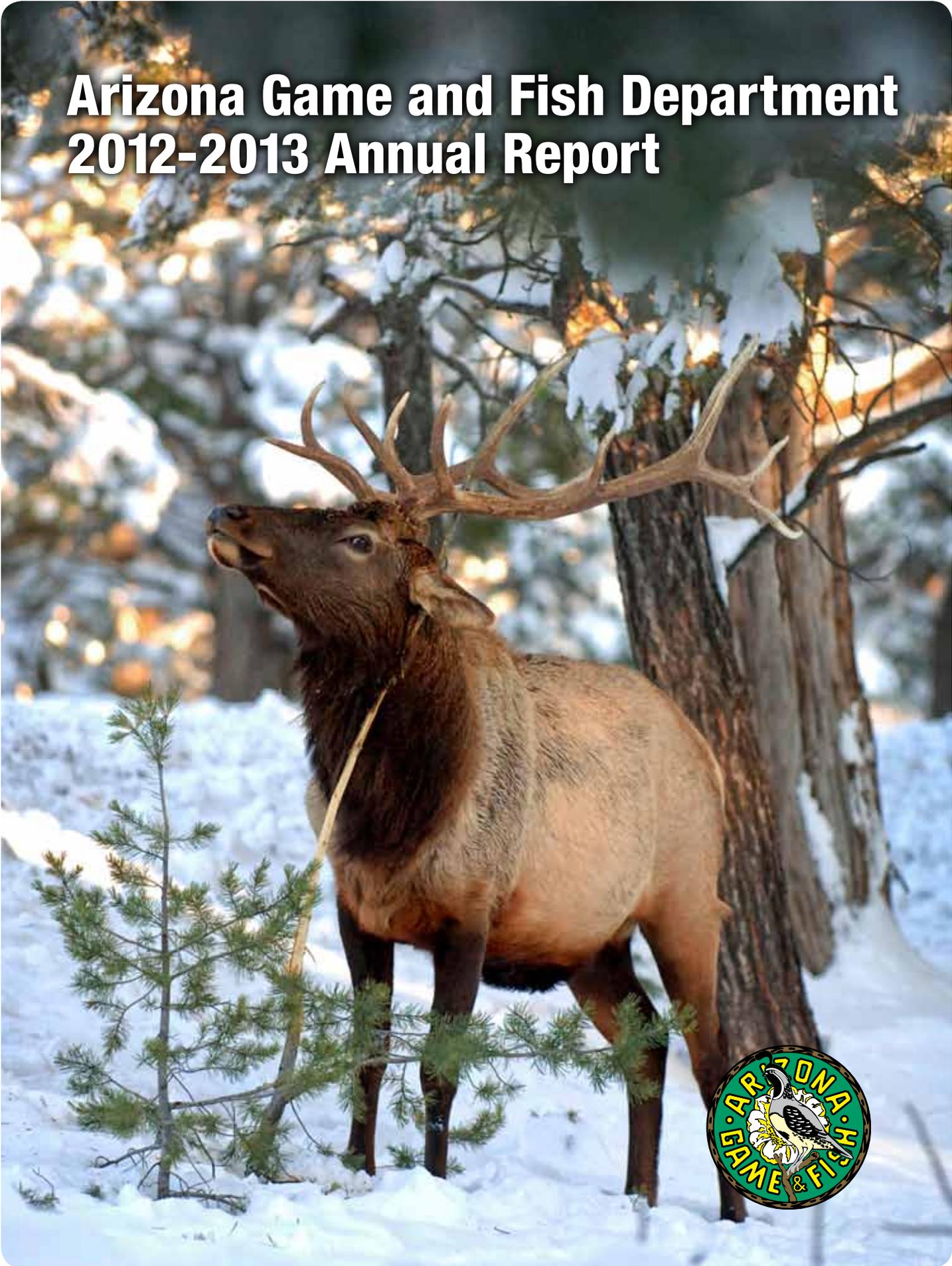


Arizona Game and Fish Department 2012-2013 Annual Report





Larry D. Voyles

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

One of the seven foundation tenets of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation states that “wildlife is an international resource.” Key actions and decisions affecting management of Arizona’s wildlife and outdoor recreational opportunities don’t occur just within our state. Forces are also at play from outside the state – at regional, national and international levels. Factors such as federal legislation, executive branch actions, court lawsuits, federal land management policies, decisions by neighboring state governments, and increasingly, international treaties, affect Arizona’s ability to chart our own course.

Clearly, it is imperative that the Arizona Game and Fish Department be actively engaged in these issues not just in Arizona, but also regionally and nationally, and at times, internationally, to represent the interests of Arizona and its citizens. And once again, we did just that over the past year. Our personnel continued to actively work at all levels with a variety of entities, including the federal government, state and local agencies, and conservation and recreation organizations across the country, to ensure that Arizona’s interests are represented at the table regarding issues that affect our state.

One example was the Department’s engagement in Mexican wolf conservation. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission and Department continue to actively participate in efforts to restore the Mexican wolf in Arizona, but under a guiding principle that management objectives must be biologically, economically and socially sustainable. When the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service initially scheduled public hearings on two proposed rules affecting Mexican wolf conservation, none of the hearings were initially scheduled in Arizona. The Arizona Game and Fish Department held three meetings across the state to explain the proposals to the public and provide information on how constituents could provide comments to the Service. Department engagement helped convince the Service to ultimately hold a public hearing in Arizona on this very important issue. As another example, the Department’s engagement with key stakeholders at the national level has so far helped maintained access to approximately 500,000 acres for recreational shooting on federal public lands close to Phoenix, that had been slated by decision for closure.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department, a leading proponent of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, represents Arizona’s best opportunity to influence wildlife and natural resource management policy at the federal level, and in so doing, to maintain Arizona’s management authorities within our borders. We are engaged in many other issues affecting our state, including federal travel management plans, endangered species conservation, critical habitat designations, wildlife translocations to restore populations, and more.

I invite you to read this year’s Annual Report. It discusses some of the issues above, but also provides a broad overview of representative accomplishments and activities from the past year. Another tenet of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation holds that all people have access to enjoy their wildlife. One significant achievement was the development and implementation of a new hunting and fishing license structure which took effect on Jan. 1, 2014. This new structure reduced the cost of a Youth (Junior) license from \$26.50 to \$5.00, so that more people than ever can hunt and fish in Arizona.

We look forward to another year of working with you, our constituents, to accomplish good things for our wildlife resources and our outdoor heritage. We couldn’t do it without your engagement and support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry D. Voyles". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Commission approves new license structure for 2014

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission in August approved a new hunting and fishing license structure that will bring significant benefits to hunters and anglers beginning in 2014. The structure has been simplified, reducing more than 40 license and stamp options down to six license options and a single state migratory bird stamp. Bundled privileges for the fishing license and hunt/fish combo license offer more value than the previous licenses. A new youth hunt/fish combo license will now cost only \$5 (as opposed to the previous \$26.50) and will be required for youth ages 10-17. The new licenses will be valid for one year from the date of purchase rather than just for the calendar year. Most license and tag fees will increase—the first price increase since 2007. The new license structure was approved by the Commission after a robust public input process that included a survey of hunters and anglers, more than 30 public meetings and 50 meetings with sportsmen's/conservation

groups, and public comment periods on license/fee concepts and on the draft license structure. Implementation of the new license structure and fees was made possible because of passage by the Arizona Legislature of Senate Bill 1223, which was signed into law by Governor Jan Brewer on May 7, 2013. The bill allows the Arizona Game and Fish Commission to set future license structure and fees (including all license types, permits, tags, stamps and watercraft registrations) directly through a streamlined, customer-focused process as opposed to the former complex and time-consuming legislative and regular rulemaking process.

Non-lead ammo program recognized at Senator McCain's condor summit

The Arizona Game and Fish Department participated in a summit hosted by Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) on Aug. 9, 2013. A diverse group of stakeholders gathered to discuss non-lead ammunition and the recovery efforts for endangered California condors. Lead poisoning is the leading cause of death in endangered condors and an obstacle to a



The Arizona Game and Fish Commission approved a new hunting and fishing license structure to take effect in 2014.

Arizona Game and Fish Department Director Larry Voyles addresses the condor summit hosted by U.S Senator John McCain.



self-sustaining population in Arizona and southern Utah. The Department's nine-year-old voluntary lead reduction program, which offers free non-lead ammunition to hunters drawn for hunts in the condor's core range and educates hunters on removing gut piles of their legally downed big game, was discussed as a successful alternative to a mandatory ban like California's. Other discussions centered on making non-lead ammunition available in more calibers, expanding the availability and supply, and making non-lead alternatives easier to identify in retail settings. In particular, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

(ATF) is reviewing current restrictions on some non-lead ammo calibers that are not permitted to be used for sporting purposes. Since condors were reintroduced into Arizona under a special provision of the Endangered Species Act – called the 10(j) Rule – that designates the population as experimental and not essential to the species' survival, a mandatory lead ammunition ban would restrict current hunting regulations in the experimental population area and be contrary to the agreements made with local communities at the time of the reintroduction. Organizations attending the summit included the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources; the ATF; Peregrine Fund; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Forest Service; National Park Service; National Shooting Sports Foundation; and wildlife conservation and hunting groups.

Tri-State Shooting Park has dedication ceremony

The Tri-State Shooting Park, serving residents in the Bullhead City and Mohave Valley area in northwestern Arizona, was dedicated in March. The range is currently open to the public, and when construction is complete it will feature a trap and skeet range, a 200-yard pistol and rifle shooting range, and a 50-yard pistol range.

The Tri-State Shooting Park was dedicated in March and serves residents in the Bullhead City and Mohave Valley area of northwestern Arizona.





Target archery was one of the many hands-on activities offered to visitors at the Outdoor Expo.

Tri-State Shooting Park replaces a range in Bullhead City that was closed in 1999 because of encroaching development. It supports hunter education programs, promotes safe hunting and shooting practices, and provides a safe shooting area. The range's dedication marked the culmination of long-term efforts by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission/Department and Tri-State Shooting Park, Inc., in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management and other stakeholders, to re-establish a public shooting range in the area.

Outdoor Expo draws 35,000 over weekend

The Arizona Game and Fish Department's 2013 Outdoor Expo drew 35,000 people over the March 23-24 weekend at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility in Phoenix. Sunday's attendance of 17,000 was a record for an Expo Sunday. In addition, 3,500 schoolchildren, teachers and chaperones attended the Expo Youth Day on Friday, March 22, meaning 38,500 people total attended over the three days. The Outdoor Expo is an annual event conducted by Game and Fish to give the public the chance to learn about wildlife-related and

outdoor recreation activities, including wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, archery, shooting sports, camping, off-highway vehicle recreation, and boating recreation. In addition to hands-on activities, more than 150 exhibitors attended, including sportsmen's and conservation organizations, government agencies, and commercial vendors of outdoor products and services.

AZGFD's national engagement benefits Arizona

Forces affecting conservation and recreation in Arizona are not confined within the state's borders. Many of those issues and decisions occur at a regional or national level. Through engagement with other state wildlife agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and the federal government, Arizona Game and Fish stays on the forefront of conservation issues to represent and protect Arizona's interests. For example, the Department leveraged relationships with other organizations to help convince the Interior Department to keep a half-million acres of the Sonoran Desert National Monument open to recreational shooting. Game and Fish was a

leading player in a summit hosted by Senator John McCain (see article in this Annual Report) to discuss non-lead ammunition and the recovery efforts of California Condors, showcasing the Department's nine-year voluntary lead reduction program as a model for other states. The Department regularly engages with the federal government to represent Arizona's interests on such issues as travel management, recreational access, and endangered species issues. Our law enforcement, aviation and wildlife professionals attend national conferences, workshops and training, and serve on AFWA and WAFWA committees affecting wildlife management and conservation decisions. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission reaffirmed its commitment that the Department will continue using travel resources wisely and acting as Arizona's most trusted, respected and credible source for wildlife conservation.

Wildlife officers perform wide array of duties

Arizona Game and Fish Department officers were actively engaged in a number of activities over the past year, including law enforcement,

wildlife management, information/education, habitat projects, and others. In the area of wildlife law enforcement, officers issued 834 citations and 180 written warnings for wildlife violations in fiscal year 2012-13. They conducted 56 special projects—including saturation patrols, night patrols, wildlife decoy operations and special investigations—to apprehend wildlife law violators. In the area of watercraft law enforcement, officers provided 8,156 hours of on-the-water boating enforcement patrol—accounting for approximately 25 percent of the time invested by the 13 agencies performing marine law enforcement duties in Arizona. They also accounted for more than 20 percent of all boating Operating Under the Influence (OUI) arrests and 20 percent of all boating citations issued in the state. In the area of off-highway vehicle (OHV) law enforcement, officers engaged extensively in education as well as enforcement efforts. In the area of OHV law enforcement, officers issued 509 citations and 180 written warnings. During OHV special project patrols, Department officers also provided 1,256 information and education contacts with OHV users.

Arizona Game and Fish officers assist the public and are engaged in a wide variety of law enforcement, wildlife management, information/education, and other activities.



The Adobe Mountain Wildlife Center celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2013.



Adobe Mountain Wildlife Center celebrates 30th anniversary

The Arizona Game and Fish Department's Adobe Mountain Wildlife Center, which opened in 1983 as the first state-run wildlife rehabilitation and education center, celebrated its 30th anniversary this year. While the center still continues to provide care to wild animals, it also focuses heavily on educating the public about Arizona's diverse native wildlife. Over the years it has provided wildlife triage, treatment and rehabilitation to more than 30,000 sick or injured animals and delivered wildlife education programs to millions of people at events and schools. An open house on Nov. 23-24, 2013, was attended by 1,700 visitors and provided the public a rare behind-the-scenes glimpse at the center. Visitors were able to view wildlife, learn from educational displays, make wildlife-related crafts, and meet wildlife experts. The center is operated by the Department, with help from the Adobe Mountain Wildlife Auxiliary, on a small budget from the Heritage Fund, a voter-passed initiative that provides for wildlife conservation and education through Arizona lottery ticket sales.

New law gives state discretion in enforcing federal Travel Management Rules

Governor Jan Brewer on June 19, 2013, signed House Bill 2551, regarding use, authority and enforcement for off-highway vehicles. The law clarifies state authority in how it will enforce federal Travel Management Rules for off-highway vehicle use on U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management lands. The bill permits Game and Fish officers to enforce laws related to habitat damage and other duties important to the Department's mission, and gives officers discretion in enforcing federal Travel Management Rules that are lower priority or that might impede achieving wildlife management objectives. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission voted in March to support HB 2551 provided that amended language was adopted addressing the Commission's concerns about unintended limitations on officers' ability to enforce resource damage laws or road closures for public safety purposes, such as during forest fires. Subsequent amendments addressed those concerns. The Commission has expressed longstanding concerns that the

new U.S. Forest Service Travel Management Rules in some instances put undue constraints on reasonable public access, are inconsistent across the different forests, confuse outdoor recreationists, and might impede the Commission's and Department's ability to meet wildlife management objectives. HB 2551 was also supported by county sheriffs throughout Arizona.

Wildlife and Conservation Education programs touch many Arizonans

The Arizona Game and Fish Department continued its wide range of educational outreach to the public over the past year. In the area of wildlife education, Department staff and volunteers provided live wildlife education and hands-on learning experiences to over 300,000 members of the public at events, workshops, expos and fairs throughout the state in fiscal year 2012-13. In the area of formal education, approximately 10,000 4th grade students in over 150 classrooms across Arizona received a live wildlife education program correlated to Arizona's Academic Content standards. About 2,000 educators received training on and used Focus Wild Arizona's educational

resources, potentially providing thousands of K-12 students with wildlife education. About 2,000 K-12 students participated in hands-on wildlife education activities throughout the state through summer camps, classroom programs, homeschool activities and field-based research events. In the area of hunter education, the volunteer instructors participating in the Department's Hunter Education Program conducted 164 courses, and 3,700 students successfully completed the courses and received their hunter education certification. The Department's sport fish education program conducted 161 fishing clinics or related programs, reaching more than 18,500 participants. In the area of boating education, the Department held 46 classroom courses with 500 students receiving certification. An additional 1,028 students completed the online boating education course. In the area of off-highway vehicle (OHV) education, 133 students completed the online Internet-based course and 35 students attended the classroom course. 22,000 people received hands-on Boating and OHV safety information and education at events throughout the state.

Outdoor recreationists should be aware of federal Travel Management Rules that are being implemented in national forests.





The Department offers a wide range of wildlife and conservation education activities, as well as outdoor skills camps.

AZGFD holds informational meetings on federal wolf proposals

The Arizona Game and Fish Department held three public meetings in Payson, Tucson and Pinetop in September to share information with constituents on two federal proposals affecting Mexican wolf conservation. One proposal is to delist the gray wolf from the federal list of threatened and endangered species but maintain endangered status for the Mexican wolf as a subspecies. The other proposal is to expand the geographic boundaries of the Mexican Wolf Experimental Population Area in Arizona and New Mexico and modify the 10(j) rule for managing that population. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service made the proposals in June and opened a public comment period, which was extended to Dec. 17, 2013. The Service initially scheduled public meetings/hearings in three out-of-state locations (Washington, D.C., San Francisco and Albuquerque), but none in Arizona. The Arizona Game and Fish Department then scheduled its meetings in order to educate constituents on the proposals and provide them with information on how to

provide comments to the Service. The Service subsequently scheduled and held a public meeting/hearing in Pinetop, Ariz., on Dec. 3, 2013. The Arizona Game and Fish Department provided comments to the Service on both proposals.

Agreement reached on Camp Navajo hunts

After working together for more than a year, the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and Department and the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) agreed on new rules for the 2014 elk and pronghorn hunting seasons at Camp Navajo, a secure military installation west of Flagstaff operated by the Arizona Army National Guard. The agreement represents a change from previous years and clarifies the eligibility qualifications and tag allocations, establishing categories for “Wounded Warrior,” “Disabled Veteran,” “Military,” and “Other.” The majority of 2014 hunting opportunities at Camp Navajo will be allocated to uniformed military and honorably retired veterans from all branches of the armed forces, disabled veterans, and

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the Frye Mesa Access Project, a collaborative undertaking that will ensure access to about 45 miles of roads and trails in southeastern Arizona.



Wounded Warriors, while still providing some opportunity for the general public. The Department and DEMA believe the agreement meets the security and operational requirements of Camp Navajo, honors the service of men and women in the military, achieves wildlife management objectives, and provides for general public participation.

Collaborative public-private project ensures recreational access

A unique collaborative project between the private sector, nongovernmental organizations and government agencies will ensure permanent public recreational access to approximately 45 miles of roads and trails in southeastern Arizona. The Frye Mesa Access Project provides permanent public right-of-way to Frye Mesa Road to improve recreational access to an 18,000-acre portion of State Trust lands and the Coronado National Forest lands in Graham County. The project was made possible after the National Wild Turkey Federation received a Yamaha OHV Access Initiative grant of \$20,000. The grant was awarded as part of Yamaha's OHV Access Initiative promoting safe, responsible riding and open, sustainable riding areas. The project builds upon the Arizona Game and Fish Department's emphasis on increasing the amount of land available for public recreation. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Nov. 1. Project partners include Yamaha, the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the Arizona Chapter of Safari Club International, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Chronic Wasting Disease not found in Arizona deer and elk

The Arizona Game and Fish Department concluded another sampling season for chronic wasting disease (CWD) and did not detect the disease in any of the 1,277 deer and elk tested during the fall 2012 hunting season. CWD is a neurodegenerative wildlife disease that is fatal to cervids, including deer, elk and moose. No evidence has been found to indicate that CWD affects humans, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. CWD was first identified in captive deer in Colorado in 1967 and has since been detected in both captive and wild cervids in 22 states and two Canadian provinces. Currently, it is found in free-ranging cervids in 18 states and two Canadian provinces. Arizona Game and Fish began testing for CWD in 1998 and has to date tested over 17,000 samples. The continued cooperation from hunters in providing heads from harvested deer and elk for testing is essential for the Department's effective surveillance of CWD.

"Release Your Wild" Archery Day

The Department hosted a free public archery event in conjunction with the release of the blockbuster movie, "Hunger Games: Catching Fire," to capitalize on the pop-culture interest the movie brought to archery. The "Release Your Wild" event was held in December 2013 at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility and drew approximately 200 attendees. Participants went through six archery shooting stations and also received a coupon for a return visit with free equipment rental to provide them with a second connection to Arizona Game and Fish and archery shooting.

CONSERVATION

Arizona's bald eagle nestwatch program celebrates 35 years of dedication

Arizona's Bald Eagle Nestwatch Program has contributed to the tremendous growth of the state's bald eagle population for 35 years. Nestwatchers have helped save the lives of

more than 60 eagle nestlings since the program began in 1978. This year's nestwatchers began their four-month tour of duty in February. They watched 14 breeding areas located in some of Arizona's most popular recreation areas. The contractors observe from dawn to dusk, collecting data about the eagles' behavior, educating the public, and notifying rescuers of any life-threatening situations for the birds. The nationally-recognized nestwatch program began as a weekend volunteer effort to help ensure the continued success of bald eagle breeding. Now 26 government agencies, private organizations and tribes are involved with the program to monitor bald eagle breeding areas that are under heavy pressure from human recreational activities.

Bighorn sheep reintroduced to Santa Catalina Mountains

The Arizona Game and Fish Department, in cooperation with the Coronado National Forest and the Catalina Bighorn Advisory Committee, in November reintroduced 31 desert bighorn sheep to the Pusch Ridge Wilderness area near Tucson. The area once contained a robust native population of desert bighorn sheep, but the population began declining in the late



Arizona's Bald Eagle Nestwatch Program celebrated its 35th anniversary.

1980s and disappeared by the late 90s. Factors are thought to include urban encroachment, human disturbance, disease, fire suppression and predation. Several conditions made it advantageous to consider the reintroduction project at this time, including improved habitat from two large fires a decade ago, scheduled prescribed burns by the Forest Service to bring back a more natural fire regimen, healthy bighorn sheep populations in other parts of the state offering surplus animals for translocation, and temporary closure of some trails by the Forest Service in the proposed reintroduction area. The project was developed and is being



Thirty one bighorn sheep captured in southwestern Arizona were translocated to the Santa Catalina Mountains as part of the Catalina Bighorn Sheep Reintroduction Project.

The Endangered Species Act celebrated its 40th anniversary this year. The endangered black-footed ferret population in Arizona continues to grow thanks to on-the-ground conservation efforts.



implemented with input and consultation with the Catalina Bighorn Advisory Committee, composed of diverse stakeholder groups such as the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society, Wilderness Society, Center for Biological Diversity, Sky Island Alliance, and Arizona Wilderness Coalition. The 31 translocated bighorns were captured from healthy herds in western Arizona and fitted with state-of-the-art satellite Global Positioning System (GPS) collars that provide real time information about their location and any mortality events that may occur. This intensive monitoring effort will enable managers to make informed management decisions as information from collars becomes available. A component of the project is a predator management plan that calls for lethal removal of specific mountain lions known to prey on bighorn sheep, for a limited duration, to allow the bighorn sheep herd to establish a viable population. The goal of the project, which operates under adaptive management principles and is under continual evaluation, is to have bighorn sheep and mountain lions coexisting in a naturally functioning ecosystem, as they once did.

Amended rules address importation of cervid carcasses, baiting

Several amendments to the Arizona Game and Fish Article 3 rules affecting hunters became effective on July 1. There are new restrictions on the importation of cervid carcasses into the state as a precaution against introduction of diseases, including chronic wasting disease. While CWD has not been detected in Arizona, it has been found in our neighboring states of Utah, New Mexico and Colorado. The amended rules also include restrictions on using edible or ingestible substances to attract game (a practice commonly known as “baiting”). A primary concern with baiting is that it results in concentrations of wildlife that may facilitate the transmission of wildlife diseases such as CWD, or contain toxic contaminants. The amended Article 3 rules now also allow hunters to use pre-charged pneumatic weapons for the take of some big game. These and other amendments were developed during the rules review process that included a public comment period, and they incorporate recently passed legislation. A summary of the amended rules is available on the Department’s website at www.azgfd.gov.

Game and Fish celebrates 40th anniversary of managing imperiled wildlife under the Endangered Species Act

The Arizona Game and Fish Department celebrated its work to conserve imperiled wildlife species on the 40th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act in May. Arizona is home to 42 wildlife species that are considered either threatened or endangered. The state's most well-known endangered species are the California condor, Mexican wolf, black-footed ferret, jaguar, Mount Graham red squirrel, ocelot, Sonoran pronghorn and Apache trout. Through Game and Fish's active on-the-ground management, in partnership with federal, state, and tribal management authorities, Arizona's greatest endangered species successes include:

- Recovery of the bald eagle that led to delisting the species from the ESA. The population went from only 11 breeding pairs in 1973 to 54 today.
- Milestone accomplishment for the reintroduced black-footed ferret, which now boasts a self-sustaining population that no longer requires the release of captive animals to maintain a healthy population.

- Growth of Arizona's Sonoran pronghorn population from 21 animals to 267 today.
- Restoration of Apache trout that led to downlisting (moved from "endangered" to "threatened") and allowed for limited angling opportunities in the state.
- Reintroduction of the California condor, which had virtually reached extinction and now numbers more than 70 birds in the wild Arizona-Utah population.

Public provides input into revised hunt guidelines

The proposed biannual hunt guidelines, which set the framework for the annual hunting regulations for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 seasons, were approved by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission at its September meeting. The review process for the hunt guidelines formally began earlier in the year by soliciting public input, followed by a series of statewide public meetings and comment opportunities. The hunt guidelines provide the biological and social parameters that set the management objectives for setting elements like season structures and permit levels for game species.



Public input helped the Department establish the biannual hunt guidelines, which set the framework for the hunt regulations for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 seasons.

AZGFD and ADOT hosted the prestigious International Conference on Ecology and Transportation (ICOET), which showcased projects such as the Highway 93 bighorn sheep overpasses.



“Agreement in Principle” reached by AZGFD and Rosemont Copper Company on proposed conservation mitigation measures

The Arizona Game and Fish Department and Rosemont Copper Company reached an “Agreement in Principle” in October regarding the proposed Rosemont Copper Mine near Tucson. Under the terms of the agreement, should the proposed mine become a reality, certain wildlife conservation and mitigation actions would be put in place to help offset the mine’s impact and provide benefits to “Arizona trust species” (those species that are not federally listed as threatened or endangered). The plans also provide for wildlife-related public recreational access. Rosemont would be responsible for funding and Game and Fish would handle implementation. The agreement addresses Arizona wildlife interests that were not considered during the federal compliance process. The Department sent the agreement to Coronado National Forest Supervisor Jim Upchurch and requested that it be included in the Forest Service’s Record of Decision for the project. The Department has noted that the agreement is not an endorsement of, nor an

opposition to, the mine project. Responsibilities of both parties will be set forth in a more detailed agreement to be negotiated in the future, after the Forest Service-issued Mine Plan of Operations permit is issued.

AZGFD, ADOT host major conference on transportation and environment

The Arizona Department of Transportation and the Arizona Game and Fish Department in June hosted the prestigious International Conference on Ecology and Transportation (ICOET), which highlighted research and achievements that focus on the relationship between transportation planning and the environment. Nearly 400 experts in transportation and ecology from more than 40 states, tribal organizations and other countries attended the Scottsdale conference. ADOT and Game and Fish had the opportunity to showcase joint efforts that consider the environment during the planning and building stages of transportation infrastructure. One such effort was the construction of wildlife crossing bridges and culverts as part of improvements along U.S. 93 near the Nevada state line to reduce the number

of collisions between vehicles and desert bighorn sheep and facilitate wildlife movement across the highway. ICOET is regarded as the primary forum for introducing research innovations and concepts that form many standards of practice in the field. The conference is held every two years.

Mexican wolf numbers increase

During its annual 2012 year-end surveys (the results of which were announced in February 2013), the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team (IFT) counted at least 75 Mexican wolves in the wild in Arizona and New Mexico at the end of 2012. This was an increase over the 2011 minimum population count (58 wolves). The results from the aerial survey, coupled with the ground survey conducted by the IFT, confirmed that there were 38 wolves in New Mexico and 37 wolves in Arizona. The survey indicated that there were 4 pairs that met the federal definition of breeding pair at year's end, out of 13 known packs. The 2012 minimum population count included 20 wild-born pups that survived through the end of the year. These numbers are considered a minimum number of Mexican wolves known to exist in the Blue Range Wolf

Recovery Area, as other non-collared wolves may be present in the recovery area but were not located during the survey period.

Hirsch Conservation Education Area is dedicated

The Hirsch Conservation Education Area at Biscuit Tank was dedicated in 2013. The area was named in honor of Bob Hirsch, a prolific outdoor writer and outdoor advocate whose work appeared in both the Arizona Wildlife Views magazine and television show. The conservation area will be used for a wide variety of outdoor educational opportunities and instructional workshops. Biscuit Tank is not open for general public use.

Arizona Game and Fish coauthors international recovery plan for endangered thick-billed parrots

A recovery plan coauthored by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and Mexico will benefit the thick-billed parrot, one of only two species of parrots historically found in the U.S. The plan aims to grow the birds' numbers by protecting, managing and restoring mature and old-growth conifer forests in Mexico. The U.S.



The Hirsch Conservation Education Area will be used for outdoor educational opportunities and instructor workshops.

has never before adopted an endangered species recovery plan from another country. This plan closely follows the Mexican thick-billed parrot recovery plan, but includes additional elements required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service because the parrot is now found only in Mexico. Recovery efforts will concentrate on established populations in Mexico, where suitable habitat exists within the birds' core range. Efforts to restore the thick-billed parrot in Mexico are considered more likely to succeed than a cost-prohibitive captive breeding program in the U.S. where habitat is less suitable. Attempts to re-establish the bird in Arizona between 1986 and 1993 were unsuccessful because captive-raised birds had trouble surviving in the wild. Thick-billed parrots disappeared from the U.S. more than 70 years ago. Historically, they visited southeast Arizona and perhaps New Mexico, but no breeding population here has ever been confirmed. Estimates indicate that more than 2,000 thick-billed parrots can be found in Mexico's states of Chihuahua and northwest Durango.

Commission approves fishing regulation amendments

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission approved 12 amendments to Commission Order 40 (fish regulations), effective Jan. 1, 2014. The updated regulations are expected to conserve sport fish populations, and simplify and streamline regulations. There are several important changes to note. The crappie daily bag limit was reduced from unlimited to 15 daily at Bartlett and Roosevelt lakes. The statewide possession limit was increased to twice the daily bag limit, applies to all statewide and special regulation seasons, and allows anglers to continue fishing on subsequent days when bag limits are met. Newly designated Community Fishing Program waters, formerly known as Urban Fishing Program waters, have special regulations for daily bag limits. Tempe Town Lake is now included in the Community Fishing Program. Other approved amendments can be viewed at www.azgfd.gov/fish.

ISSUES

Lake Powell added to Arizona's list of quagga-infected waters

Boaters leaving Lake Powell are now required by law to pull their boat plug and decontaminate and dry their watercraft before leaving the vicinity of the lake, to help prevent the spread of invasive quagga mussels. In March, the National Park Service (NPS) identified 14 adult quagga mussels attached to moored vessels and dock structures at the Wahweap Marina. As of May, the NPS had identified more than 150 mussels at Wahweap and Antelope Point marinas. None of the adult mussels were close enough together to mate for successful reproduction and all were physically removed from the lake. The discovery prompted the Arizona Game and Fish Department to add Lake Powell to its list of waters known to contain aquatic invasive species (AIS). The affected waters are part of the Department's Director's Orders, which list the aquatic invasive species in Arizona, the lakes that contain them, and the legally mandated protocols for moving boats from AIS-infected waters. Other AIS-infected waters in Arizona include Lake Pleasant, Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, Lake Havasu and all lower Colorado River waters to the international border with Mexico.

AZGFD expresses concerns over 72-hour limit for camping trailers

The Arizona Game and Fish Department and Commission expressed concerns after the Coconino, Kaibab and Prescott national forests announced in an August news release that they were instituting a 72-hour limit on how long hunters and other recreationists could leave their trailers and motorhomes unattended. The news release indicated that if trailers were left unattended for more than 72 hours, the Forest Service could consider them abandoned property and might remove them from the forest or cite the owner. The Department and Commission viewed this action by the Forest Service as unprecedented, as a 14-day stay limit had been in effect on national forest lands for



Eddie "Flathead Ed" Wilcoxson caught a state record flathead catfish weighing in at 76.54-pounds. It measured 53.5 inches in total length with a 34.75-inch girth.

decades and was well-understood and observed by hunters and other outdoor recreationists. The Department, along with a number of Arizona county sheriffs and elected officials, expressed concerns over the 72-hour rule, and Game and Fish staff met with Forest Service officials to resolve the matter. The Forest Service has since clarified that hunters and others recreating on forest lands are not at risk of having their property considered abandoned after 72 hours (as long as they comply with the 14-day rule), and the intent of the 72-hour rule was to deal with the issue of truly abandoned property.

MISCELLANEOUS

History made: Angler reels in state's heaviest recorded fish

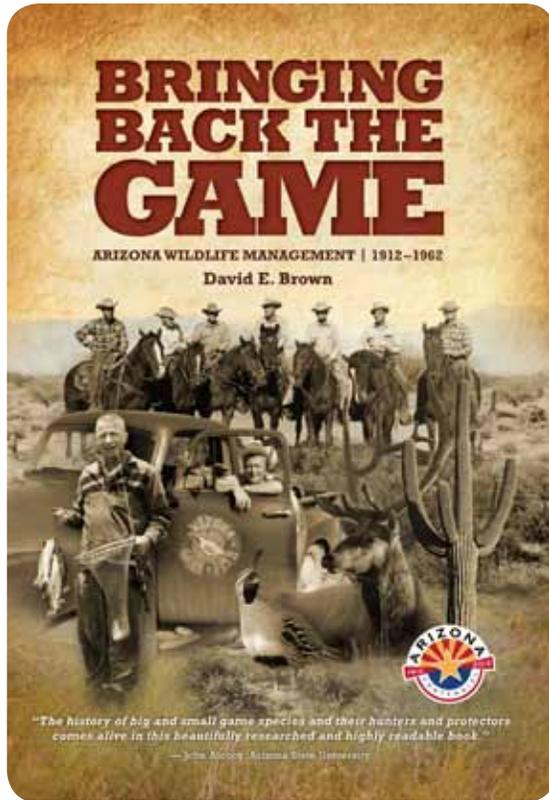
Arizona angler Eddie "Flathead Ed" Wilcoxson landed what would become a state record flathead catfish at Bartlett Lake in April. The catfish weighed 76.54 pounds and measured 53.5 inches in total length with a 34.75-inch girth. It also became the heaviest recorded fish of any species in state history, topping the

74-pound flathead catfish caught in 1988 out of the Colorado River. Wilcoxson caught the flathead using an Ugly Stik fishing rod, Okuma 45D reel, 60-pound braided line, an 18-inch steel leader with a SPRO Power Swivel and, as bait, a live 2-pound carp. In addition to flathead catfish, the 2,015-acre Bartlett Lake, located in the Tonto National Forest northeast of Phoenix, holds largemouth bass, sunfish, crappie, channel catfish, carp and crayfish. Bartlett Lake also produced the state record carp that weighed 37 pounds in 1987.

Commission Chair's term is changed to correspond with fiscal year

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission voted in April to change the term of service of the Commission Chair, Vice Chair and Committee assignments from a calendar year to a fiscal year basis (July 1 through June 30 of the following year). The move allows the outgoing Commission Chair to work with the incoming Chair, other Commission members, and the Department's leadership to ensure a smoother transition and continuity during changes in

The book "Bringing Back the Game: Arizona Wildlife Management, 1912-1962" describes the efforts to return game populations to abundance and provide more fishing opportunities for anglers.



Commission membership. Current Chairman John W. Harris, whose term as a Commission member runs through the end of 2014, will serve as Chair through June 30, 2014, after which the Commission will hold an election for the new Chair. The Commission is composed of five members, each serving staggered five-year terms. Commissioners are appointed by the Governor, with assistance from the Arizona Game and Fish Commission Appointment Recommendation Board, and confirmed by the State Senate. No more than one member may be from any one county, and no more than three may be from the same political party. Since its inception in 1929, this organizational structure has served as a buffer for the best interests of science-driven wildlife conservation during eight decades of back-and-forth political change.

Boating access improvement project begins at C.C. Cragin Reservoir

The Arizona Game and Fish Department, in cooperation with the Coconino National Forest, began a boating access improvement project at C.C. Cragin (Blue Ridge) Reservoir in October to widen the existing boat ramp, install rockfall

protection netting, and complete several other safety features. The reservoir is located on the Mogollon Rim east of Clints Well. When completed, this project will enhance recreational boating access, safety, and fishing opportunities for the future. Vehicular access to the lake is currently closed but is anticipated to resume in the spring of next year, as weather and road conditions allow.

New book brings wildlife management history to life

The Arizona Game and Fish Department published the new book, "Bringing Back the Game: Arizona Wildlife Management, 1912–1962," that examines wildlife management in Arizona during those formative years as sportsmen, and later professional game wardens and biologists, worked to return game populations to abundance and to provide more fishing opportunities for anglers. The book is the third in a series of wildlife histories that began with "Man and Wildlife in Arizona: The American Exploration Period, 1824–1865," and continued with "Arizona Wildlife: The Territorial Years, 1863–1912." The Arizona Wildlife History Series now covers almost 140 years of efforts to conserve, use and manage wildlife in the Grand Canyon State — a significant achievement. Author David E. Brown is a retired Arizona Game and Fish Department biologist and adjunct professor at Arizona State University and the University of Arizona.

Commission meetings go back out to local communities

After four years of holding its meetings exclusively in Phoenix, the Arizona Game and Fish Commission took six of its 10 regular meetings back out on the road to communities around the state in 2013. The change provides greater access to the Commission for constituents who live in other areas of the state. Each meeting includes a two-hour public forum that highlights projects and collaborative activities in which the Department is engaged



A collaborative boating access improvement project at C.C. Cragin reservoir will widen the existing boat ramp, install rockfall protection netting, and complete several other safety features.

with the host community and region. The Department built a new portable audio-visual system that allows interactive webcasting from the various venues so the meetings can still be viewed statewide.

Arizona Senate confirms appointment of Edward “Pat” Madden to Arizona Game and Fish Commission

The Arizona Senate confirmed Gov. Jan Brewer’s appointment of Edward “Pat” Madden of Flagstaff to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission in early 2013. Madden is an avid outdoors enthusiast and has an extensive law enforcement background. He worked for more than three decades with the Flagstaff Police Department – beginning his career in 1966 as a patrolman and retiring as chief of police in 1999. Since then, he has been a special investigator with the Arizona Department of Gaming. Madden has been an active member of the Flagstaff community, serving on multiple boards and committees and receiving numerous awards and commendations for his work and community service.

AWARDS

AZGFD among Recovery Champion Award recipients for Gila trout protection

In recognition of efforts to protect Gila trout and other native fish populations after last year’s devastating Whitewater-Baldy Complex Fire in New Mexico, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s 2012 Region 2 Recovery Champion Award was presented in 2013 to the Gila trout and Chihuahua Recovery Team. Members included Julie Carter, Arizona Game and Fish Department’s conservation and mitigation program supervisor; Jim Brooks of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Jerry Monzingo of the Gila National Forest; Kirk Patten of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish; and David L. Propst, Ph.D. and Thomas Turner, Ph.D., of the University of New Mexico. Arizona’s assistance came into play when more than 25 volunteers helped backpack Gila trout into Ash Creek. The fish were salvaged from the Gila National Forest by ground crews on horseback after the fire and before the monsoon rains.

“Best Arizona Book” published by Game and Fish

The Arizona Game and Fish Department’s book, “An Introduction to Hunting Arizona’s Small Game,” was named “Best Arizona Book” in the 2013 New Mexico/Arizona Book Awards contest. About 1,800 entries competed in 53 categories. The book also won in the “Crafts/Hobby/How-To” book category. The contest was sponsored by the nonprofit New Mexico Book Co-op. Written by biologist and hunter Randall D. Babb of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the book provides expert tips for pursuing everything from quails and doves to squirrels and rabbits. It helps new and experienced hunters alike select the right firearm, gear up for the hunt and care for the harvest.

“Arizona Wildlife Views” wins 3 Emmy® Awards

Arizona Wildlife Views, the Arizona Game and Fish Department’s award-winning television show, received three Emmy® Awards from the Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS) during a Saturday, Oct. 19

ceremony. Carol Lynde, Game and Fish video production supervisor, earned the Emmy in the “Environmental Program” category for “Eagle Nest Reborn,” the story of department biologists who helped save a breeding pair of bald eagles. See the video at <http://youtu.be/KOBkzcMuvBg>. Lynde also won two Emmys for “Moving Bighorn Sheep.” This Arizona Wildlife Views story won in the “Environmental Program Segment” category and for “Direction, Post-Production.” See the video at <http://youtu.be/WpA4ZtsAe3Q>. Also nominated for Emmys this year were Chief of Information Jim Paxon and Video Producer David Majure. Nearly 800 videos were submitted by television and video production professionals in Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, Wyoming and El Centro, California.

Biologist receives award from Pope & Young

Jim Heffelfinger, game specialist for the Arizona Game and Fish Department’s Tucson region, was honored with the Lee Gladfelter Memorial Award by the Pope & Young Club. The award recognizes a wildlife professional whose efforts have made a significant contribution to bowhunting and wildlife conservation. Heffelfinger, one of the nation’s

Arizona Game and Fish staff and guests were on hand to accept three Emmy Awards from the Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.



leading deer biologists, has been working with colleagues for years on a massive project involving the validation of white-tailed deer, Coues' deer, mule deer and black-tailed deer DNA. Genetic markers have been identified that can definitively determine if a deer is a Coues' whitetail or not. Other tests can prove an animal is a whitetail x mule deer hybrid. The project will not only help guide wildlife management and conservation strategies, but can assist the Pope and Young Club and the Boone and Crockett Club in fine-tuning or validating geographic boundaries and authenticating individual specimens.

Officer honored as MADD OUI Officer of the Year

Luke Apfel, wildlife manager for the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Kingman region, received the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) OUI Officer of the Year award, honoring his efforts to remove impaired operators from the waterways. Apfel has been active in many regional Operating Under the Influence checkpoints. Serving in the Bullhead City district since January 2012, Apfel has earned a reputation as a top OUI enforcement officer.

Officer receives Shikar-Safari Award

Tim Holt, East Sector supervisor for the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Mesa region, received the Shikar-Safari Club's Officer of the Year Award for Arizona for his lifelong service and impeccable record. The award is presented to a conservation officer in each state to recognize their outstanding performance and dedication to protecting and conserving wildlife.

Pena Blanca Lake project wins SOBA Award

The States Organization for Boating Access (SOBA) presented the Arizona Game and Fish Department with the annual Outstanding Project Award for the Pena Blanca Lake Boating Access Renovation project. The project, completed entirely by AZGFD in coordination

with the Coronado National Forest, consists of a parking lot, restroom, solar lighting, boat launch ramp, fishing dock and boat dock. The facilities are fully handicapped accessible with two ADA spaces for passenger vehicles and two ADA spaces for boat trailers at the shoreline. SOBA Outstanding Project Awards are given to agencies or organizations involved in boating access projects that are of high quality, innovative, unique and economical.

AZGFD wins conservation communications awards

The Arizona Game and Fish Department received several conservation communications awards over the past year. Associate Editor Julie Hammonds and A/V Production Supervisor Carol Lynde received an Award of Distinction from the Communicator Awards in the "Nature and Wildlife" category for their video, "Condor ER." The video looks at the effort it takes to save California condors who are suffering from lead-poisoning. The Association for Conservation Information (ACI) honored the Department with four 2nd-place awards: "Tight Lines at Lees Ferry" article in Arizona Wildlife Views magazine (Magazine: Fisheries Article category); "Choosing a Hunting Dog" graphic design, Cecelia Carpenter, Arizona Wildlife Views magazine (Graphic Design category); "An Introduction to Hunting Arizona's Small Game," Randall Babb, author, Julie Hammonds, editor, (One-time Publication: Books/Reports category); "Arizona Hunters Deserve Recognition for Voluntarily Reducing Lead Available to California Condors," Lynda Lambert (Print News Release category).

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Fiscal Year Revenues by Fund	2011-12	2012-13
Game and Fish Fund	\$28,444,410	28,149,498
Watercraft Licensing Fund	4,290,224	4,213,943
Game, Nongame Fund	156,059	144,684
Federal Assistance (Includes Matching Funds)	33,089,696	34,583,403
Heritage Fund	10,128,637	10,118,464
Off-highway Vehicle Fund	1,597,076	1,593,241
Capital Improvement/Conservation Dev. Funds	1,484,568	1,463,771
Wildlife Conservation Fund	6,123,790	6,204,704
Indirect Cost Fund	2,866,799	3,344,078
Other Funds (See Detail Below)	3,761,039	3,259,743
Total Revenue All Sources	\$91,942,298	\$93,075,529

Other Funds Detail

GF Land and Water Conservation/ Recreation Development	281	269
Wildlife Theft Prevention Fund	181,475	137,229
Waterfowl Conservation Fund	80,151	72,739
Wildlife Endowment Fund	132,512	148,721
Interagency Service Agreement Fund	244,450	0
Federal Economic Recovery Fund	255,661	264,002
Trust/Donation Fund	2,622,931	2,423,886
Firearms Safety and Ranges Fund	72	0
W/L Habitat and Restoration Fund	3	3
Game & Fish California/Coll Stamp	56,341	2,817
Game & Fish Kaibab Coop	36,993	40,060
Publications Revolving Fund	150,169	170,017
Total Other Funds	\$3,761,039	\$3,259,743

Fiscal Year Expenditures by Fund	2011-12	2012-13
Game and Fish Fund	25,858,590	26,361,062
Watercraft Licensing Fund	4,003,743	3,167,827
Game, Nongame Fund	205,567	104,051
Federal Assistance (Includes Matching Funds)	33,950,296	33,672,698
Heritage Fund	4,431,168	9,240,124
Off-highway Vehicle Fund	1,496,119	1,403,884
Capital Improvement/Conservation Dev. Funds	2,331,421	2,122,187
Wildlife Conservation Fund	5,945,743	5,040,170
Indirect Cost Fund	3,394,312	2,664,346
Other Funds (See Detail Below)	2,706,373	3,068,082
Total Expenditures All Sources	\$84,323,332	\$86,844,431

Other Funds Detail

Federal Grants	\$16,148	0
Wildlife Theft Prevention Fund	155,524	163,223
Waterfowl Conservation Fund	151,074	84,762
Interagency Service Agreement Fund	27,980	114,600
Federal Economic Recovery Fund	239,650	313,204
Trust/Donation Fund	1,907,908	2,202,456
Firearms Safety and Ranges Fund	0	0
Game & Fish Kaibab Coop	69,710	12,880
Publications Revolving Fund	138,379	176,957
Total Other Funds	\$2,706,373	\$3,068,082

Calendar Year Sales in Numbers by Group	2011	2012
Licenses (see detail below)	428,056	439,244
Resident Trout Stamps	62,725	64,105
Nonresident Trout Stamps	168	285
Tags (excluding special hunts)	165,872	164,915
Misc Permits/Licenses	1,998	2,042
Special Use Licenses/Stamps	37,017	57,730
Misc No Cost Licenses/Permits	4,555	2,082
Two Pole Stamp	57,552	58,492
Resident Additional Day Stamps	1,639	1,888
Nonresident Additional Day Stamps	1,681	1,908
Arizona Waterfowl Stamps	5,853	6,821
Migratory Bird Stamps	46,546	47,126
Kaibab 12A Habitat Stamps	1,681	1,790
Restricted Non-permit Tags	0	0
Supplemental Hunt Tags	19	58
Companion Hunt Tags	126	131
Totals	815,488	848,617

Lifetime License/Stamp Sales	2011	2012
Lifetime License Sales Fish	43	49
Lifetime License Sales Hunt	91	102
Lifetime License Sales Combo	91	95
Lifetime License Sales Trout Stamps	34	40
Wildlife Benefactor Combo License	17	14
Totals	311	300

Calendar Year License Sales by Category	2011	2012
Resident General Fish	131,614	130,466
Nonresident General Fish	768	803
Family/Primary Fish	5,181	5,750
Family/Spouse Fish	2,713	3,037
Family/Child Fish	2,089	2,294
Resident Super Fish/Trout/Urban License	13,433	13,976
Nonresident Super Fish/Trout/Urban License	1,868	1,925
Resident General Hunt	57,528	59,450
Nonresident General Hunt	19,894	21,818
Computer Family/Primary Hunt	890	980
Computer Family/Secondary (Spouse) Hunt	443	505
Computer Family/Youth & Child/10-13 Hunt	2,429	2,369
Resident Hunt/Fish	71,725	74,608
Nonresident Hunt/Fish	480	714
Computer Family/Primary Hunt/Fish	3,328	3,705
Computer Family/Secondary (Spouse) Hunt/Fish	1,769	1,993
Computer Family/Youth & Child/10-13 Hunt/Fish	2,143	2,187
Computer Super Hunt w/Stamps	149	163
Computer Super Hunt/Fish w/Stamps	774	722
Nonresident 3-Day Hunt	6,749	7,083
Urban Fishing	29,223	27,824
Nonresident Colorado River Fish	1,243	1,295
Nonresident 5-Day Fish	7,752	7,677
Resident Youth Hunt/Fish	21,485	23,293
Nonresident 4-Month Fish	7,773	7,658
Resident/Nonresident 1-Day Fish	29,854	31,792
Resident Youth Group 2-Day Fish	103	96
Resident General Fish Nov/Dec	2,696	3,023
Nonresident General Fish Nov/Dec	104	128
Computer Family/Primary Half Fish Nov/Dec	25	53
Computer Family/Spouse Half Fish Nov/Dec	5	11
Urban Fishing Nov/Dec	1,866	1,846
Totals	428,056	439,244

Calendar Year License and Tag Sales	2011	2012
Licenses	\$17,106,497	19,989,591
Stamps	1,768,790	1,812,907
Tags	7,949,629	7,666,141
Total Value	\$26,824,916	\$29,468,639



John W. Harris



Robert E. Mansell



Kurt Davis



Edward "Pat" Madden

THE GAME AND FISH COMMISSION

Under the provisions of the Arizona Revised Statutes 17-231, the Arizona Game and Fish Commission establishes policy for the management, preservation and harvest of wildlife. The Commission makes rules and regulations for managing, conserving and protecting wildlife and fisheries resources, and safe and regulated watercraft and off-highway vehicle operations for the benefit of the citizens of Arizona. In support of the Commission's obligations, the Director, as Chief Administrative Officer, provides general supervision and control of all Department functions and activities.

The Commission is composed of five members appointed by the Governor pursuant to ARS 38-211. The Governor is assisted in the selection of Commission candidates by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission Appointment Recommendation Board.

The Commission appoints the Director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and the Director serves as Secretary to the Commission. No more than one Commissioner may be from any one county. No more than three may be from the same political party. Each Commissioner serves a five-year term, staggered. Commissioners customarily serve as Chair during their last year.

OUR MISSION

To conserve Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and manage for safe, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities for current and future generations.



The Arizona Game and Fish Department prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability in its programs and activities. If anyone believes that they have been discriminated against in any of the AGFD's programs or activities, including employment practices, they may file a complaint with the Director's Office, 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix, AZ 85086, (602) 942-3000, or with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Dr., Mail Stop WSFR-4020, Arlington, VA 22203. Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation or this document in an alternative format by contacting the Director's Office as listed above.

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