AND TO AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR, AS SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION, TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT AS APPROVED OR RECOMMENDED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

b. Request for the Commission to Approve a Collection Agreement with the City of Scottsdale

Presenter: Chantal O'Brien, Research Branch Chief

The purpose of this Collection Agreement is to establish a framework for collaboration and cooperation between the Department and City of Scottsdale to conserve and enhance wildlife connectivity in Arizona. This agreement will allow implementation of study objectives assessing the effects of roads on wildlife connectivity within McDowell Sonoran Preserve and will enhance the relationship between the Department and City of Scottsdale. This agreement will allow collaboration, cooperation, exchange of expertise, labor, materials, and fund the Department in continued efforts to study the effects of roads on wildlife in Arizona.

The Department recommends THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE COLLECTION AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF SCOTTSDALE AND TO AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR, AS SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION, AND TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT AS RECOMMENDED OR APPROVED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

c. Request for the Commission to Approve an Intergovernmental Agreement with Maricopa County for the purpose of establishing a process for working together to maintain, improve, and manage outdoor recreation, educate the public and manage wildlife and their habitats

Presenter: Ty Gray, Assistant Director

Maricopa County and the Department have maintained a long-term working relationship on various outdoor and wildlife related issues. This Intergovernmental Agreement updates a previous agreement which has been in effect since 1976 by clarifying further authorities, responsibilities and identifying areas of common interest and methods for collaboration.

The Department recommends THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH MARICOPA COUNTY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING A PROCESS FOR WORKING TOGETHER TO MAINTAIN, IMPROVE AND MANAGE OUTDOOR RECREATION, EDUCATE THE PUBLIC AND MANAGE WILDLIFE AND THEIR HABITATS, AND TO AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR, AS SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION, TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT AS RECOMMENDED OR APPROVED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

d. Memorandum of Understanding with United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding rocket net charges

Presenter: Brian Wakeling, Game Branch Chief

The Arizona Game and Fish Department has traditionally purchased rocket net charges to capture wildlife for conducting the business of wildlife management in Arizona. The charges are used to propel rockets to carry nets over deer, elk, turkeys, waterfowl, and other wildlife. The

USFWS requires all states to sign an MOU to continue to purchase rocket net charges. The Commission approved an MOU with the USFWS to purchase rocket net charges in January, 2007. That MOU expired April 30, 2011 and now needs to be renewed for another 5-year period. The USFWS acquired M-6 propellant from the Department of Defense in 1995 and shipped the propellant to a secure facility for storage. This is a military propellant and it cannot be sold to the public. The USFWS supplies the propellant to Winn-Starr Inc., for manufacture of rocket net charges. By executing this MOU, the service authorizes the Department to purchase rocket net charges from Winn-Starr. The MOU has been reviewed by the Office of the Attorney General and is ready for Commission/Department signature. The Department is already in full compliance with all conditions and assigned responsibilities of the MOU.

The Department recommends THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE AND AUTHORIZE THE SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TO ALLOW THE DEPARTMENT TO CONTINUE TO PURCHASE ROCKET NET CHARGES FROM WINN-STARR, INC., AS FACILITATED BY THE SERVICE.

e. Request for the Commission to Approve a Memorandum of Understanding with American Conservation Experience (ACE).

Presenter: Kirk Young, Fisheries Branch Chief

The State of Arizona is an area with a wide variety of wildlife species, many of which are unique to the American Southwest. There exist a myriad of needs and opportunities for the management and conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitats in Arizona. The Commission and Department manage these wildlife resources in public trust for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations. American Conservation Experience (ACE) is a non-profit conservation corps offering opportunities for both American and International volunteers to take part in challenging outdoor conservation projects in the Western United States that benefit wildlife, fisheries, and recreation. ACE members receive on-the-job skills training, and the chance to contribute to habitat, wildlife, and fisheries restoration, trail maintenance, invasive plant management, re-vegetation, fencing and other efforts throughout the Western United States. By employing the conservation corps model focusing on domestic youth while also engaging international students in meaningful conservation projects, ACE has developed a program with a proven track record of meeting land management agencies' resource management needs in a cost effective and professional manner. This MOU will formalize a framework for the Department and ACE to collaborate on wildlife management and conservation projects hosted by the Department. The Department has a need for a labor force to support its normal wildlife and habitat management, property maintenance, and other labor intensive projects, and ACE is able to provide a motivated, high quality, cost effective volunteer force to carry out these types of projects.

The Department recommends THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE MOU BETWEEN THE AMERICAN CONSERVATION EXPERIENCE AND THE COMMISSION TO SOLIDIFY WORKING RELATIONSHIP AND ENABLE ACE AMERICAN AND INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS TO WORK ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION PROJECTS HOSTED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN ARIZONA, AND TO AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR, AS SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION, TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT AS RECOMMENDED OR APPROVED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

Motion: Freeman moved and Husted seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS A, B, C, D, AND E.

Vote: Unanimous
4 to 0
Harris absent

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11. Call to the Public

George Reiners, YVRGC: Expressed concern for wildlife in the burned wildfire area and recommended that people buy hunting and fishing licenses even if they don't hunt and fish as a way to support the wildlife. People can also donate at any Department office. The Department is the lead agency in the recovery effort and this will help in that effort.

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Meeting recessed for lunch at 12:00 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

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7. Monthly Update on Recreational Access Issues within Arizona.

Presenter: Mike Senn, Assistant Director Wildlife Management

Mr. Senn provided the Commission with an update on recreational access issues and progress since the last Commission meeting. These monthly updates stem from the April 16, 2011 Commission workshop in which the Commission, Department and members of the public discussed recent recreational access issues and challenges associated with private, State Trust, and public lands. Since the April workshop, Department staff members have been actively working to develop strategies to effectively manage these access issues. The update included the following information:

Department Activities Since Last Month:

- Presented access issues in association with the Hunt Guidelines public input meetings
- Presented access issues in association with the Watchable Wildlife Management Plan public input meetings
- Other opportunities (Statewide and Local HPC, Cattle Growers Meeting, NRCD meetings, etc.)
- Considered development of a possible pair of mail surveys with stakeholders; one for sportsmen/recreational users and another for private landowners
- A short presentation on Access issues and current Department Landowner Relations Program is being given at: Hunt Recommendation Meetings: June 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, and 23 (statewide locations)
- Watchable Wildlife Management Plan Meetings: June 20, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, and 30 (statewide locations)

- Comments will be presented to the Commission along with survey results (if applicable) at a later date.

Other Opportunities for Input:

- Statewide HPC meeting July 23rd
- Local HPC meetings that will be scheduled throughout the autumn of 2011
- Annual Cattle Growers Meeting in Prescott July 28th (LLSRC)
- Possibly at County Cattle Growers Meetings and NRCD meetings.

Future Actions:

- Continue to gather and review background and benchmark information
- Review results from public input and possible mail surveys - using that feedback to help inform future actions
- Begin to formulate possible alternatives
- Provide alternatives to the Commission in autumn 2011.

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12. Law Enforcement Program Briefing

Presenter: Gene Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief

Mr. Elms briefed the Commission on activities and developments that occurred since the last regular meeting relating to the Department's Law Enforcement Program. This briefing was in fulfillment of the Commission's request to be briefed on a monthly basis regarding the Department's Law Enforcement Program. The Commission was provided with a written report (also available to the public) and a Power Point presentation by Mr. Elms which highlighted some items in the report including law enforcement training activity, wildlife enforcement activity, watercraft and OHV enforcement activities, and partnerships that were developed and fostered in this reporting period. This month's briefing also included law enforcement officer activities related to the multiple fires statewide.

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13. Request for Commission approval to enter into Inter-Governmental Agreements to fund watercraft law enforcement efforts by Watercraft Law Enforcement Agencies for State FY2012.

Presenter: Gene F. Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief

The Department asked the Commission to provide watercraft law enforcement funding to eight counties through Inter-Governmental Agreements. State Law Enforcement Boating Safety fund sweeps reduced County watercraft law enforcement budgets for the current fiscal year. Watercraft Fund appropriations to the Department for boating safety and OUI enforcement allows for the opportunity to provide funding assistance to non-federal Arizona boating law enforcement agencies facing budgetary shortfalls. The funding will be transferred through the execution of Inter-Governmental Agreements with the eight counties per the following amounts:

Agency	Total
Yuma County SO	\$62,000
Mohave County SO	\$162,325
Gila County SO	\$146,000
Maricopa County SO	\$281,000
Coconino County SO	\$175,000
La Paz County SO	\$44,675
Apache County SO	\$55,000
Navajo County SO	\$74,000
Totals	\$1,000,000

Motion: Husted moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE DEPARTMENT ENTERING INTO IGAS WITH YUMA COUNTY, MOHAVE COUNTY, GILA COUNTY, MARICOPA COUNTY, COCONINO COUNTY, LA PAZ COUNTY, APACHE COUNTY AND NAVAJO COUNTY TO PROVIDE \$1,000,000 IN FUNDING FOR DEDICATED WATERCRAFT LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS CONTINGENT UPON FINAL ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE APPROVAL OF THE IGA'S.

Vote: Unanimous

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14. Request for Commission Approval of the Program Narrative for U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Funds (Federal FY 2011 / State FY 2012)

Presenter: Gene F. Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief

The Department asked the Commission to approve the Department's U.S. Coast Guard funding pursuant to the Federal Boating Safety Act of 1971. The Program Narrative detailing State FY 2012 expenditure of U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) boating safety grant funds by the Department and was provided to the Commission prior to this meeting for review and consideration. The narrative details the Department's watercraft activities and obligations for State FY 2012. It addresses the grant period of October 1, 2011, to September 30, 2012, and reflects the legislatively mandated watercraft responsibilities of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Motion: Mansell moved and Husted seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE PORTION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S WATERCRAFT SAFETY PROGRAM FUNDED BY THE U.S. COAST GUARD GRANT MONIES PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL BOATING SAFETY ACT OF 1971.

Vote: Unanimous

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16A. Request for the Commission to Approve a Cooperative Agreement with ASARCO, LLC and ASARCO Conservation Foundation

Presenter: Raul Vega, Tucson Regional Supervisor

The Department asked the Commission to approve a Cooperative Agreement with ASARCO, LCC and ASARCO Conservation Foundation for the purpose of managing and monitoring the PZ-1 habitat restoration project. The purpose of this Cooperative Agreement is to establish a framework for collaboration and cooperation between the Department and ASARCO to conserve and enhance wildlife habitat in Arizona. This agreement will allow the Department to carry out the monitoring and management of the PZ-1 wetland mitigation lands along the lower San Pedro River. This project will further cultivate the relationship between the Department, ASARCO and the Army Corps of Engineers (which oversees the mitigation planning) as it pertains to wildlife management actions within the San Pedro River watershed. This agreement will allow collaboration, cooperation, exchange of expertise, labor, and materials, and fund the Department in continued efforts to conserve and enhance wildlife habitat along the San Pedro watershed. Although beyond the scope of the agreement, the Department is working with ASARCO to ensure continued public access to the property as appropriate.

Motion: Freeman moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH ASARCO, LCC AND ASARCO CONSERVATION FOUNDATION, AND TO AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR, AS SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION, AND TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT AS RECOMMENDED OR APPROVED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

Vote: Unanimous

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Meeting recessed for a break at 1:55 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 2:00 p.m.

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15. Hearings on License Revocations for Violation of Game and Fish Codes and Civil Assessments for the Illegal Taking and/or Possession of Wildlife

Presenter: Gene Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief

Record of these proceedings is maintained in a separate minutes book in the Director's Office.

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16. Rehearing Request by Donald L. Bell Regarding Previous License Revocation/Civil Assessment.

Presenter: Gene F. Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief

Donald L. Bell has requested that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission grant a rehearing regarding the revocation of his license. On January 25, 2011, Donald L. Bell was convicted in Fredonia Justice Court for Fail to Immediately Tag, Discharge Firearm from Maintained Road, and Waste Edible Game Meat. On April 15, 2011, the Commission revoked Donald L. Bell's hunting, fishing and trapping licenses for a period of three (3) years, invoked an \$8,000.00 civil assessment, and further required him to complete a Hunter Education Course before obtaining

any license(s) to take wildlife in the State of Arizona. Donald L. Bell has requested a rehearing of this matter and decision. Due to his age, a three (3) year revocation of his license is excessive; therefore, he is requesting a shorter revocation period, or a reinstatement of his fishing privileges.

Mr. Bell was not present

Motion: Husted moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO DENY DONALD L. BELL'S REQUEST FOR A REHEARING.

Commissioner Freeman commented that the Commission was already lenient with a three-year revocation period, but that he was open to discussion.

Commissioner Husted stated that Mr. Bell can still be with his grandchildren when they are fishing, he just can't fish.

Vote: Unanimous

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9. Request to approve the Article 3 Taking and Handling of Wildlife Five-year Review Report, for submission to the Governor's Regulatory Review Council (G.R.R.C.).

Presenter: Jennifer Stewart, Rules and Risk Branch Chief

Ms. Stewart presented the Commission with the Five-year Review Report for Article 3, regarding the taking and handling of wildlife for Commission approval to submit to G.R.R.C. A.R.S. §41-1056 requires each state agency to review all of its rules at least once every five years on a preset schedule determined by G.R.R.C. Approval of the report today does not change rule, but recommended changes will be included in future rulemaking. Several of the suggested changes contained in this packet are the result of a previous rulemaking that was presented to the Commission in December 2008, but placed on hold when the rulemaking moratorium became effective in January 2009. The Commission can make changes to any of the proposed changes today and will have additional opportunities to approve or deny proposed changes as part of the rulemaking process. If approved by the Commission, the Department will submit the report to G.R.R.C. The Department will not pursue rulemaking for Article 3 the rulemaking moratorium has expired or an exception request to proceed is received from the Governor's Office.

The Article 3 rule review team completed its review and proposes the following substantive amendments:

R12-4-301. Restrictions for Taking Wildlife in Maricopa County Parks:

- Creating a new rule defining terms used throughout Article 3
- Amending the rule to incorporate recent amendments made to A.R.S. §§ 13-3107, modifying statutory prohibitions pertaining to the firearms related ordinances, and 13-3108, which prohibits political subdivisions from limiting the lawful taking of wildlife during an open season established by the Commission.

R12-4-303. Unlawful Devices, Methods, and Ammunition:

- Allowing individuals to possess semiautomatic centerfire rifles with a magazine capacity of more than five rounds and full-jacketed ammunition designed for military use for the purpose of personal protection. This is in response to a petition received by the AZ State Rifle & Pistol Association.
- Prohibiting the use of electronic night vision equipment, electronically enhanced light-gathering devices, and thermal imaging devices for the take of wildlife
- Prohibiting use of edible or ingestible substances to attract big game for hunting purposes. This excludes water or nutritional supplements, salt, or salt-based materials produced and manufactured for the livestock industry.
- Prohibiting the use of products containing cervid urine to address disease transmission concerns.
- Prohibiting individuals from intentionally restricting wildlife from the water source to ensure wildlife have adequate access to water
- Prohibiting individuals from using dogs to pursue or hold at bay any bear or lion for another hunter unless the hunter is present when the dogs are released on a specific target animal and continuously present for the entire pursuit.

R12-4-304. Lawful Methods for Taking Wild Mammals, Birds, and Reptiles:

- Reduce the standard pull weight for bows to align it with industry standards.
- Allowing crossbows and bows drawn and held with an assisting device as a legal method of take to make the rule less restrictive and improve consistency within the rule
- Allowing the take of mountain lion with shotguns shooting shot which was requested by the public during hunt guideline sessions.
- Allowing the take of upland game birds with a pneumatic weapon which resulted from public comment received by the Department.
- Allowing the take of coyotes and mountain lions with artificial light in response to the recent passage of House Bill 2396.
- Identify pursuit with dogs as a lawful activity in areas it's currently permitted.

R12-4-305. Possessing, Transporting, Importing, Exporting, and Selling Carcasses or Parts of Wildlife:

- Establish cervid importation and transportation requirements to prevent the introduction of chronic wasting disease into Arizona
- Creating additional methods for the take and removal of crayfish and prohibiting the transport of crayfish to help conserve native aquatic species
- Prohibiting transport of live crayfish to help conserve native aquatic species.

R12-4-306. Buffalo Hunt Requirements:

- Allowing Department to prescribe order of hunters and designate which animal can be taken during a supplemental hunt to provide additional direct oversight.

R12-4-307. Trapping Regulations: Licensing; Methods; Tagging of Bobcat Pelts:

- Update trapping regulations to conform with AFWA recommendations.

R12-4-308. Wildlife Inspections, Check Stations, and Roadblocks:

- Removing requirement for individual who takes deer, elk, antelope, or buffalo under a special big game permit to submit the skull or skullcap for inspection and photographing

- Granting the Department the authority to conduct inspections of all lawfully taken wildlife to collect the biological data necessary to ensure harvest/management objectives are met
- Allowing establishment of harvest objectives to increase hunter opportunities while regulating harvest and to allow an unlimited number of individuals to participate in a hunt
- Removing archery harvest reporting requirement.

R12-4-309. Authorization for Use of Drugs on Wildlife:

- Clarifying situations where the rule does not apply.

R12-4-311. Exemptions from Requirement to Possess an Arizona Fishing License while Taking Aquatic Wildlife:

- Clarifying live crustacean transportation limits to help conserve native aquatic species
- Expanding fishing license exemptions for National Fishing and Boating Week

R12-4-313. Lawful Methods of Taking Aquatic Wildlife:

- Allowing pneumatic weapons for take of bullfrogs and bow and arrow for the take of catfish in response to public comments received by the Department.

R12-4-316. Possession, Transportation, or Importation of Live Baitfish, Crayfish, or Waterdogs:

- Removing "red shiner" from list of live bait minnows that can be lawfully possessed, transported, or imported by licensed anglers
- Allowing anglers to collect, possess, and use red shiners as bait only on the body of water where they are captured to help conserve native aquatic species.

R12-4-317. Seasons for Lawfully Taking Fish, Mollusks, Crustaceans, Amphibians, and Aquatic Reptiles:

- Creating the authority to open seasons for taking take of catfish with bow and arrow.

R12-4-318. Seasons for Lawfully Taking Wild Mammals, Birds, and Reptiles:

- Including falconry as a method of take during archery-only. Exempting falconers hunting with exotic raptors from sports falconry license requirements
- Allowing hunters participating in other limited weapon hunts to possess a non-hunting handgun for personal protection.

The Commission discussed and agreed that they would like to see the following written more clearly: R12-4-303 - Prohibiting the use of electronic night vision equipment, electronically enhanced light-gathering devices, and thermal imaging devices for the take of wildlife and prohibiting use of edible or ingestible substances to attract big game and the use of products containing cervid urine to address disease transmission concerns.

Commissioner Husted suggested adding Eurasian collared doves to be taken with pneumatic weapons in R12-4-304 - Allowing the take of upland game birds with a pneumatic weapon.

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Meeting recessed for a break at 3:40 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 3:50 p.m.

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9. (continued) Request to approve the Article 3 Taking and Handling of Wildlife Five-year Review Report, for submission to the Governor's Regulatory Review Council (G.R.R.C.).

Presenter: Jennifer Stewart, Rules and Risk Branch Chief

Public Comment

Phil Carr, representing himself (called in from Region V): Requested that the Commission reconsider allowing an 8-gauge shotgun for taking game; the Commission had previously denied Mr. Carr's request to allow the use of an 8-gauge shotgun at the October 2009 meeting, but directed the Department to evaluate the request the next time Article 3 was open. Primarily, Mr. Carr would like to use the 8-gauge shotgun for turkey hunting.

Rod Lucas, Region VI Supervisor, informed the Commission that he discussed with Mr. Carr that the Department recommended the Commission deny his petition for rule change in order to be consistent with federal regulations and because only a minimal number of the people owned 8-gauge shotguns.

The Commission discussed and was in consensus to direct the Department to further evaluate the petition during rulemaking and determine if Mr. Carr's request might be accommodated.

The Commission discussed the different draw weights for bow hunting and directed the Department to ensure consistency in their application going forward. The Commission talked about possibly dropping the draw weight requirements at some point in the future, but would first want a briefing from experts on the technology of the modern bow.

Commissioner Harris requested using another term besides "non-hunting" in R12-4-318 - Allowing hunters participating in other limited weapon hunts to possess a "non-hunting" handgun for personal protection.

Commissioner Husted requested a Commission discussion of a two-three year wait on drawing an elk tag.

Ms. Stewart stated that this would fall under Article 1 and not Article 3.

Chairman Woodhouse requested that this be a future agenda item for discussion.

Motion: Freeman moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE ARTICLE 3 FIVE-YEAR REVIEW REPORT AS AMENDED FOR SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNOR'S REGULATORY REVIEW COUNCIL.

Vote: Unanimous

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10. Request to approve the Department's recommendation to submit a request to the Governor's Office for permission to initiate rulemaking to implement House Bill 2543 (firearms; regulation; state preemption) and Senate Bill 1334 (hunting within city limits)

Presenter: Jennifer Stewart, Rules and Risk Branch Chief

House Bill 2260 was signed by the Governor on May 10, 2010 and continues the statutory moratorium on agency rulemaking activities until June 30, 2011. Section 28(B) outlines reasons agencies may submit an exception request to the Governor's Office to continue rulemaking during the moratorium if rules meet this specified criteria. Section 28(C) specifies that "an agency shall not conduct any informal or formal rule making pursuant to this section without the prior written approval of the office of the governor." An agency requesting an exception to the moratorium under Section 28(B) must submit a written request to the Governor's Office, who will determine if an exception may be granted. The written request must clearly identify the exception criteria the rule meets and the date on which the agency's decision making body granted the Department permission to request the exception.

House Bill 2543, effective July 29, 2010, modifies current statutory prohibitions pertaining to the firearms related ordinances, rules or taxes that may be enacted or enforced by a political subdivision of the state and Senate Bill 1334, effective July 20, 2011, prohibits political subdivisions from limiting the lawful taking of wildlife during an open season, as established by the Commission. The Department believes the rulemaking meets the criteria prescribed under Section 28(B) of the statutory moratorium, which allows agencies to submit requests to initiate rulemaking for an authorization or requirement enacted by the legislature after January 1, 2009. The Department is submitting this rulemaking exception request to the Governor's Office in case the current rulemaking moratorium is extended.

If the Commission votes to allow the Department to request an exception, the Rules and Risk Section will submit a letter to the Governor's Office, requesting permission to proceed with rulemaking related to House Bill 2543 and Senate Bill 1334. If the Governor's office approves the exception request, the Department will initiate rulemaking related to House Bill 2543 and Senate Bill 1334. Rulemaking documents will be presented to the Commission for review and approval at some point in the future provided the Governor's office grants an exception to the rulemaking moratorium. If the Governor's Office denies the Department's request, the Department will refrain from pursuing rulemaking activities relating to the implementation of the House Bill 2543 and Senate Bill 1334 until the moratorium lifts.

Motion: Harris moved and Mansell seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THIS RECOMMENDATION FOR SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, REQUESTING PERMISSION TO INITIATE RULEMAKING TO IMPLEMENT HOUSE BILL 2543 AND SENATE BILL 1334.

Vote: Unanimous

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17. Proposed Dates and Locations of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission Meetings for 2012 and January 2013

Presenter: Bob Broscheid, Deputy Director

The Department presented the Commission with dates for the January 2012 Commission meetings and January 2013. The Commission discussed and agreed on the following:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
January 13-14	Phoenix (Date set in June 2010)
February 10-11	Phoenix
March 9-10	Phoenix
April 13-14	Phoenix (hunt orders)
May 11-12	Phoenix
June 22-23	Phoenix (hunt orders)
August	2 Day Commission Workshop
August 3-4	Phoenix (hunt orders)
September 7-8	Phoenix (fish orders)
November	2 Day Commission Workshop
December 7-8	Phoenix (hunt orders)
January 11-12, 2013	Phoenix - Commission Meeting

Motion: Mansell moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO ADOPT THE SCHEDULE AS PRESENTED WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT THERE WILL BE NO MEETING IN OCTOBER AND THE FISH ORDERS WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE SEPTEMBER 7-8 MEETING; AND THAT THESE DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGES IN THE FUTURE ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE COMMISSION CHAIR.

Vote: Unanimous

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18. Update of Meet the Commission Awards.

Presenter: Ty Gray, Assistant Director, Information and Education Division

Mr. Gray presented the final list of Commission award categories for the 2011 Commission Awards to be presented in January 2012 as follows:

Award of Excellence: Any individual, group, organization, club, foundation, or agency that has excelled in efforts to benefit wildlife, wildlife habitats, or programs of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Youth Environmentalist of the Year: Any individual, 18 years of age or younger, who has excelled in efforts to benefit wildlife and the mission of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Outdoor Writer of the Year: Any professional or freelance writer who has excelled in highlighting issues or activities pertaining to the welfare of wildlife and the mission of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Media of the Year: Any media source (radio, television, magazine, newsletter, or periodical) that has published articles or materials beneficial to public interest about wildlife or wildlife related topics and the mission of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Conservation Organization of the Year: Any organization, group, foundation, or agency that has excelled in efforts to enhance the welfare of wildlife, wildlife related recreation, and the mission of the Game and Fish Department.

Conservationist of the Year: Any individual, not associated with a professional agency, which has excelled in efforts to enhance, conserve, and manage wildlife or their habitats.

Natural Resource Professional of the Year: Any individual who through a professional agency affiliation has excelled in efforts to enhance, conserve, and manage wildlife or their habitats.

Volunteer of the Year: Any individual who, as a *registered volunteer* with the Department, has excelled in efforts to support and benefit the mission of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Educator of the Year: Any individual whose educational activities have advanced and supported the welfare of wildlife, wildlife related recreation, or the mission of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Mentor of the Year: Any individual who has acted in the role of a mentor and whose efforts have resulted in the promotion and support of future wildlife conservation efforts and the development of future wildlife conservation leaders in Arizona.

Advocate of the Year: Any individual that has engaged in political advocacy for the betterment of wildlife conservation and in the support of the mission of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

License Dealer of the Year: Any license dealer who actively promotes Game and Fish license and tag sales through innovative approaches, community involvement and a customer service focus that benefits the citizens of Arizona and supports the Game and Fish's mission of wildlife conservation.

Buck Appleby Hunter Education Instructor of the Year Award: Any hunter education instructor who actively participates in hunter education activities and demonstrates the highest level of customer service, dedication and professionalism during these activities.

Chair's Award: At the sole discretion of the Commission Chair.

Motion: Freeman moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE 2011 COMMISSION AWARDS CATEGORIES AS PRESENTED.

Vote: Unanimous

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19. Call to the Public

Tammy Sundquist, representing herself: In regards to delisting the Mexican wolf, Ms. Sundquist asked the Commission to consider in their discussions that the Mexican wolf is a distinct and unique species of gray wolves; the recovery plan for the Mexican wolves continues to be a failure; other wolf populations have succeeded but not the Mexican wolf; delisting is really jumping ahead; Mexican wolves are not found anywhere else in the world.

George Reiners, YVRGC: Expressed appreciation for the Commission’s approval of the Buck Appleby Award.

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20. Executive Session

The Commission voted to meet in Executive Session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03 (A)(3) and (4) for the purpose of discussion and consultation with legal counsel.

Motion: Freeman moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION.

Vote: Unanimous

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Public Meeting reconvened at 6:20 p.m.

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21. Litigation Report

The Litigation Report (attached to these minutes) was provided to the Commission prior to this meeting and was available to the public. There were no additional updates.

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Motion: Harris moved and Husted seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO ADJOURN FOR THE DAY.

Vote: Unanimous

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Meeting recessed for the day at 6:23 p.m.

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Meeting reconvened Saturday at 9:00 a.m.

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The Commission attended a dedication ceremony at the Ben Avery Activity Center, 4044 W. Black Canyon Blvd., Phoenix Arizona at 8:00 a.m. and returned to 5000 W. Carefree Hwy,

Phoenix, Arizona by 9:00 a.m. for the regular meeting. No formal action was taken at the dedication ceremony.

Chairman Woodhouse called the meeting back to order at 9:00 a.m. and lead those present through the Pledge of Allegiance followed by Commission and Department introductions. Saturday's portion of this meeting followed an agenda revision #3 dated June 24, 2011 that was posted on June 24, 2011 at 11:36 a.m. in order to add agenda item 4B at TIME CERTAIN 2:00 p.m.

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Awards and Recognition

Director Voyles presented Hank Schucking with an award for his outstanding leadership as a Hunter Education Instructor and recognized him for being awarded with the Salt River Project (SRP) 2011 President's Volunteer Spirit Award. The recipients of this award receive \$1,000 from SRP to go towards the program that they volunteer for. Hank chose these funds for the purchase of equipment and resources to benefit the Hunter Education Program within Region II.

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1. Shooting Sports Activities Briefing

Presenter: Jay Cook, Shooting Range Branch Chief

Mr. Cook provided the Commission with a Power Point presentation highlighting several items in the Shooting Sports Activities Briefing that was provided to the Commission prior to this meeting and was available to the public. The report included shooting programs and shooting range development statewide and covered activities that occurred since the last regular Commission meeting. This briefing is part of the Department's ongoing commitment to provide the Commission with updates on a regular basis.

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2. Statewide Shooting Range Grant Requests for FY 2012

Presenter: Anthony Chavez, Statewide Shooting Range Administrator

Mr. Chavez briefed the Commission on the applications for the Department's Shooting Range Grants Program, which received six grant applications for fiscal year 2012. The Department recommended that the Commission approve four of the applications: 1) Construction of facility and improvements at the Town of Chino Valley Police Department Range (Chino Valley); 2) Construction and facility improvements that include installation of shooting station and covered firing points, shooting pits and bunkers, and yardage markers at the Town of Clifton Shooting Range (Clifton); 3) Phase II construction and improvements to the arrow backstops, boundary fence and signage on the Granite Mountain Archery Range (Prescott); 4) Development and expansion of the public shooting range to include, leveling, grading, and improving the bullet impact areas of the berms and the Phoenix Rod and Gun Club Range (Phoenix) for a total of \$93,051.15.

The following is a summary of the grant applications received for the FY12 Shooting Ranges Grant cycle:

Town of Chino Valley Police Department Shooting Range (Chino Valley): Requested \$50,000.00 to improve the safety and usability of the existing Chino Valley Police Range for public use. Construction includes but is not limited to improving roadways, restroom facilities, site leveling, berm construction, shade structures and developing shooting positions. Department recommendation: Partial funding of \$40,000 to conduct construction and facility improvements.

Town of Clifton Shooting Range (Clifton): Requested \$37,500.00 to conduct Phase II construction and facility improvements that include installation of shooting station and covered firing points, shooting pits and bunkers, and yardage markers to improve the safety and usability of the existing Clifton Shooting Range. Department recommendation: Fund total amount requested.

Granite Mountain Archery Range-Granite Mountain Archers (Prescott): Requested \$6,207.00 for Phase II development of Safety Backstop, Boundary Fencing, Signage and Target Replacement on the field course at the Granite Mountain Archery Range. Department recommendation: Fund total amount requested.

Phoenix Rod and Gun Shooting Range (Phoenix): Requested \$9,344.15 to development and expand the use of the public shooting range. Construction includes but not limited to leveling, grading, and improving the bullet impact areas of the berms. Department recommendation: Fund total amount requested.

7-Mile Shooting Range-Mohave Sportsman's Club (Kingman): Requested \$5,800.00 to upgrade and replace old trap equipment on the trap and skeet range on 7-Mile Shooting Range. Department recommendation: No funding.

7-Mile Shooting Range-Mohave Sportsman's Club (Kingman): Requested \$6,450.00 to repair, maintain and upgrade the Shooting Range Administrative Building to include but not limited to roof repairs and replacement, windows repaired and replaced, and new carpet and painting. Department recommendation: No funding.

Motion: Harris moved and Freeman seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE SHOOTING RANGE GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR THE FY12 GRANT CYCLE FOR A TOTAL OF \$93,051.15.00 AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

Vote: Unanimous

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2B. Informational Update on Research Projects

Presenter: Chantal O'Brien, Research Branch Chief

Ms. O'Brien provided the Commission with an informational update on research projects using a Power Point presentation. The update included information on current research projects

conducted by the Department's Research Branch, including the activities of the Wildlife Health Program. A list of current projects was provided to the Commission and available to the public.

Ms. O'Brien briefly provided a review of the types of the projects that are currently being conducted and highlighted some specific examples as follows:

- The Wildlife Health Program: Disease Surveillance and Management; Herd health assessments; Wildlife mortality and morbidity investigations
- Wildlife-highway Research: State Route 260 Elk Crosswalk; Interstate 17 Elk Movements; Interstate 40 Elk Movements; U.S. Highway 93 Bighorn Crossings; U.S. Highway 191 Bighorn Movements; State Route 87 Tortoise Crossings; State Route 85/93 Tortoise Crossings; Evaluation of effective wildlife barriers
- Kaibab Winter Range Monitoring: The Kaibab deer herd has been the focus of research and management efforts since 1930s; Over the last decade and more, winter range in GMU 12A-W has been adversely impacted by large wildfires, drought, and invasive weeds; The Department, USFS, and AZ Sportsmen For Wildlife have made significant investments in habitat improvements; WMRS is developing monitoring protocol for assessing condition and trend of forage resources on critical portions of winter range
- Forest Restoration Research: Forest management impacts on bats, turkeys, songbirds, Abert's squirrels, snag retention and decay rates, and oak regeneration is the focus of this research; Effects of forest restoration on tassel-eared squirrels; Black bear habitat use relative to areas treated in the Wildland-Urban Interface; Northern goshawk prey availability and foraging habitat
- Nongame Species Projects: Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Surveys; Tucson shovel-nosed snake surveys; Sonoran desert tortoise pattern recognition modeling; LeConte's Thrasher occupancy surveys; Flat-tailed horned lizard demographic monitoring; Yellow and red bat habitat selection; Lowland leopard frog and Colorado River toad surveys; Mine and cave surveys for closure recommendations
- Colorado River Monitoring: Long-term fish monitoring below Glen Canyon Dam is an essential component of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program (GCDAMP). The GCDAMP is overseen by a Federal Advisory Committee, which the Department is a member of. That Committee provides recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior on the operation of Glen Canyon Dam
- Golden Alga Project: Evaluation fisheries at Saguaro, Canyon, & Apache Lakes following major golden alga related fish kill (2005); Innovative research to determine best largemouth stocking methods (many 1-2" vs fewer 6-8" bass); Develop long term fish kill monitoring and response
- Bubbling Ponds Native Fish Research Facility: Spikedace and loach minnow; Razorback sucker; Humpback chub; Training – serves as a training center for fisheries professionals to ID fish, learn new marking techniques, and other opportunities as needed
- Habitat Restoration: Army Corps of Engineers in-lieu fee mitigation projects; Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration technical assistance, plan development, and restoration implementation

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Meeting recessed for a break at 9:52 a.m.
Meeting reconvened at 10:15 a.m.

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3. Consideration of Applications for Special Big Game Hunt License Tags for Antelope, Bighorn Sheep, Black Bear, Buffalo, Elk, Javelina, Mountain Lion, Mule Deer, White-tailed Deer, and Turkey for 2012-2013

Presenter: Brian F. Wakeling, Game Branch Chief

Mr. Wakeling briefed the Commission using a Power Point presentation. ARS 17-346 authorizes the Commission to provide up to 3 Special big game license-tags per year per applicable big game species. AAC R12-4-120 governs the issuance, sale, and transfer of special big game license-tags including the proposal requirements and process, successful applicant requirements, and special big game license-tag applicability and requirements. The total income from this program since inception in 1984 is \$18,808,451. Funds are consolidated into and administered from 10 species accounts as directed by the Commission. The special tag dollars are spent through the Habitat Partnership Committee (HPC), a collaborative group consisting of representatives from various organizations and the Department.

The Department has received applications for Special Big Game License Tags from the following nonprofit organizations in accordance with A.R.S. 17-346 and Commission Rule R12-4-120:

Arizona Antelope Foundation (AAF): Requested three (3) Special Antelope License Tags. One tag will be auctioned at the 2012 Arizona Antelope Foundation banquet, the second tag will be auctioned at the 2012 Arizona Elk Society banquet and the third tag will be included in the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle. Should the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle also apply for one of these tags to be included in their raffle, the Arizona Antelope Foundation will support their request in lieu of their own request. In addition to the antelope tags, the AAF requested one (1) Special Big Game License Tag for buffalo, one (1) Special Big Game License Tag for black bear, one (1) Special Big Game License Tag for mountain lion and one (1) Special Big Game License Tag for javelina. These tags will be auctioned at the 2011 Arizona Antelope Foundation fundraising banquet.

Arizona Big Game Super Raffle (AZBGSR): Requested one tag for each of Arizona's ten (10) Special Big Game species: one (1) Special Antelope License Tag; one (1) Special Desert Bighorn Sheep License Tag; one (1) Special Black Bear License Tag; one (1) Special Buffalo License Tag; one (1) Special Whitetail Deer License Tag; one (1) Special Elk License Tag; one (1) Special Javelina License Tag; one (1) Special Mountain Lion License Tag; one (1) Special Mule Deer License Tag; and one (1) Special Turkey License Tag. All tags will be sold in the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle using direct mail, publication advertising, as well as Internet marketing and sales.

Arizona Bowhunters Association (ABA): Requested one (1) Special Javelina License Tag; one (1) Special Black Bear License Tag; and one (1) Special Buffalo License Tag. The tags will be auctioned at the 2012 ABA Annual Awards Banquet. The Arizona Bowhunters Association also supports the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle and is in favor of one tag for each species to be awarded to that organization and pledge to support the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle, its goals and objectives.

Arizona Deer Association (ADA): Requested two (2) Special Mule Deer License tags; two (2) Special Whitetail Deer License Tags; and one (1) Special Mountain Lion License Tag. The ADA proposes to auction all tags at the ADA's annual fundraiser in 2012 or at another ADA sponsored event. The mountain lion tag will be packaged with special incentives. The ADA also supports the issuance of one special tag for each big game species to the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle Committee. If for some reason the tags would not be given to the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle directly, the ADA requested the mule deer and whitetail deer tags to be raffled through the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle or to be auctioned at the ADA's 2012 fundraiser or another ADA sponsored event.

Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society (ADBSS): Requested three (3) Special Big Game License Tags – two (2) Special Bighorn Sheep License Tags and one (1) Special Mountain Lion License Tag. One (1) tag to be auctioned for a *Mexicana* desert bighorn sheep in the southern GMUs with the auction occurring at the Wild Sheep Foundation 2012 convention, the Arizona Sportsmen For Wildlife Conservation's 4th Annual Fundraising banquet in 2012, or the ADBSS's 29th annual fundraising banquet. One (1) tag to be auctioned for a Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep in the eastern GMUs, at the ADBSS fundraising banquet in March 2012 or by the Wild Sheep Foundation at its 2012 convention. One (1) Special Mountain Lion License tag to be auctioned at the ADBSS fundraising banquet in March 2012, where it will be packaged with special incentives. The ADBSS supports the issuance of the third Special Bighorn Sheep License Tag for a *Nelsoni* species in the northern GMU's to the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle Committee. If for some reason the Nelsoni tag would not be given to the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle directly, the ADBSS would request that ADBSS be granted the tag to be raffled through the AZBGSR or to be auctioned at their fundraiser in March 2012. ADBSS is also willing to auction any other Special Tags the Commission would like to issue at their fundraiser banquet in March 2012 if there is an opportunity.

Arizona Elk Society (AES): Requested one (1) Special Elk License Tag and one (1) Special Buffalo License Tag. Both tags will be auctioned at the AES annual fundraising banquet in March 2012. The AES supports the awarding of one of the Special Elk Tags to the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle. The AES is willing to auction any other special tags at their fundraising banquet in March 2012 that the Commission may elect to issue to their organization.

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC): Requested the commission to grant them the opportunity to auction Special License Tags for Bison, Bear, Mountain Lion and Javelina. The tags will be auctioned at their 2012 Heritage Banquet. AZSFWC is also willing to auction any other Special License Tags the Commission would grant them for auction at their 2012 Heritage Banquet.

Mule Deer Foundation (MDF): Requested one (1) Special Mule Deer License Tag, and one (1) Special Whitetail Deer License Tag. The Special Mule Deer License Tag and the Special Whitetail Deer License Tag will be auctioned at the MDF 2012 National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah, February 9 - 12; 2012, in conjunction with the Western Hunting & Conservation Expo.

National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF): Requested two (2) Special Turkey License Tags. One of the tags will be sold by raffle by the Arizona Chapter of NWTF; one tag will be auctioned by the Arizona Chapter of the NWTF in conjunction with the Arizona Elk Society

fundraising banquet. The NWTF requested the Commission to award the third special turkey tag to the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle.

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF): Requested one (1) Special Elk License Tag to be auctioned at the RMEF's 28th Anniversary Elk Camp convention in Las Vegas, NV, February 2 – 4, 2012.

Safari Club International – Arizona Chapter (SCI-AZ): Requested one (1) Special Whitetail Deer License tag, one (1) Special Mule Deer License Tag and one (1) Special Javelina License Tag. All tags to be auctioned at the SCI-AZ's fundraiser on July 9, 2011.

Safari Club International – Phoenix Chapter (PHXSCI): Requested one (1) Special Mule Deer License Tag, one (1) Special Buffalo License Tag and one (1) Special Antelope License Tag to be auctioned at the PCSCI's banquet and fundraiser on March 24, 2012. In the event that any black bear or mountain lion tags are available, the PCSCI would like to make a general request for such tags which they will raffle at their 2012 annual fundraiser.

Public Comment

The following members of the public addressed the Commission on behalf of their respective organization's requests:

- John Tuter, Arizona State Chair, RMEF
- Tice Supplee, Board Member, AAF
- Pete Cimellaro, Former President, ADA
- Dan Holwerda, President, SCI – Phoenix Chapter
- Steve Sams, State Chapter President, NWTF
- Bobby Boido, President, SCI – Arizona Chapter
- Miles Moretti, President/CEO, MDF

Commissioner Husted asked if the two Chapters of SCI, Arizona and Phoenix, could work together to market a tag.

Public Comment

Tod Molesworth, Vice President of SCI – AZ Chapter, stated that he would like to have the white-tail tag to raise funds for water and habitat restoration in the fire area, but would defer the mule deer tag to the Phoenix Chapter and work with them on that.

The Department recommended that the Commission award the 2011 Sponsorship of special license tags prioritized upon 1) the organization being specific to the big game species, 2) past participation performance by the organization, and 3) if the tag will be raffled or auctioned, providing equitable public opportunity for acquisition.

The Commission used an electronic ballot system that allowed the public and the Commission to view each individual Commissioner's selections. Split selections were taken by the majority. Mr. Wakeling read the Commission's selections into the record as follows:

Antelope: Two tags to AAF (Unanimous); One tag to ABGSR (Unanimous)

Black Bear: One tag to ABGSR (Unanimous); One tag to ABA (Unanimous); One tag to ASFWC (Split decision; Commissioners Freeman and Woodhouse selected AAF and Commissioners Husted, Harris and Mansell selected ASFWC. The third tag goes to ASFWC which has the majority)

Bighorn Sheep: One tag to ABGSR (*Nelsoni*) (Unanimous); Two tags to ADBSS (one *Rocky Mountain* and one *Mexicana*) (Unanimous)

Buffalo: One tag to ABGSR (Unanimous); One tag to ABA and one tag to AES (The second and third tags are split decisions – Commissioners Woodhouse, Harris and Mansell selected ABA, and Commissioners Husted, Harris and Mansell selected AES; Commissioners Freeman and Woodhouse selected AAF and Commissioners Husted and Freeman selected PHXSCI. The second and third tags will go to ABA and AES which have the majority)

Elk: One tag to ABGSR; One tag to AES; One tag to RMEF (All unanimous)

Javelina: One tag to ABGSR (Unanimous); One tag to SCI-AZ (Unanimous); One tag to ABA (Split decision; Commissioners Husted, Freeman, Woodhouse and Mansell selected ABA and Commissioner Harris selected ASFWC)

Mule Deer: One tag to ABGSR (Unanimous); One tag to ADA (Unanimous); One tag to MDF (Split decision on the third tag; Commissioners Husted, Freeman, Woodhouse and Harris selected MDF and Commissioner Mansell selected ADA)

Turkey: One tag to ABGSR; Two tags to NWTF (All unanimous)

Whitetail Deer: One tag to ABGSR (Unanimous); One tag to ADA and one tag to SCI-AZ (Split decisions on second two tags; Commissioners Husted, Woodhouse, Harris and Mansell selected ADA; Commissioners Husted, Freeman, Harris and Mansell selected SCI-AZ; and Commissioners Freeman and Woodhouse selected MDF)

Mountain Lion: One tag to ABGSR; One tag to ADA; One tag to ADBSS (All unanimous)

Motion: Harris moved and Mansell seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE ALLOCATION OF THE SPECIAL BIG GAME TAGS AS DISCUSSED AND READ BACK BY MR. WAKELING.

Vote: Unanimous

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Meeting recessed for a break at 11:43 a.m.

Meeting reconvened at 11:59 a.m.

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4. Consideration of Proposed Commission Order 29 for Special Big Game License-Tag Seasons for Mule Deer, White-tailed Deer, Pronghorn Antelope, Elk, Turkey, Javelina, Bighorn Sheep, Buffalo, Black Bear, and Mountain Lion for the 2012–2013 Special License Tag Hunting Seasons

Presenter: Brian F. Wakeling, Game Branch Chief

Mr. Wakeling presented the Commission with Commission Order 29 for the 2012–2013 special big game license tag hunting seasons for mule deer, white-tailed deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, turkey, javelina, bighorn sheep, buffalo, bear, and mountain lion. Due to recent legislation in Arizona, many areas previously closed to hunting within municipality limits will be open this year. The Department formed a team to consider the implications of the legislation and assure that the opening of these areas benefit hunters, maintain public safety and minimize conflict with the public. This is not expected to substantively influence special big game license tag hunters.

The Department recommends that all special big game license tag hunt seasons be open yearlong, with the season for each species commencing on August 15, 2012 and ending on August 14, 2013. Recommended open areas for the special license-tag hunts are as follows:

Mule Deer: Special license-tags will be valid statewide (except Camp Navajo in Unit 6B, Mohave County Park Lands in Unit 16A, and Fort Huachuca in Unit 35A).

White-tailed Deer: Special license-tags will be valid statewide (except Camp Navajo in Unit 6B, Mohave County Park Lands in Unit 16A, and Fort Huachuca in Unit 35A).

Antelope: Special license-tags will be valid for Units 1–10 (except Camp Navajo), 11M, 12A, 12B, 13A, 13B, 15A, 15B, 17A, 17B, 18A, 18B, portions of 19A, 19B, 21, 30A, 31, 32, 34B, 35A (except Fort Huachuca), and 35B.

Elk: Special license-tags will be valid statewide (except Camp Navajo in Unit 6B, Mohave County Park Lands in Unit 16A, and Fort Huachuca in Unit 35A).

Javelina: Special license-tags will be valid statewide (except Camp Navajo in Unit 6B, Mohave County Park Lands in Unit 16A, and Fort Huachuca in Unit 35A).

Turkey: Special license-tags will be valid for Units 1, 3B–10 (except Camp Navajo in Unit 6B), 11M, 12A, 13A, 13BS, 17A, 17B, 20A, 22, 23, 27, 29, 33, 34A, and 35A (except Fort Huachuca in Unit 35A).

Bighorn Sheep: One special license-tag will be valid for Units 9, 10, 12A, 12B, 13A, 13B, 15A, 15B, 15C, 15D, and 16A (except Mohave County Park Lands) (*Nelsoni* permit). A second special license-tag will be valid for Units 16B, 22, 24B, 28 (south of US Hwy 70), 31, 32, 37A, 39 (west of Old AZ Hwy 80), 40B, 41, 43A, 43B, 44A (west of the Swansea Road and south of Bill Williams River Rd.), 44B, 45A, 45B, 45C (including the Kofa NWR), 46A, and 46B (including the Cabeza Prieta NWR) (*Mexicana* permit). A third special license-tag will be valid for Unit 6A and portions of Units 1, portions of Unit 27, and portions of Unit 28 (*Rocky Mountain* permit).

Buffalo: Special license-tags will be valid for Units 12A, 12B, and 13A.

Black Bear: Special license-tags will be valid statewide (except Camp Navajo in Unit 6B, Mohave County Park Lands in Unit 16A, and Fort Huachuca in Unit 35A).

Mountain Lion: Special license-tags will be valid statewide (except National Wildlife Refuges, Mohave County Park Lands, and Camp Navajo in Unit 6B).

Motion: Harris moved and Mansell seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO ADOPT COMMISSION ORDER 29: SPECIAL HUNTS AS PRESENTED.

Vote: Unanimous

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6. Call to the Public

Chris Parks, Supervisor, Special Operations Division, City of Phoenix Parks Department (not present, Chairman Woodhouse read comments into the record): The City of Phoenix Parks Department would like to thank the Game and Fish Commission for its consideration of the ramifications of Senate Bill 1334 and the work that has already been done to increase safety in our city parks and preserves. We support the regulatory measures offered and look forward to working with the Game and Fish Department on their implementation. Thank you.

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Meeting recessed for lunch at 12:08 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 1:47 p.m.

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5. Consideration of Proposed Commission Orders 19, 20, and 24 for the 2011–2012 Hunting Season.

Presenter: Mike Rabe, Small Game Program Supervisor

Mr. Rabe began his presentation with a briefing on several changes from last year. Those changes included the following:

- Bag (Possession) Limits for White Winged Doves has changed from 6(12) per day to 10(20) per day
- Open and Closed Areas have also changed due to recent legislation
- Commission Orders are more extensive due to the legislative changes – subsequent Commission orders will follow this same pattern.

New Arizona Legislation - Hunting in Counties and Municipalities:

- SB 1334 amends Arizona Revised Statutes §13-3107(C)(3) by permitting the discharge of a firearm within or into the limits of any municipality while lawfully taking wildlife during an open season as established by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission
- SB 1334 also amends ARS §13-3108 by preempting any ordinance, rule or regulation of a political subdivision that limits the lawful take of wildlife during an open season in a manner inconsistent with Title 17, and rules and orders of the Commission
- HB 2543 amends 13-3108: This bill pre-empted the authority of political subdivisions to limit or prohibit the discharge of firearms in those parks and preserves approved as hunting areas by the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

The Department's approach:

- This legislation grants a substantial expansion of the Commission's authority in Arizona
- The Department recommendations are the first implementation of this authority to regulate hunting throughout the state
- The Department wants to create hunter opportunity wherever possible while minimizing conflicts
- The Department recommends an appropriate mix of weapon types and hunting season in Commission Orders to achieve the intent of the legislation while preserving partnerships within affected municipalities and counties
- Develop a communication plan for effected agencies, public, and the Department
- Develop a process to allow effected agencies to seek modification of areas open to hunting
- Hunting prescriptions in the urban interface will be refined over time through the Commission Order process as new information becomes available and through further coordination with Counties and Municipalities
- This recommendation reflects a conservative approach compared to what might evolve in future Commission Orders after coordination with Counties and Municipalities
- Prior to this legislation, the Commission entered into agreements with 11 municipalities to designate hunting areas within their boundaries. This approach preserves the spirit of those previous agreements.

Mr. Rabe reviewed with the Commission the certified copy of the Commission Order for dove and how these changes would be incorporated.

(This agenda item continues following the 2:00 PM Time Certain agenda item 4A.)

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4A. Time Certain at 2:00 PM - Discussion of options available to the Commission and Department for responding to the situations of hunters who are drawn for Game Management Units affected by the 2011 wildfires.

Presenter: Brian F. Wakeling, Game Branch Chief.

Mr. Wakeling provided the Commission with a Power Point presentation. The presentation included the latest information on several Arizona's fires and their effects on game management. Because information is still rapidly developing, the data presented may change as the fire progresses or as better information becomes available. The following data was provided to the Commission as well as other information:

Wallow Fire - 49% of Unit 1 and 28% of Unit 27 (These numbers will increase as the fire continues to burn):

Severity Type	Percent Severity, Unit 1	Percent Severity, Unit 27
Extremely Low	15%	13%
Low	19%	7%
Moderate	11%	5%
High	4%	3%

Unit	Total Square Miles	Total Square Miles Burned (6/24/11)	% of Unit Burned
1	844	413	48.92%
27	1,352	389	28.78%

Permits – Wallow (These numbers do not include over-the-counter tags):

Species	Unit	Permits	Tag Revenue	Economic Value to Arizona
Deer	1	260	\$11,717	\$221,105
	27	1,051	\$47,363	\$766,430
Elk	1	1,340	\$201,740	\$1,153,511
	27	830	\$124,958	\$845,948
Turkey	1	725	\$8,513	\$394,220
	27	900	\$10,568	\$425,948
Pronghorn	1	40	\$4,080	\$42,238
		5,146	\$408,939	\$3,849,400

(Economic value based on 2006 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Survey)

Horseshoe II Fire – 34% of Unit 29:

Severity Type	Percent Severity, Unit 29
Extremely Low	8%
Low	12%
Moderate	12%
High	2%

Unit	Total Square Miles	Total Square Miles Burned (6/24/11)	% of Unit Burned
29	1,013	348	34.39%

Permits – Horseshoe II Fire (These numbers do not include over-the-counter tags):

Species	Unit	Permits	Tag Revenue	Economic Value to Arizona
Deer	29	950	\$42,811	\$221,105

Monument Fire – 12% of Unit 35A:

Severity Type	Percent Severity, Unit 29
Extremely Low	9%
Low	2%
Moderate	1%
High	0%

Unit	Total Square Miles	Total Square Miles Burned (6/24/11)	% of Unit Burned
35A	647	79	12.23%

Permits – Monument Fire (These numbers do not include over-the-counter tags):

Species	Unit	Permits	Tag Revenue	Economic Value to Arizona
Deer	35A	938	\$42,270	\$718,639
Pronghorn	35A	7	\$714	\$8,130
		945	\$42,984	\$726,770

Murphy Complex – Unit 36B:

Unit	Total Square Miles	Total Square Miles Burned (6/24/11)	% of Unit Burned
36B	561	128	22.76%

Permits –Murphy Complex Fire (These numbers do not include over-the-counter tags):

Species	Unit	Permits	Tag Revenue	Economic Value to Arizona
Deer	36B	938	\$138,753	\$2,058,949

Comparison of Wallow Fire and Rodeo-Chediski Fire:

Burn Severity	Wallow (sq mi)	Rodeo-Chediski (sq mi)
High	74.32	197.44
Mod	160.44	190.35
Low	255.00	292.50
Extremely Low	302.36	51.00
Total	792.12	731.29

(This is preliminary data as of the date of this briefing)

Rodeo-Chediski – Units 3A and 3C General Deer:

Deer	Permits	Apps/Permit	Percent Hunt Success
1997	200	3.0	13
1998	200	3.6	20
1999	200	3.7	21
2000	200	3.4	13
2001	200	3.1	20
2002	200	3.3	11
2003	150	3.8	13
2004	125	4.7	17
2005	125	5.6	30
2006	148	6.5	33
2007	200	4.8	36
2008	300	3.3	42
2009	300	5.1	48
2010	207	5.5	42

Rodeo-Chediski – Units 3A and 3C All Elk Hunts:

Elk	Permits	Apps/Permit	Percent Hunt Success
1997	266	6.9	56
1998	515	7.1	52
1999	645	5.6	48
2000	720	3.9	39
2001	420	6.4	35
2002	420	6.7	33
2003	370	5.1	42
2004	280	14.2	48
2005	720	6.9	43
2006	897	6.1	48
2007	904	5.5	48
2008	1025	5.1	44
2009	1110	4.5	47
2010	1117	4.7	40

Elk Hunts – Average Points Per Side

Elk	Archery Hunts	November General	General Early Bull
1997	6.0		
1998	5.6	3.9	6.1
1999	5.9	2.8	6.4
2000	5.5	4.8	
2001	6.1	3.4	5.9
2002	5.4	4.6	5.7
2003	6.6	4.6	
2004	6.1	4.2	6.4
2005	6.2	3.8	6.4
2006	6.1	4.1	6.3
2007	5.8	3.9	
2008	6.2	4.5	6.4
2009	6.3	3.9	6.4
2010	6.3	4.1	6.6

The Commission has received prior requests/petitions for compensation for situations such as:

- The Rodeo-Chediski
- Fall buffalo hunts when buffalo were on Grand Canyon National Park
- Late winters that deny access to spring turkey hunters
- Early fire closures that deny access to spring turkey hunters
- Prescribed fires in fall about which individual hunters complain
- Survey overflights.

There is a wide variety of issues that have adversely affected hunts and caused people to submit petitions to the Commission, but in these instances the Commission has not chosen to provide any compensation. For a number of years the Department has placed a disclaimer in the hunt regulations that states “The issuance of any big game permit has no express or implied guarantee or warranty of hunter success. Any person holding a valid permit assumes the risk that

circumstances beyond the control of the Arizona Game and Fish Department may prevent the permit holder from using the permit. In such situations, the Arizona Game and Fish Department disclaims any responsibility to reissue or replace a permit, to reinstate bonus points or to refund any fees, except under specific circumstances, such as activation of military or emergency personnel, as stated in R12-4-107(L).”

Since the draw is not scheduled to occur until after July 14, the Department has time to assess and gather more information. The earliest hunt starts August 19 for archery pronghorn and September 2 for general. Elk starts September 19, turkey starts in September, and most of the deer hunts are in October.

The Commission asked questions and discussed the statistics with Mr. Wakeling.

Commissioner Harris pointed out that nearly 85% of Unit 1 was either not burned or the burn severity was low or extremely low.

Commissioner Husted stated that he was concerned about access issues.

Jim Paxon, Information Branch Chief, briefed the Commission on potential road closures and access issues that may be imposed by the Forest Service. The Forest Service has a preliminary fire severity map and once they finalize that they will begin to examine watersheds and potential impacts from high water flows. The earliest that the Forest Service may begin to talk about closures could possibly be in about two weeks.

Public Comment

Gerry Perry, retired Game and Fish employee and representing himself, called in from Region V: Has an elk tag for Unit 27; would rather use his tag and not worry about what solutions to the fire situation he will come up with; the economic impact to the community should be considered; those with tags should go on their hunts and do what they do.

George Reiners, representing himself: Agreed with Gerry Perry’s comments; no changes should be made to the hunts; the Commission should continue to do as they have done in the past.

Steve Clark, Arizona Elk Society: The public needs to see the information that the Department has provided to the Commission; it is positive information and not as devastating as the news media portrays it; access is his biggest concern; does not see any reason to refund tags.

Commissioner Freeman stated that what he wanted was to explore the idea of a possible option for a hunter with a tag in the burn area to surrender his tag and regain his bonus points. He did not want to discourage people from going but wanted to give the hunter a choice.

Steve Clark stated that he would be fine with that and that he didn’t believe it would be a very high percentage of hunters that would turn in their tags.

George Reiners commented that he believed the Commission would be opening a can of worms if they made any changes, and questioned where the Commission would draw the line in the future if they made any changes now.

Commissioner Mansell commented that he believed that most of those hunters with tags will want to go on their hunts and that it will be because of access issues if they don't go, so the Commission should prepare to have something in place.

Chairman Woodhouse stated that the Commission will not know about any access issues for a couple of weeks, so if it turns out that there are access issues, the Commission can quickly call a telephonic meeting to discuss and take action if needed.

Commissioner Husted stated that the Commission needed to look at their legal options, listen to the public, and then do the right thing. If a person waited 19 years and now his hunting hole is burnt over, that person should have the option of turning in his tag and getting his bonus points back. That would not be a major impact.

Public Comment

Joe Grech, representing himself: Has a Unit 1 archery tag and waited about 10 years to get it; the number of tags were increased this year and now with less land available there will be more hunters on less land; he would give up his tag in a heart-beat if he could get his bonus points back.

Pete Cimellaro, representing himself: Appreciates the Commission having this discussion; would like to see a policy in place that deals with issues like this so that it will be consistent in the future; would like to see the Commission develop an option for bonus point restoration in situations like this.

Chairman Woodhouse pointed out that a person who turns in his tag and gets his bonus points back (should the Commission develop that option), that person could possibly then wait again for many more years to draw that favored trophy hunt tag. So even if the Commission gives a person that option, it will be a tough choice.

The Commission went into Executive Session for legal counsel.

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Executive Session

The Commission voted to meet in Executive Session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03 (A)(3) and (4) for the purpose of discussion and consultation with legal counsel.

Motion: Husted moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION.

Vote: Unanimous

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4A. (continued) Discussion of options available to the Commission and Department for responding to the situations of hunters who are drawn for Game Management Units affected by the 2011 wildfires.

Presenter: Brian F. Wakeling, Game Branch Chief.

Chairman Woodhouse stated that the Commission has asked the Department to keep a close watch on these fires and all the fires in Arizona, and if the need arises or if the Department is notified of greatly limited access by the Forest Service, the Commission will call an immediate telephonic meeting and figure out what legal options that they may or may not put into play.

Commissioner Husted stated that the Commission has asked the Department to put all the available information together including this presentation on the Department's website so people can make informed decisions.

Public Comment

Dan Lange, representing himself: Has a Unit 1 archery tag; waited about 10 years to get it; other states have something in place to return tags and get bonus points back in the case of adverse life events.

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5. (continued) Consideration of Proposed Commission Orders 19, 20, and 24 for the 2011–2012 Hunting Season.

Presenter: Mike Rabe, Small Game Program Supervisor

Mr. Rabe presented the Commission with the Department's proposals for establishing seasons and season dates, bag and possession limits, and open-closed areas for Commission Order 19 (dove), Commission Order 20 (band-tailed pigeons), and Commission Order 24 (sandhill cranes). A Power Point presentation was provided that included historical information, graph comparisons, survey data, and maps. A detailed description of all proposals were provided to the Commission prior to this meeting for review and consideration and was also available for public review at all Department offices. Information provided included the following:

Commission Order 19 – Dove

The Fish and Wildlife Service estimates dove harvest in Arizona through the Harvest Information Program (HIP). The HIP program estimates hunter participation, success, and harvest by surveying a random sample of hunters who purchase an Arizona Migratory Game Bird Stamp. This survey has been in place since 1999. HIP data for 2010 is not yet available.

Mourning dove—HIP harvest data for the 2009 dove seasons indicated the number of hunters hunting mourning doves increased 9% from the 2008 season. Similarly, the number of days hunters spent in the field increased 11% in 2009. According to HIP, the total mourning dove harvest in 2009 was 784,400 birds, an increase of 8% over the previous year's harvest.

White-winged dove—HIP harvest data for the 2009 seasons indicate 124,500 white-winged doves were harvested, a 31% increase over 2008.

Dove call counts are conducted each year during the last week of May. Therefore, call counts for 2011 have been conducted but were not yet available. The 2010 call count index for mourning doves was 19.8, an increase from the 2009 call count of 17.6. White-winged call counts in 2010 declined compared to 2009 (23.6 and 27.9 respectively).

Mourning dove harvest management plan—In March 2008, the Pacific Flyway Council adopted an interim harvest strategy for mourning doves for implementation in 2009. This harvest strategy uses call counts, harvest estimates derived from HIP, harvest rate derived from banding, and Breeding Bird Survey data to calculate a trend for dove populations. The trend estimate is then used to assign harvest packages for mourning dove seasons. For this year, the trend indicates a moderate package mourning doves; this is no change from last year's season structure.

White-winged dove season framework change—In March 2011, the Pacific Flyway Council recommended a change in the white-winged dove season framework for Arizona. The previous framework allowed a maximum bag of 6 white-winged doves per day for the early season hunt. This new framework allows the white-winged bag to be considered as part of the aggregate in the 10 mourning dove bag limit. This allows hunters to bag 10 doves total, either 10 mourning doves, 10 white-winged doves, or an aggregate of the two species. This makes it easier for hunters to avoid an inadvertent over limit of white winged doves. Since white-winged doves are typically only available for harvest in the first week of the 15 day early season, the change is expected to have little effect on the harvest and sustainability of white-winged doves.

Eurasian collared doves—In 2008 through 2010, the Commission opened yearlong seasons on Eurasian collared doves with an unlimited bag. This year, the Department recommends keeping that same season structure. Because they are non-native, they are specifically excluded from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, so the Fish and Wildlife Service has no management oversight; management in Arizona therefore belongs entirely to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.

Changes in open areas for dove hunting—Due to recent legislation in Arizona, many areas previously closed to dove hunting will be open this year. The Department formed a team of employees to consider the implications of the legislation and assure that the opening of these areas benefit hunters, maintain public safety and minimize conflict with the public.

The Harvest strategy for mourning doves adopted by the Pacific Flyway Council, March, 2011 recommended a moderate framework for this year. The white-winged dove season bag limit is now tied to the mourning dove framework and applies to both species in an aggregate. The white-winged dove framework still differs in that it is only a 15 day season, September 1–15.

Harvest Strategy for mourning doves adopted by the Pacific Flyway council, March 2011:

State	Restricted Framework	Moderate Framework	Liberal Framework
Arizona California	60 days, the season may be split between two periods; September 1–15 and November 1–January 15; Bag and Possession limits of 8 and 16 respectively	60 days, the season may be split between two periods; September 1–15 and November 1–January 15; Bag and Possession limits of 10 and 20 respectively	60 days, the season may be split between two periods; September 1–15 and November 1–January 15; Bag and Possession limits of 12 and 24 respectively

Nevada Utah Idaho Oregon Washington	30 days, Bag and Possession limits of 8 and 16 respectively	30 days, Bag and Possession limits of 10 and 20 respectively	30 days, Bag and Possession limits of 12 and 24 respectively
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Season Structure Recommendation:

Other than the removal of the bag limit restriction on white-winged dove in the early season, the Department recommends no change to the season structure for mourning doves and white-winged doves over the 2010 recommendation. The 2011 recommendation is for a September season of 15 days from September 1–15 as per Federal Frameworks. The late season recommendation is for the season to be open from November 25, 2011 to January 8, 2012 for mourning doves only. This recommendation is the maximum number of days allowed under Federal Frameworks.

For the early season the Department recommends an aggregate bag of 10 mourning doves and white-winged doves, as per the revised Federal Frameworks. Recommended possession limits are 20 mourning doves or white-winged doves in the aggregate after opening day in the early season. For the late season, bag is recommended at 10 mourning doves per day and 20 in possession.

The dates for the Robbin's Butte junior's-only hunt are recommended for September 3–4, 2011. Within the area, shooting stations will be established to accommodate 2 junior hunters each. Should demand exceed supply, shooting stations will be assigned by a drawing at 4:45 a.m. at the Robbins Butte Wildlife Area headquarters. To facilitate hunt operation, hunters will be required to check in and out. Bag limits and shooting hours will be the same as for the general season. Personnel from the Hunter Education Program and Region VI will conduct the hunt.

The Department is recommending continuation of the extended falconry-only dove season initiated in 1991. Recommended falconry-only season dates are September 16 through November 1. This season recommendation includes the maximum number of hunt days available for falconry (47). Falconry is also a legal method of take during both the regular early and late dove seasons.

The Department recommends that Eurasian collared dove season to be open year long (September 1, 2011 through August 31, 2012) with an unlimited bag limit. Falconry will be a legal method of take and also open yearlong for Eurasian collared doves.

Commission Order 20 – Band-tailed Pigeon

In 1997, the Harvest Information Program (HIP) replaced Arizona's harvest survey protocol for band-tailed pigeon. Band-tailed pigeons have always been difficult to survey for both harvest and population information. The principle management difficulty with these birds is that few hunters hunt them, so harvest information is difficult to estimate since traditional surveys often miss the majority of band-tail pigeon hunters. In addition, band-tailed pigeon distribution is spotty and changes from year to year. Birds typically congregate where mast and other food sources are abundant, but those areas differ from year to year and may even change mid-summer.

Harvest information obtained from band-tailed pigeon hunters for the 1999–2009 seasons indicate Arizona has between 400 and 2,300 active hunters; 1,300 hunters were estimated in 2009. Wings examined from Arizona during the 2009 season (5 wings) showed that none of harvested band-tailed pigeons were juveniles. With only a sample of five wings however, those data should not be considered a viable estimate of band-tailed pigeon recruitment. HIP harvest estimates indicate variable harvest of band-tails over 2001–2009 (400, 1,000, 1,400, 1,400, 2,200, 500, 1,000, 1,300, and 2,300 respectively). Data from 2010 is not yet available.

Season Structure Recommendation:

The Federal Frameworks for band-tailed pigeons within the four-corner states allow for seasons of not more than 30 consecutive days between September 1 and November 30 with a bag and possession limit of 5 and 10, respectively.

The Department recommends that the season should be September 9–October 2, 2011 which allows for 4 weekends of hunting opportunity. The Commission approved eliminating zones for band-tailed pigeons last year when zones for mourning doves were eliminated. Bag and possession limits of 5 and 10, respectively, are recommended statewide.

Commission Order 24 – Sandhill Crane

The Sandhill cranes traditionally hunted in Arizona include cranes from both the Mid-Continent Population (M-CP) and Rocky Mountain Population (RMP). The RMP is comprised entirely of greater sandhills. M-CP cranes are primarily the lesser subspecies with some Canadian subspecies. The population of RMP cranes is smaller than the M-CP and can tolerate only light harvest; hence, the number of RMP cranes harvested drives the number of permits in Arizona and other Pacific Flyway states.

The Pacific Flyway Council approved an updated RMP plan in March 2007. The RMP Cooperative Flyway Management plan established population objectives, a survey to monitor recruitment, and harvest levels that are designed to maintain a stable abundance between 17,000–21,000 birds. The plan contains a formula for calculating allowable annual harvests to achieve population objectives. All sandhill crane hunters in the range of the RMP must obtain a state permit to hunt cranes. This provides the sampling frame for independent state harvest estimates and allows for assignment of harvest quotas by state. In many areas, harvest estimates are supplemented by mandatory check station reporting. The Federal Frameworks cite the management plans approved by both the Central and Pacific Flyway Councils.

In 2011, there will be check stations for M-CP or RMP sandhill cranes. Check stations for RMP cranes are mandated every 3 years; the next check station for RMP cranes will be in fall 2014. Of 164 birds checked in 2008, 24 were determined to be RMP cranes. Arizona's allocation of RMP cranes for 2010 was 129. Arizona remained well within the allocation last year. Since the inception of the hunt in 1981, Arizona has never exceeded its allocation for RMP cranes.

Arizona's allocation for 2011 is 118 RMP cranes. The current population estimate for RMP cranes is 21,064. This allocation is a reflection that RMP crane populations are slightly above the population objective (17,000–21,000) defined in the management plan for sandhill cranes of in the Pacific Flyway.

Arizona has conducted its own January survey of M-CP and RMP sandhill cranes since 1978 and that survey shows a steady increase in the numbers of cranes wintering in the state. In 1978, the Department counted 4,264 wintering cranes in Arizona. In the 2011 survey, 29,462 cranes were counted. Although this is a decline from last year's count of 40,499 cranes (the highest count on record), it is consistent with the average number of cranes that winter in Arizona. Wintering habitat in both White-Water Draw and Wilcox Playa and widespread corn production in the Sulfur Springs Valley is the primary reason Arizona winters so many sandhill cranes.

The Department increased the number of tags issued to hunters from 2 to 3 for the 2009 season. The reason for the increase was because so few RMP birds were being harvested each season. Increasing the bag per hunter is preferable over increasing the number of hunters in the field because almost all of the hunting opportunities within the allowable areas (30A, 30B, 31, and 32) are on private lands, and more hunters would likely create unacceptable landowner-hunter conflicts.

The increased bag did appear to increase the harvest of RMP cranes; in 2009 and 2010, Arizona hunters harvested 67 and 56 RMP cranes respectively. Although that is an increase over recent years, it is still well below Arizona's allowable allocation under the Management Plan for RMP cranes. The overall harvest of both RMP and M-CP cranes last year (309 out of 29,462) was 1% of the wintering population.

Season Structure Recommendation:

Lower Colorado River Valley (LCRV) Cranes – This year, the Department recommends no hunt for LCRV cranes. The count in 2011 was 2,415, dropping the three year average to 2,360 and below the 2,500 crane threshold for a hunt as defined in the management plan for LCRV cranes. Therefore a hunt for LCRV cranes is not possible under federal frameworks.

Mid-Continent and Rocky Mountain populations – The allowed Federal season dates and bag limits for the Mid-Continent and Rocky Mountain Populations of cranes in Arizona are as follows: The outside dates of the season must fall between September 1 and January 31 and not exceed 30 days. The bag limit may not exceed 3 per day or 9 per season.

The Department recommends four general 3-day hunts beginning on November 18, with 85 permits in each hunt. An archery hunt is recommended for November 11–13 and a junior's-only hunt is recommended for December 9–11. There will be at least one non-hunt day between each hunt. All hunters that successfully draw for cranes receive 3 tags. With the recommended season structure, we estimate total harvest will be between 300 to 400 cranes. The predicted removal of RMP birds is estimated at 60–90 birds.

Motion: Freeman moved and Husted seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE, SUBJECT TO FINAL FEDERAL FRAMEWORKS, COMMISSION ORDER 19: DOVE, COMMISSION ORDER 20: BAND-TAILED PIGEON, AND COMMISSION ORDER 24: SANDHILL CRANE, AS PRESENTED.

Vote: Unanimous

6. Call to the Public

There were no requests to speak to the Commission.

* * * * *

7. Approval of Minutes and Signing of Minutes.

Motion: Husted moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM APRIL 15-16, 2011, AND MAY 13, 2011.

Vote: Unanimous

The Commission signed the minutes following approval.

* * * * *

8. Director's and Chairman's Reports

Motion: Husted moved and Harris seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO DISPENSE WITH THE DIRECTOR, CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS.

Vote: Unanimous

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9. Commissioners Reports

No reports provided per Commission vote in agenda item #8.

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10. Future Agenda Items and Action Items

Future agenda items and action items from this meeting were not reviewed.

* * * * *

Motion: Harris moved and Freeman seconded THAT THE COMMISSION VOTE TO ADJOURN THIS MEETING.

Vote: Unanimous

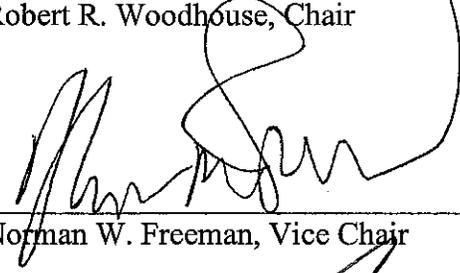
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Meeting adjourned for at 3:50 p.m.

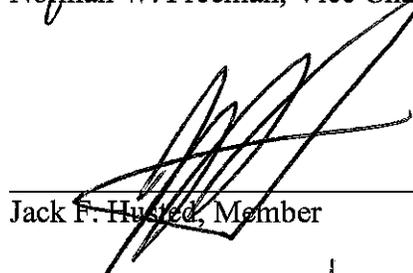
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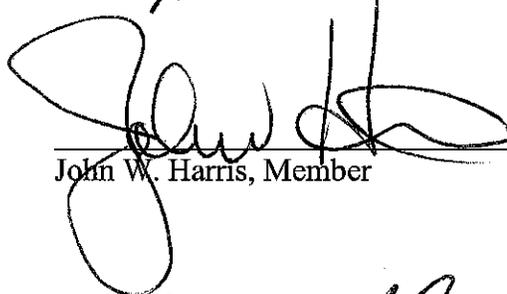
Robert R. Woodhouse, Chair



Norman W. Freeman, Vice Chair



Jack F. Husted, Member

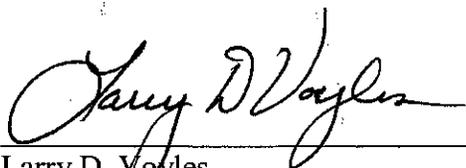


John W. Harris, Member



Robert E. Mansell, Member

ATTEST:



Larry D. Voyles
Secretary and Director

Game and Fish Litigation Report
Presented at the Commission Meeting
June 24, 2011

The Assistant Attorneys General for the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and the Arizona Game and Fish Department are representing these agencies in the following matters in litigation. This report does not include claims and lawsuits for damages against these agencies in which the agencies are represented by Assistant Attorneys General in the Liability Defense Section of the Attorney General's Office.

1. *Wilderness Watch, Inc. et al. v. United States Fish and Wildlife Service et al., CV01185-MHM.* Plaintiffs filed suit on June 15, 2007, challenging the decision of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ("FWS") to redevelop two water structures on the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge. The water structures provide supplemental water to wildlife populations that have suffered due to persistent drought. Plaintiffs allege that these water developments violate the National Environmental Policy Act because the FWS did not first determine the environmental impact of these projects. Plaintiffs also allege that such permanent structures are prohibited by the Wilderness Act. Plaintiffs seek declaratory and injunctive relief. They are asking the court to find that the FWS violated the law and to order the FWS to remove the structures.

The Commission has voted to file an application with the court to intervene on behalf of the FWS. Any court order finding that the FWS violated federal law will impair the Commission's ability to restore the wildlife populations in the refuge and in other wilderness areas in Arizona. The Attorney General's Office anticipates that a motion to intervene will be filed by August 15th.

On August 7, 2007, the State filed its Motion to Intervene. Plaintiffs, in response to the State's motion, did not object to the State's permissive intervention, so long as the court imposes restrictions on the State's participation, such as page limits, requiring the State to file joint briefs with the other intervenors, and prohibiting the State from duplicating arguments made by the federal defendants. On August 29, 2007, the State filed a reply in support of its Motion to Intervene and opposed any restrictions on the State's intervention.

On August 20, 2007, the State also filed a response to plaintiffs' Motion for Temporary Restraining Order.

On August 30, 2007, the federal defendants filed an answer to plaintiffs First Amended Complaint.

The court has issued a scheduling order for the parties to file motions for summary judgment. The plaintiffs' motion is due December 14, 2007; the defendants' cross-motion and response is due February 1, 2008; plaintiffs' response/reply is due February 29, 2008 and defendants' reply is due March 14, 2008.

Plaintiffs have withdrawn their motion for a temporary restraining order so the status quo will remain until the court rules on the motions for summary judgment.

As for the motions to intervene filed by the State of Arizona and various conservation organizations, the court has indicated it will not likely rule on these motions prior to the time the

parties file their motions for summary judgment. The court, however, granted permission to the applicants for intervention to file motions for summary judgment. Also, the plaintiffs stated on the record that they have no objection to the State of Arizona intervening in the case.

On February 1, 2008, the State of Arizona, the federal defendants and conservation groups filed separate cross motions for summary judgment and responses to the plaintiffs' summary judgment motion.

On February 29, 2008, the plaintiffs filed a response to the cross motions for summary judgment. Defendants have until March 14, 2008, to file replies.

On March 4, 2008, the court granted the motions to intervene by the State of Arizona and the conservation groups.

On March 14, 2008, the State of Arizona and the other defendants filed replies to the plaintiffs' cross motion for summary judgment.

On April 2, 2008, the organization Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility ("PEER") filed a motion for leave to file an amicus curie brief in support of the plaintiffs' cross motion for summary judgment. At the same time, PEER lodged its amicus brief with the court clerk. Each defendant has filed a response opposing PEER's motion for leave. Not only is the motion untimely, the brief that PEER has lodged contains many additional factual assertions not included in the administrative record. This attempt to supplement the administrative record with new information violates the established law in this area.

The parties filed supplemental briefs on June 3, 2008, addressing the issue whether the Wilderness Act or the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act controls in this case. Oral argument on the cross motions for summary judgment took place on June 12, 2008. The court has taken the motions under advisement.

The court issued an order on September 5, 2008, denying the plaintiffs' cross motion for summary judgment and granting the defendants' and interveners' cross motions for summary judgment. Judgment in favor of the defendants was entered on September 11, 2008.

The plaintiffs filed a notice of appeal on October 29, 2008. The court entered a time schedule order on November 4, 2008. The plaintiffs (now appellants) filed an opening brief on February 13, 2009. The defendants and intervenors filed motions for thirty day extensions to file responsive briefs. The court granted the motions and extended the date to file the briefs to April 15, 2009.

The court issued an order on April 27, 2009, granting the plaintiffs an additional 21 days from the date of the order to file a reply brief. The reply is now due on May 18, 2009.

The Court of Appeals held oral argument on December 10, 2009 and has taken the case under advisement.

The Court of Appeals issued an opinion on December 21, 2010. The Court held that wildlife conservation, and the conservation of bighorn sheep in particular, is a purpose of the Kofa Wilderness Area. The Court, however, found that the Service did not sufficiently explain

that redeveloping two water structures in the wilderness area was necessary to restore the bighorn sheep population. The Court expected the Service to evaluate alternative actions to determine whether these alternatives would increase the sheep population without the additional water. The court remanded the case back to the district court for a decision on whether to allow the Service to supplement its decision.

The Safari Club International (intervener) filed a petition for rehearing en banc. On March 1, 2011, the Ninth Circuit issued an order denying the petition. The Ninth Circuit has returned the case to the District Court for further action and Judge Bolton has been assigned the case.

The Court held a status conference on May 9, 2011, to determine how to proceed with the case. The plaintiffs and the federal defendants advised the court that they are in preliminary settlement discussions. The court will allow the parties sixty days to settle the case. If the parties do not report a settlement by July 8, 2008, the court will set a briefing schedule on what remedy the court should order.

2. *Anderson v. Arizona Game and Fish Department, et al.*, 2 CA-CV 2010-0098
Plaintiff Ralph Anderson seeks judicial review of the Commission's June 27, 2008 action revoking his licenses to take wildlife for ten years for taking big game in excess of bag limit (bull elk). Anderson had previously had his hunting privileges revoked for five years for taking a Gould's turkey during closed season. On March 8, 2010 the Pinal County Superior Court affirmed the Commission's decision. Anderson appealed to the Arizona Court of Appeals. The Court of Appeals, in a decision filed November 8, 2010, reversed in part and affirmed in part. The Court held that A.R.S. §17-340(B) does not grant the Commission authority to impose consecutive sanctions on offenders for repeat offenses. The Court affirmed the Commission's power to impose additional sanctions under A.R.S. §17-340(B)(2) while a person is serving a current term of revocation and to revoke or suspend the license of a person whose license has already been revoked based on a conviction of another covered Title 17 offense. Anderson filed a petition for review to the Arizona Supreme Court seeking review of the Court of Appeal's ruling that the Commission can further sanction a person whose hunting licenses have already been revoked. The Supreme Court has denied review and the case will be remanded to the Commission for a new hearing for the purpose of imposing a non-consecutive term of revocation (or other sanction as the Commission determines) for the bull elk violation.

3. *Mojave Valley Shooting Range Appeal.* The Hualapai and Fort Mojave Indian Tribes ("Appellants") filed an administrative appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals ("IBLA") on March 15, 2010. The appeal seeks review of the BLM's Decision Record to transfer to AGFD 315 acres of public land in the Mojave Valley for construction and operation of a shooting range. The Appellants allege that the Decision Record violates the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"), the National Historic Preservation Act ("NHPA"), and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act ("NAGPRA").

The Appellants served their Statement of Reasons on the Department on April 16, 2010. On April 30, 2010, AGFD filed a Motion to Intervene in support of the BLM's decision. The Department's Answer to the Appellants' Statement of Reasons is due on May 17, 2010.

The IBLA granted the Department's motion to intervene and extended the time for the Department to file an answer to the appellants' statement of reasons. On June 15, 2010, the

Department filed its response brief to the appellants' statement of reasons.

The IBLA issued an opinion on December 7, 2010, affirming the BLM's decision to transfer land to the Department for use as a shooting range. The IBLA found that the BLM did not violate NEPA or the National Historic Preservation Act.

4. *Center for Biological Diversity v. U.S. Bureau of Land Management et al.* CV-09-8011-PCT-PGR; *The Wilderness Society et al. v. U.S. Bureau of Land Management et al.* CV-09-8010-PCT-PGR. On May 9, 2008, Records of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plans for the Arizona Strip, Vermillion Cliffs National Monument and portions of the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument were released to provide guidance for BLM-administered lands in northern Arizona. In *Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) v. U.S. Bureau of Land Management*, No. CV 09-8011-PCT-PGR (US Dist. Ct. AZ), plaintiff CBD challenges the Plans, alleging that BLM and FWS have failed to comply with the NEPA, FLPMA, and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by refusing to incorporate actions necessary to protect public land and endangered and threatened species from adverse impacts of excessive off-road vehicle use, livestock grazing, and the use of lead ammunition. *The Wilderness Society et al. v. BLM, et al.* No. CV 09-8010-PCT-PGR (US Dist. Ct. AZ) also challenges the Plans by alleging violations of the NEPA, FLPMA, NHPA and presidential proclamations for the Vermillion Cliffs and Grand Canyon-Parashant Plans.

The National Rifle Association is an intervener. AGFD filed an amicus brief in the CBD case, which argued that BLM was not legally obligated to analyze the effects of lead ammunition on California condors in the BLM strip district, as the manner and methods of hunting are vested exclusively with the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.

CBD seeks a court order setting aside all Plans as arbitrary and capricious. The Wilderness Society seeks the same result, but only for the Vermillion Cliffs and Grand Canyon-Parashant Plans. Both plaintiffs request a remand to BLM for further proceedings. If the Court finds BLM's actions arbitrary or capricious, the Court will then conduct the "remedy" phase of the case, where the plaintiffs may seek injunctions against motorized use of roads or the use of lead ammunition during the period of time that BLM is revising its RMPs in accordance with the Court's ruling. **The matter will be calendared for oral argument in September.**

5. *Lorta v. Arizona Game and Fish Commission et al.*, CV-11-134. Plaintiffs filed an action on February 15, 2011, seeking judicial review of the Commission's license revocation and civil assessment decisions. The case was filed in Santa Cruz County Superior Court. The Commission has until March 16, 2011 to file a responsive pleading. On March 15, 2011, we filed a motion to dismiss on the basis the court lacks subject matter jurisdiction over the civil assessment order and the license revocation decision is moot because the underlying conviction was set aside.

The plaintiffs filed a response to the motion to dismiss on April 11, 2011, and also filed a motion for summary judgment. On April 21, 2011, we filed a reply in support of the motion to dismiss and a motion to preclude on the grounds that the plaintiffs' response was untimely and the Arizona Rules of Civil Procedure do not permit a motion for summary judgment prior to the filing of an answer. **The Court scheduled an oral argument hearing on the motion to dismiss for June 21, 2011.**

6. *Reed v. Arizona Game and Fish Department and Commission, C20111354.* The plaintiffs filed an action on March 3, 2011, seeking judicial review of the Commission's license revocation and civil assessment decisions. The case was filed in Pima County Superior Court. We agreed to waive service of process, and in so doing, we have sixty days to respond to the complaint.

On May 6, 2011, we filed a partial motion to dismiss the civil assessment claims and a motion to enlarge the time to file an answer. **The Reeds filed a response on May 19, 2011 and we filed a reply in support of the motion to dismiss on May 27, 2011. The Court scheduled an oral argument hearing for July 5, 2011.**

Lands Update
For the Arizona Game and Fish Commission
June 17, 2011
Phoenix, Arizona

FOREST SERVICE LAND AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Coconino National Forest

The Forest Wildlife Biologist met with the Department and US Fish and Wildlife Service to begin identification of Management Indicator Species that will be used for plan analysis. We continue to advocate for motorized retrieval of elk in all Game Management Units within the Forest's Travel Management Plan. The Forest expects to release its decision in the coming months.

Kaibab National Forest

The Department met with the Forest to discuss their efforts of conducting a wildlife viability analysis for the 66 forest planning species. This analysis is part of the wildlife specialist report that will feed into the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process currently under way. Forest planning species are those that the Forest will pay special attention to as the Plan gets implemented, and the Department was heavily involved in their selection. The viability analysis takes a habitat approach to looking at forest planning species needs that allow them to persist and expand.

In addition, the Department is currently reviewing a draft Management Indicator Species (MIS) report from the Forest. Under the 1982 rule, MIS Species must be designated and are selected because their population changes are believed to indicate the effects of management. The MIS species selected by the Kaibab are those that will primarily indicate management effectiveness as it relates to what the Forest has called their key needs for change. These key needs for change for the Kaibab are moving forest structure toward reference conditions and restoring historic fire, protecting and regenerating aspen, protecting seeps, springs, ephemeral wetlands, and North Canyon Creek, and restoring grasslands. The MIS species selected to indicate how these key needs for change are being managed are Grace's warbler (mature trees in fire adapted ecosystems), western bluebird (understory development in fire adapted ecosystems), ruby crowned kinglet (mixed conifer component of fire adapted ecosystems), and pronghorn (restored grasslands).

The Department commented on the North Kaibab Ranger District (NKR) Travel Management Routes (TMR) at the end of May. As it relates to Motorized Big Game Retrieval (MBGR) the NKR's proposed action was to allow retrieval of elk and bison, but not deer. The Department was consistent with recommendations for other forests and asked that MBGR be allowed for all big game species (especially deer) because of the importance of meeting management objectives, as well as continued success of the voluntary non-lead ammunition program. Barring appeals, the forest is hopeful that a decision will be made by the end of their fiscal year.

Prescott National Forest

Department personnel recently reviewed and provided comments on Draft 4 of Prescott National Forest's Forest Plan Revision Environmental Assessment (EA). Cooperation and coordination with the Forest has been positive, and Department personnel are pleased with the progress that has been made in this effort.

Tonto National Forest (TNF)

The Department continues to work through the travel management planning process and we are currently providing comment on the latest revision of the route map that is yet to be released to the public. The biological assessment for the travel management plan is still under development. The Department anticipates the draft environmental assessment to be out this summer and will continue to provide comment. The Department remains concerned with loss of access, closures of OHV areas, loss of designated camping sites, need for increased enforcement and an increase in overall routes.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Four Forests Restoration Initiative (4FRI)

The first Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for 4FRI covers approximately 750,000 acres of both the Coconino and Kaibab National Forests primarily in the landscape south and west of Flagstaff and Williams. The proposed action includes plans for forest restoration, reintroduction of fire, decommissioning of roads (likely those identified in Travel Management Rule), as well as restoration of dry ephemeral channels, springs, and grasslands. The Department recently attended a USFS public meeting to scope a revised version of the Proposed Action (PA), which should be released sometime in the next two months. The revised PA has significantly greater heterogeneity in treatment approaches compared to the earlier version of the PA, which is a good thing for wildlife habitat diversity across the landscape. Greater specificity with regard to post-treatment conditions of the ponderosa pine forest is expected to be included in the Draft EIS, which should be released this fall. The USFS has also strengthened its language with regard to protection of old trees, but will not include a diameter cap as old presettlement trees come in all sizes. The Department agrees with this approach. With regard to the small-diameter wood products industry contracts, the USFS expects to release their request for proposals anytime now. Once the RFP is released there will be a 2-month review period with prospective bidders. The contract will be on 300,000 acres for 10 years.

Kaibab National Forest

The Forest is currently scoping the Bill Williams Mountain Restoration Project. The proposed action aims to improve forested conditions on approximately 15,200 acres on and around Bill Williams Mountain near Williams. The Department is requesting active engagement in this project as we expect this project to be controversial and have broad wildlife implications. The Department has done a field review of the area and will be meeting with the Forest at the end of June to discuss concerns related to fuels and restoration techniques and the potential to remove large, old trees that have high wildlife value. The Department does however, support appropriate treatments on Bill Williams as the fuel loads are quite high and without treatment non-natural fire is likely.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM)

AZ Strip Field Office

The Department has engaged in two workshops for a newly forming group called the Parashaunt Partnership. Members of the potential collaborative include state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, tribes, ranchers, local sportsmen's groups, universities, and the interested public. The group is forming to help address management concerns in the over one million acre monument. Some of these management concerns include degraded Mojave Desert habitat, range conditions in the pinyon and juniper, and ponderosa pine restoration at Mt. Trumbull. The group will have another opportunity to meet in September or October to discuss Mojave Desert issues specifically.

The Department commented on an Environmental Assessment (EA) that aims to protect intact Mojave Desert habitat in tortoise habitat. The goal of the EA is to create linear chemical fuel breaks using Plateau herbicide to kill cheatgrass. Cheatgrass has drastically altered fire regimes in the Mojave Desert and its continued spread will jeopardize the continued existence of native desert habitat which did not evolve with fire. The Department is supportive of this EA.

Kingman District

Route Evaluation in support of BLM's Travel Management Planning effort will take place June 13th thru June 17th for the Poachie Mountain planning unit located in GMU 16A. Department personnel will participate in the evaluation.

Department personnel continue to participate in the Kingman BLM's spring forage monitoring efforts on an assortment of allotments that will be undergoing rangeland health evaluations in the near future.

Phoenix Office

The North Lake Pleasant Area Recreational Management Plan has been initiated with public meetings that began in May and will continue in June to communicate the proposal and gain feedback. The Department remains a part of the Partner's group associated with the planning efforts for Lake Pleasant and has provided input throughout the process. The Department is attending the meeting scheduled for June.

The Department met with the Field Office for a quarterly meeting for discussion on National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance and coordinated projects to include the Lower Sonoran/Sonoran Desert National Monument RMP status, 2Y water catchment, Sonoran Valley Parkway, Hidden Waters Parkway, Yuma Parkway, Wickenburg Trail and Transportation Study, I-17 to Cordes, CAP projects, Agua Fria National Monument water rights, weed EA, and Buckeye Hills MOU/CRMP process.

Yuma Field Office

The Yuma Field Office is working with the Department and others to develop and implement a Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation Plan for the human-caused 2011 Laguna Fire, which started on 5-18-11 and was contained on 5-24-11. The fire was located west of the Colorado River and east of SR-24 and was pushed by high winds across the Colorado River and into Arizona and onto public lands. The fire later burned through Betty's Kitchen recreation site, Pratt nursery, Mittry south restoration and into the Mittry Lake Wildlife Area (approximately 240 acres). Rehabilitation of the burned area will include erosion control and bank stabilization,

removing hazard trees, clearing of the weeds, seeding and planting native species, replacing the lost structures, improving the damaged historic trail, and monitoring the effects of the project.

BLM NATIONAL MONUMENTS & CONSERVATION AREAS

Lower Sonoran and Sonoran Desert National Monument

The Department will be reviewing the proposed Resource Management Plan (Plan) and Environmental Impact Statement once released. The Plan had cleared the Washington review and was expected to be released to the public in May. The Phoenix Field Office notified the Department that BLM's new Wild lands Policy had to be implemented on the Monument which had sent the plan back to the Field Office for further review. However, on June 1, 2011 in memo to BLM Director, Bob Abbey, Secretary Salazar confirmed that the BLM will not designate any lands as "Wild Lands." The Department will coordinate with the Phoenix Office to find out when they anticipate the Plan and EIS will now be released.

GENERAL UPDATES

Central Arizona Grasslands Strategy

I-17 Project

At a recent Central Arizona Grasslands Strategy Implementation Team Meeting the Department presented a telemetry project for I-17 being proposed for the second time. This project would provide data for potential corridor identification for mitigation on I-17, movement/habitat use information to inform future GMU 21 treatment areas. The assistance grant with BLM would provide 35K toward the project, with potential for more funds as the project is also linked to a master's thesis. An HPC will also be proposed in conjunction with this project to broaden the potential funding base and gain buy-in from interest groups.

Spider Ranch (Smith Mesa Habitat Improvement Project)

At a recent Central Arizona Grasslands Strategy Implementation Team Meeting, the Department reviewed the Smith Mesa Resource Advisory Council (RAC) application. Following that meeting, the Department submitted a Yavapai County RAC Grant application to fund the Smith Mesa Habitat Improvement project, located on the Spider Ranch. Additionally, Department personnel met with the ranch manager of the Spider Ranch and a representative the USFWS, "Partners" program to assess brush management project areas on two ranch locations and determine "Partners" involvement in funding these habitat projects. Partner's agreed to fund this project with a proviso that they be allowed to look for less costly ground implementation.

Yolo Ranch Grassland Improvement Project

The Department has completed contract negotiations with the Yolo Ranch ownership and the contractors to expedite the second phase of work on the grassland restoration project. Contractors began work and have spotted pronghorn moving through recently treated juniper cuts.

Mud Tank Wash Grassland Enhancement Project

The Department has coordinated with the owners of the Bar Triangle and Barney York Ranches to complete the amendments to the EA and expedite on the ground activities associated with the Mud Tank Wash Grassland Enhancement project. The Habitat Stewardship Agreements for the

Mud Tank and Ash Creek projects have been completed, signatures of the respective landowners have been secured, and juniper treatments have been initiated on Bar Triangle portion of the Mud Tank project.

City of San Luis

The Department is working with the City of San Luis on the City's 2010 General Plan Update. The General Plan is a policy document and guide providing comprehensive direction for the growth and development of the City of San Luis. The plan is intended to be both long range and visionary and to provide guidance for actions to be taken in the next ten to twenty years. The Department is working to help incorporate wildlife-friendly development guidelines that consider wildlife populations and linkages/corridors, native habitats, open space, and wildlife-oriented recreation.

Davis-Kingman 69 kV TAP Draft EA

Personnel participated in an interagency meeting attended by both BLM and the project proponent. At the meeting, and in written form, the Department reviewed and provided comments on the Davis-Kingman 69 kV TAP Draft EA. Because this transmission line replacement will cross the Black Mountains in Northern GMU 15D, and will have impacts to desert bighorn sheep, project guidance included avoidance of construction activities during lambing season and the December hunt. Both BLM and the project proponent were supportive of these and other recommendations put forth by the Department.

Horseshoe 2 Fire

The Horseshoe 2 fire has burned the majority of the Chiricahua Mountains; estimated at around 184,198 acres. The human caused fire started on May 8th and as of June 17th was 65% contained with full containment expected by June 22nd. Department staff have only viewed a limited part of the damage but expect significant threats to habitat immediately following the fire. Monsoon rains could bring extensive ash and sediment flows into all canyons coming off the mountain, which could have significant effects on Yaqui river system fishes which occur nowhere else in the U.S. Among other effects the Department is concerned about human wildlife conflicts resulting from loss of habitat on the mountain and increased wildlife movement into the surrounding towns and ranches. Numerous landowners and livestock operators have expressed concern for the impact on their livestock operations from the loss of forage on burned allotments. With Forest allotments unavailable, the Department anticipates that State Trust Lands may be stocked beyond capacity, resulting in further impacts to wildlife habitat in the low country. The Department will work with the Forest and the Land Department to develop strategies to minimize further losses to wildlife habitat and mitigate the losses that have already occurred. Revegetation of burned areas is of primary concern to decrease the immediate loss of soil.

Murphy Complex Fire

The Murphy Complex fire had burned 68,078 acres of Madrean Oak Woodland and Semi-desert Grassland in the Atascosa and Pajarito Mountains in Unit 36B west of Interstate 19. Pena Blanca Lake suffered some damage to restroom facilities. Department personnel have not been able to evaluate most of the burned area. The US Forest Service announced June 15th, the fire was 100% contained. This area includes significant biological resources including Sycamore Canyon which is considered one of the most biologically significant sites in the U.S. due to unique species that occur here.

Proposed Rosemont Copper Project

The Coronado National Forest (Forest) released a Deliberative Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Rosemont Copper Mine to Cooperating agencies on June 1. This internal working draft was supposed to be for Cooperating agencies only but was released to the public under a Freedom of Information Act request.

The Cooperating agencies were asked to provide comments on the draft in 30 days or 19 business days. The Department has asked the Forest for an extension of the 30 day review period. The Department has made assignments to staff to review the DEIS for technical inaccuracies, omissions and data gaps, and general problems with the DEIS for this initial review period. The Forest intends to release the DEIS for public review in August of 2011.

Immediately following the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register of the DEIS, the clock will start on a public comment period of 90 days. Public meetings will be held during the comment period to share information and receive written and oral comments. Public opportunities to comment on the DEIS will be noticed through the Federal Register, the media, and the project website. The Department will provide additional comments on the DEIS during the 90 day public comment period.

Renewable Energy Development

Wind

Yavapai Wind Energy Project

Following participation in a kickoff meeting for the Yavapai Wind project, Department personnel attended a public meeting in Seligman on May 24th for the proposed Yavapai Wind Energy Facility on Yavapai Ranch located in northern GMU 17A. In attendance were the project proponent (NextEra Energy), their biological consultant (SWCA), the Ranch owner (Fred Ruskin) and about 40 members of the public. The meeting utilized display boards to introduce the conceptual plan to the public, apparently for the purpose of garnering public support for the project. In a separate conversation with SWCA, Department personnel posed the question, "Will public access be maintained for recreational and hunting purposes?" In response, the SWCA consultant indicated that it was the intention of the project proponent and the Rancher to maintain the same type and degree of access that is currently available on the Ranch.

Perrin Ranch

The Department submitted comments for the Perrin Ranch Environmental Assessment (EA). Due to the early, active engagement of the Department and the USFWS on wildlife issues, comments were minor in scope. As part of the Avian and Bat Protection Plan, a wildlife technical advisory committee will be convened after the NEPA compliance decision is made. The Department will be actively engaged in this process to assure that adaptive management can help avoid or minimize impacts to wildlife.

Solar

Hyder Solar Energy 1 & 2

Maricopa County is considering Revised Minor Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPA) for the Hyder Solar Projects 1 and 2. The applicant is requesting a CPA for the project site of 95.59 acres. The current zoning of the land is Rural-190. The Board of Supervisors may permit numerous Special Uses including solar utilities. Department personnel will attend a Technical Advisory Committee to discuss the application on June 21.

Harquahala Solar

Maricopa County is considering a Major Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) for the Harquahala Solar Project to allow for the development of photovoltaic solar renewable energy facilities in the Harquahala Valley. As part of this process, the applicant is requesting approval of a CPA converting 3,514 acres of private land from “Rural” to “Industrial.” Department personnel will attend a Technical Advisory Committee to discuss the application on June 21.

Sycamore Mesa - GMU 21

Completion of thinning for this fiscal budget year has occurred with a total of 367 acres treated in the \$85,000 budget for an average cost of \$232/acre. All treatments are within units on the Prescott National Forest (PNF). The PNF has completed follow-up pile burning on approximately 236 acres of the 367 total. Monahan Enterprises has completed the last 131 acres, which will most likely be burned next fall. Overall, 2,893 acres out of a proposed 5,654 will be treated representing 51% of the target acres for restoration work. The BLM has conducted juniper thinning and prescribed pile burning on lands south and adjacent to the current project area, further expanding the restoration work towards the common goal of reducing juniper densities within grassland and pronghorn movement corridors. The BLM will be providing a shapefile of their restoration work to incorporate in the overall strategy for the area. The Department completed site visits to monitor/inspect through photo point documentation and will be meeting with the PNF this week on planning for treatments.

Transportation

I-17 & I-40

The Department attended two Wildlife Technical Advisory committee meetings for the I-40 and the I-17 projects. These two freeways are expecting significant widening over the next 10 years. Transmitter data from elk in the project areas is helping to guide where wildlife crossings will occur. One of the main issues the Department continues to face is advocating for enough appropriate structures to facilitate wildlife both large and small.

Northern Parkway/Tonopah Parkway

The Northern Parkway study is partly a result of the Interstate 10/Hassayampa Valley Transportation Framework study. The Northern Parkway study area includes the planned Northern Parkway, an east-west corridor centered on the Northern Avenue section line, from the planned Tonopah Parkway (411th Avenue alignment) to the planned Turner Parkway (267th Avenue alignment). The Northern Parkway corridor within the project study area is approximately 18 miles long and two miles wide. The Department continues to participate in the technical review committee and has provided environmental overview for the study regarding connectivity and permeability, fragmentation, degradation, access, and invasive species.

North South Corridor Study

The purpose of the study is to provide a connection between US 60 and I-10 through identifying and evaluating routes. The Department has provided initial comments that identified connectivity and permeability, fragmentation, degradation, access, and invasive species concerns. The Department continues to participate in the stakeholder meetings and anticipates providing comments on the screening of corridors and alignment alternatives due out in summer. The next meeting, scheduled for early May and June, were canceled. The next scheduled meeting is in early July.

Phoenix to Tucson Rail Study

The purpose of the study is to provide an intercity rail connection between Phoenix and Tucson through identifying and evaluating potential routes. The Department has attended the kick-off meeting for the study and will be participating in the Corridor Support Team meetings. These meetings are being held as an opportunity for agencies and interested stakeholders to provide input about the objectives and methodologies for comparing alternatives. The focus of the June meeting will include the purpose and need, alternatives for consideration, evaluation of the alternatives. The overall study process will also be presented. The current schedule includes public involvement beginning in the fall.

Yuma Parkway

The Department is participating in the recently-formed technical review committee for the Yuma Parkway feasibility study and is providing environmental overview regarding connectivity and permeability, fragmentation, degradation, access, and invasive species. The Parkway study was also derived from the Interstate 10/Hassayampa Valley Transportation Framework study. The Yuma Parkway study area is generally centered on the Buckeye/Yuma Road section line, from ½ mile west of Salome Highway to ½ mile east of Palo Verde Road. The study area is approximately 13 miles long and two miles wide. The primary purpose of this feasibility study is to identify the optimum corridor alignment for long-term right-of-way protection by investigating, mapping, and analyzing corridor constraints and opportunities. Study emphasis is on corridor location rather than facility validation or design.

Vulture Mountains Recreation Plan

The Department is working with Maricopa County, the Bureau of Land Management, and others to establish a general framework of cooperation upon which a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) for the Vulture Mountain Cooperative Recreation Management Area (Vulture Mtn.-CRMA) will be developed. The County is currently working with stakeholders on the development and review of 4 alternatives to address the recreational uses and needs of the area; and to identify the management actions required to reach the desired outcomes of the parties, the public, and surrounding communities.

Wildlife Areas

Horseshoe Ranch

The Department initiated the kick-off meeting for the Horseshoe Ranch Coordinated Resource Management Plan with representatives from the Tonto NF, BLM and NRCS. The desired outcomes from the meeting included: defining the scope of the planning process, identify the affected agency needs, agree on the strategies to complete the CRMP, identify resource needs and set initial timelines for the process.

Wildlife Linkages/Corridors

Statewide coordination is continuing for the county workshops. Following internal review, the Department released a final report in early March detailing the results of the Coconino County wildlife linkage stakeholder workshops. This document will serve as the template for other county-specific linkage reports. Specific updates are below:

Yuma County Comprehensive Plan

The Department is working with Yuma County on the development of the revision for the Yuma County Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan evaluates and directs land use

development policies for the future economic growth and development within Yuma County. The Department is working to help incorporate wildlife-friendly development guidelines that consider wildlife populations and linkages/corridors, native habitats, open space, and wildlife-oriented recreation.

Young's Farm Proposal to Sever and Transfer Existing Water Right

Yavapai Land Holdings, LLC and Young Acres, Inc. bought Young's Farm near Dewey, Arizona from the Young family several years ago. In March 2011, the new owners filed an application with the Department of Water Resources to sever and transfer the existing water right historically used for irrigating the farm to a new municipal use on the formerly farmed land. The intent was to provide for an assured water supply for the future development of the farm as a housing development. On April 28, 2011, the Department filed a protest of the proposed sever and transfer application as allowed under state statute. The grounds for the protest to the sever and transfer application were as follows: Conflicts with a prior vested right (The Department recently acquired Horseshoe Ranch and its existing water rights from the Agua Fria River downstream from Young's Farm), Menace to public safety (lack of a drought conservation plan or back-up supply) and Against the interest and welfare of the public (the S&T identified more water than legally put to a beneficial use, established a dual filed right under both surface and groundwater statutes, and harm to riparian habitat and public natural resources). More recently, the current owners of Young's Farm have leased the land back to a local farmer thus placing the land back into production and as of May 6, 2011 the Arizona Department of Water Resources has suspended review of the application for the Sever and Transfer.