

# Arizona Game and Fish Department 2013-2014 Annual Report





Larry D. Voyles

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

In September 2014, I had the honor of becoming the president of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). AFWA functions as the collective voice for North America's fish and wildlife agencies to advance sound, science-based management and conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats in the public interest. In this role, I have witnessed the tremendous commitment and dedication exhibited by wildlife professionals across the nation.

As director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, I can unequivocally state that our agency is a leader in the wildlife management and conservation arenas. Among our many achievements during the past year was implementation of a new license structure that removed an antiquated, burdensome structure and replaced it with an easily navigable, customer-friendly process while offering bundled privileges at a greater value. This was made possible by the approval of Senate Bill 1223 the previous year, keystone legislation of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission that continues to be a driving model and envy of agencies across the nation.

We also continued our efforts with the Mexican Wolf Non-essential Experimental Population 10(j) rule revision. The Department engaged in negotiating changes to the proposed rule to best protect state interests by participating with 28 stakeholder groups in creating the Arizona Cooperator's Alternative. The Commission chose to adopt the Arizona Cooperator's Alternative, recognizing that it represented the interests of the most affected stakeholders, including sportsmen, livestock producers, recreationists and residents. In 2015, we have stepped up our efforts through litigation. Arizona's attorney general, Mark Brnovich, has joined us in the fight, and we are prepared to appeal and litigate the Record of Decision (ROD) of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) so that work is completed in a timely manner and based on sound science, as would be in line with the Arizona Cooperator's Alternative.

Other achievements celebrated by the Department include:

- Beginning Jan. 1, 2014, we began the process of adding 15 lakes to the newly renamed Community Fishing Program. These waters are in addition to the 21 already within the program.
- The creation of a short-term solution to provide recreational fishing opportunities in the Willow Beach-Bullhead City area, protecting jobs and keeping an important economic engine running.
- The Department led the completion of a draft management plan to make Lees Ferry a blue-ribbon fishery.
- A special-use permit was secured from the U.S. Forest Service for a new target shooting range to be built near Show Low. This decision is in keeping with our mission to promote and support the development of safe, accessible recreational shooting facilities.

All of these accomplishments, year-in and year-out, are achieved without the use of general-fund tax dollars. The Department must align its budget with actual revenues and a user-pay, public-benefit model. From that perspective, what this agency accomplishes is truly entrepreneurial and inspiring.

Our work continues in the year ahead. Impending species listings under the Endangered Species Act will require the Department's full attention to ensure that the listings are warranted and that the best available science is used along with appropriate wildlife management practices. Federal land-use designations, persisting drought conditions, and wildfires will continue to pose challenges for our state.

I can assure you that the Department is steadfast in protecting and enhancing the state's wildlife and natural resources, a responsibility that we have been entrusted with by the people of Arizona since 1929.

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

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS



*A streamlined hunting and fishing license structure that went into effect Jan. 1, 2014, offers more value and is family-friendly.*

### **New hunting, fishing license structure takes effect**

Arizona's new hunting and fishing license structure went into effect on Jan. 1, 2014. It was simplified from more than 40 license and stamp options to six license options and a single migratory bird stamp. The new fishing license and hunt/fish combination license offer bundled privileges for more value. They include privileges for trout, Community Fishing, two-pole fishing, and fishing Arizona's shared Colorado River waters with Nevada and California—no need to buy separate stamps or licenses for those privileges. The new license structure is family friendly—the youth hunt/fish combo license now costs only \$5 (as opposed to the previous \$26.50) and is required for youth ages 10-17. Licenses are now valid for one year from the date of purchase rather than just for the calendar year. The new structure was approved by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission last year after the Arizona Legislature passed legislation giving the Commission the authority to set future license and tag structure and fees through a new, customer-focused process.

### **Community Fishing Program expands**

Beginning Jan. 1, 2014, the Department began the process of adding 15 waters to the newly renamed Community Fishing Program (CFP). These waters are in addition to the 21 waters in metropolitan Phoenix, Tucson and Payson that were already within the program. The new waters are:

- Two newly built lakes, Pioneer Lake in Peoria, and Copper Sky Lake in Maricopa.
- Eight existing park ponds of 2-6 acres in the greater Phoenix area.
- Tempe Town Lake, which was formerly a state water.
- Four Yuma-area waters: West Wetlands Pond, Council Avenue Pond (in Somerton), Fortuna Lake and Redondo Lake.

In addition, Riverview Lake in Mesa, which had been temporarily closed, was rebuilt, enlarged and reopened. The Community Fishing Program waters are now included in the privileges of a General Fishing License. A separate Community Fishing License for Community Fishing Program waters only is also available.



*The process of adding 15 new lakes to the Community Fishing Program will bring to 36 the number of waters that are in the newly renamed program.*

### **Trout stockings to resume at Willow Beach National Fish Hatchery**

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), in cooperation with Mohave County and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), succeeded in April to create a short-term solution to provide recreational fishing opportunities in the fall in the Willow Beach-Bullhead City area. The agreement called for AZGFD to provide some 21,000 juvenile rainbow trout to be reared and stocked through the Willow Beach National Fish Hatchery, which is located along the Colorado River south of the Hoover Dam. The hatchery, operated by the USFWS, had been unable to rear or stock sport fish because of pipeline and infrastructure damage. This solution will allow for short-term angling opportunities. Meanwhile, AZGFD, USFWS and Mohave County will continue to work toward a long-term solution to supply trout to Arizona waters for recreational fishing opportunities.

### **New target range coming to the White Mountains**

The U.S. Forest Service issued a special use permit to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission for a new target range to be built near Show Low. The Second Knoll Target Range will accommodate pistol and rifle target shooters and be operated by the White Mountain Shooters Association (WMSA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, through a license agreement with the Commission. The range will be located in an unused cinder pit that was previously permitted by the Forest Service to the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). The cinder pit is located five miles from the Show Low airport, is easily accessible, and has a 75-foot deep pit to provide a safe shooting location. Game and Fish has worked closely with ADOT, the Forest Service and WMSA to bring a new target range to the White Mountains. Construction is expected to begin in 2015.



*A minimum of 83 Mexican wolves were counted in the wild in Arizona and New Mexico at the end of 2013, an increase of 10 percent over 2012.*

### **Arizona-New Mexico Mexican wolf population grows in 2013**

During its annual year-end population survey, the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team (IFT), led by the Arizona Game and Fish Department, counted a minimum of 83 Mexican wolves in the wild in Arizona and New Mexico at the end of 2013. This number showed a 10 percent increase in the known population of Mexican wolves in the wild compared to the 2012 minimum population count of 75 wolves. This number is 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. Presently, 100 percent of the Mexican wolves in Arizona and New Mexico are wild-born, a factor that is considered an important milestone along the way to recovery.

### **New rule allows transfer of big game hunt tags to disabled military veterans**

Hunters who won't be able to use their upcoming Arizona big game hunt permit-tag now have the option of transferring that tag to qualified 501(c)(3) organizations that provide hunting opportunities to veterans with

service-related disabilities. The new tag transfer option is the result of legislation sponsored by Representative Frank Pratt (District 8) that went into effect in July. A tag transfer to a disabled veteran's 501(c)(3) organization requires a big game tag transfer affidavit of voluntary donation and the tag. Individuals who wish to donate their tag should contact the individual 501(c)(3) organization to obtain the transfer affidavit. A list of qualified organizations can be found at <https://azgfdportal.az.gov/Hunting/TagTransfer>. This new option means there are now three tag transfer options available. The other two are: (1) By a parent to his or her minor child, or by a grandparent to his or her minor grandchild, subject to provisions specified in the Arizona Hunting Regulations, or (2) To a qualified 501(c)(3) organization for use by a child with a life-threatening condition or permanent disability.

### **AZGFD Director Larry Voyles selected as AFWA President for 2014-15**

Arizona Game and Fish Department Director Larry Voyles was selected as the president of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) for 2014-15. He previously had served in other posts within AFWA, including a term as the association's vice president. AFWA is the professional association that serves as

the collective voice of North America's state, provincial and territorial fish and wildlife agencies. The association represents its state agency members on Capitol Hill and before the Administration to advance favorable fish and wildlife conservation policy and funding, and works collaboratively on important national and international wildlife issues.

### **Outdoor Expo and Youth Day draw record 48,000**

More than 48,000 people visited the 2014 Arizona Game and Fish Department Outdoor Expo and Friday Youth Day, setting a combined attendance record for the three-day event at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility in Phoenix. The March 29-30 weekend Expo drew 41,000 people, including Sunday's record-breaking attendance of 20,700. Youth Day was held on Friday, March 28, and hosted 7,000 preregistered school children, teachers and chaperones. The Expo features hands-on activities and exhibits on fishing, hunting, shooting sports, archery, camping, OHV/boating recreation, and wildlife viewing. There were more than 170 exhibitors, including sportsmen's groups, conservation organizations, shooting clubs, government agencies, and commercial vendors of outdoor products and services.



*Lake Paddlemore is always a popular attraction at the Outdoor Expo, which attracted more than 48,000 people over a three-day run in March 2014 at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility.*

## **AZGFD rescues more than a half-million hatchery trout threatened by wildfire**

With the Slide Fire bearing down on Sterling Springs Fish Hatchery, the Arizona Game and Fish Department on May 25 rescued some 600,000 trout fingerlings from the hatchery and transported them to safe sites. The hatchery typically produces 1.6 million eggs annually. In addition, it is responsible for 68 percent of the trout production for stocking in state waters. The emergency fish rescue operation that began at 6 a.m. helped ensure Arizonans will have trout to catch, and protected a portion of threatened, native Apache trout. Four trucks made two trips each to transport more than 350,000 rainbow trout and 150,000 brown trout to Page Springs Hatchery, as well as more than 80,000 Apache trout to Canyon Creek Hatchery. Before the rescue, the Slide Fire incident management team ensured the hatchery was safe enough to allow Game and Fish personnel to enter and exit with minimal risk.



*As the Slide Fire burned near Sterling Springs Fish Hatchery, department personnel teamed up May 25, 2014, to rescue and transport some 600,000 trout fingerlings to safer hatchery sites.*

## **CONSERVATION**



*Another step was taken toward the recovery of the endangered black-footed ferret when 25 of the animals were released on the private Espee Ranch in northern Arizona.*

### **Historic release of endangered ferrets to private working ranch is first in AZ under special conservation agreement**

Arizona's endangered black-footed ferret population accomplished several steps toward recovery in October with the release of 25 animals on the private Espee Ranch, a working, northern Arizona cattle ranch owned by Babbitt Ranches. Successful ferret recovery depends on the presence of healthy prairie dog colonies, a ferret's primary prey. To help ensure that the Espee Ranch maintains a prairie dog population, a new vaccine field trial was also initiated in conjunction with the ferret release. Vaccine-laden bait developed in part by the U.S. Geological Survey is being studied as a potential means for reducing the incidence of sylvatic plague in prairie dogs. This release of ferrets onto private land was made possible through a Safe Harbor Agreement, a special tool under the Endangered Species Act that encourages private landowners to conserve endangered species on their property with minimal land-use restrictions. Espee Ranch is the first landowner

in Arizona to use a Safe Harbor Agreement for black-footed ferret conservation. Establishing a second self-sustaining ferret population on the Espee Ranch (the other is in Aubrey Valley) would help Arizona achieve one of its recovery goals for conserving the species. The ferret reintroduction program is a partnership effort between several government agencies, tribal entities, and private landowners.

### **Catalina Bighorn Sheep Project makes progress but requires patience**

The Catalina Bighorn Sheep Reintroduction Project made some strides in 2014. Five new lambs were observed in the first season. The project was bolstered in November with the addition of 30 translocated bighorn sheep (23 ewes and 7 rams), captured from healthy herds from the Canyon Lake area on Tonto National Forest lands and from the Plomosa Mountains east of Quartzite. The new sheep were outfitted with satellite GPS collars to provide managers with up-to-date information to help make adaptive, data-driven decisions. These sheep join the 12 remaining sheep from the 2013 release. The reintroduction project, which has received both support and criticism, is a collaborative, multi-partner effort to restore bighorn sheep to the Santa Catalina Mountains and Pusch Ridge Wilderness Area, where they had roamed for centuries before disappearing in the 1990s. The project is continually being evaluated through the adaptive management process by AZGFD and the multi-stakeholder Catalina Bighorn Advisory Committee.



*The Catalina Bighorn Sheep Reintroduction Project got a boost in 2014 with the translocation of 30 bighorn sheep, along with the observance of five new lambs in the first season.*



*Habitat improvements for mule deer and scaled quail include a series of prescribed burns that will result in new growth of shrubs and grasses and other food sources.*

### **AZGFD commits \$1 million to improving mule deer and quail habitat**

The Arizona Game and Fish Department committed \$1 million this year in an effort to increase the state's populations of mule deer and scaled quail. Both of these popular species are below population objectives. Using increased funds made available through the Wildlife Restoration Program, the Department is partnering with the Bureau of Land Management to improve mule deer habitat in Game Management Unit 16A through a series of prescribed burns to reopen and reinvigorate some of the state's desert shrublands that have become overgrown with thick vegetation. For scaled quail, actions to improve habitat will be focused in Units 31 and 32. Once the burns and other planned treatments have been completed, new growth of shrubs and grasses will become a food source for mule deer, quail and other species. The Wildlife Restoration Program provides grant funds for wildlife and habitat conservation projects through a federal excise tax paid by manufacturers on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment.

## **Mexican wolf conservation achieves two major milestones**

The Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project celebrated the achievement of two major milestones in the work to re-establish the species to its historic range. Biologists from the Mexican Wolf Interagency Field Team confirmed via a trail camera photo that two pups cross-fostered from an Arizona wolf pack into New Mexico's Dark Canyon pack were still alive and doing well. The photo showed the two cross-fostered pups along with the three pups that were naturally born into the Dark Canyon pack. The cross-fostering effort of these pups was a first for Mexican wolves. Cross-fostering allows genetic diversity to be improved in the wild Mexican wolf population without having to otherwise rely upon the release of naive wolves from captivity to achieve management objectives. News of the first wild-born litter of Mexican wolf pups in Mexico also signaled the accomplishment of another major milestone. Biologists in Mexico have been working to re-establish a population of Mexican wolves south of the international boundary for several years, and recently sighted the first litter born in the country in 30 years.

## **Agencies conduct non-native fish removal in Virgin River Gorge**

The Arizona Game and Fish Department, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and Virgin River Program conducted a fish management project in June using rotenone in the Virgin River Gorge in southwest Utah and northwest Arizona to remove invasive red shiner and restore habitat in the Virgin River for native fishes. During the treatment, public access was restricted in the project area. The implementation of this project will help meet recovery goals for the endangered woundfin, one of the rarest species of fish in the Southwest. Woundfin are threatened by red shiner, a non-native bait fish that existed in the project area's 17-mile stretch of the river between Utah's State Line Fish Barrier and Arizona's Virgin River

Gorge Fish Barrier. Rotenone use is regulated by several state and federal laws and is registered for use to remove undesirable fish by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

## **Tarahumara frogs return to Pajarito Mountains after 40-year absence**

Hundreds of Tarahumara frogs hopped into their new home in southern Arizona's Pajarito Mountains in October after a 40-year absence, thanks to a recovery effort by the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. About 550 frogs that were reared at the museum were backpacked into a remote canyon to be released. Previously known to exist in only three mountain ranges in Arizona and having been extirpated from the state in the 1980s, active management of this species has been occurring to the north of the Pajarito Mountains for more than a decade. Establishing a population in the Pajaritos will repatriate the Tarahumara frog to two of the three historical mountain ranges and prevent the need for protection under the Endangered Species Act. The released frogs will be monitored by biologists regularly over the next several years. In addition, the population may be augmented with additional frogs until it is determined that the population has become established in the canyon and no longer requires active management.



*About 550 Tarahumara frogs were released in a remote canyon in southern Arizona's Pajarito Mountains after a four-decade absence.*



*A total of 13 condors were treated for lead poisoning between Sept. 1, 2013 and Aug. 31, 2014. That's the lowest level since 2005.*

### **Fewer California condors treated for lead exposure**

The number of California condors treated for lead exposure in Utah and Arizona this year dropped to its lowest level since 2005. Between Sept. 1, 2013 and Aug. 31, 2014, a total of 13 condors were treated for lead poisoning. During the same period the previous year, 28 birds were treated. The annual average over five years had been 26 condors. To help the species, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (and more recently the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources) have asked hunters in southern Utah and northern Arizona to use non-lead ammunition. To offset the cost and encourage participation, both agencies have voluntary programs that provide hunters in core condor range with a free box of non-lead bullets. The voluntary response from Arizona hunters has been impressive with between 80 to 90 percent of hunters taking steps to reduce lead available to condors in the past seven years. Utah's non-lead program started in 2010. Fifty-five percent of those who hunted in the Zion hunting unit (where Utah's non-lead program is focused) in 2013 used non-lead ammunition or removed entrails from the field if they used lead bullets. Having a comparable program in Utah may be tipping the scale in favor of the condors.

### **Arizona Big Game Super Raffle raises money for wildlife**

The 2014 Arizona Big Game Super Raffle brought in about \$500,000 to benefit wildlife conservation efforts. Each year, the Arizona Game and Fish Commission awards one Special Big Game License Tag for each of 10 big game species—bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, antelope, buffalo, turkey, bear, javelina and mountain lion—to the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle for the purpose of being offered through the raffle. People buy tickets for a chance to win one or more of the tags. Every dollar raised from ticket sales for each of the species is returned to the Arizona Game and Fish Department and managed by the Arizona Habitat Partnership Committee (AHPC) for the benefit of that particular species. The Arizona Big Game Super Raffle is a nonprofit entity with a volunteer board of directors made up of representatives from sponsoring organizations. Many thanks go to the ticket buyers along with the sponsoring organizations and many volunteers who contributed their time and talent to make this event a success.

## ISSUES

### Mexican wolf 10(j) rule

The Arizona Game and Fish Department worked throughout the year with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reach a resolution on the proposed Mexican wolf 10(j) rule revision. The discussions were necessary because the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) issued by the Service failed to include any elements of the Arizona Cooperator's Alternative, a proposal developed by 28 cooperating agencies and stakeholders aimed at finding a balance between Mexican wolf conservation and stakeholder interests. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission directed the Department to negotiate with the Service to develop a rule that protected all state trust wildlife species and included key elements of the Cooperator's Alternative. The Commission's three primary points of concern were that the draft EIS:

Lacked a cap on the number of wolves allowed in Arizona and New Mexico. Possible resolution would be 300-325 wolves across the two states with clear and enforceable removal strategies to ensure that this number is not exceeded.

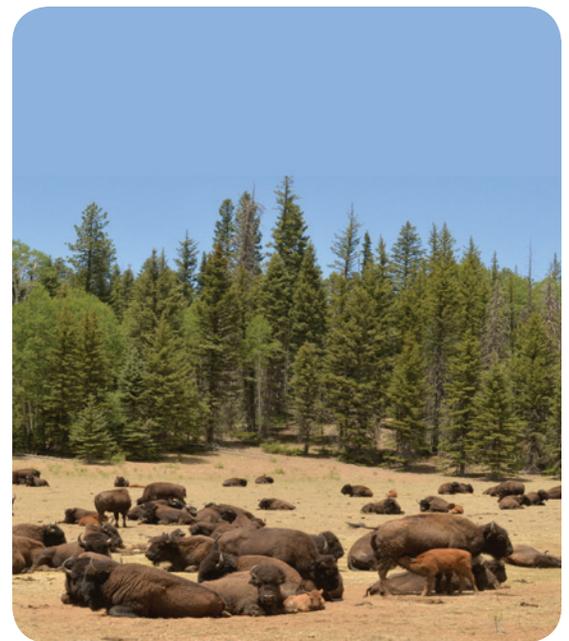
Failed to define the level of impact that constitutes "unacceptable impact" to ungulate populations. Possible resolution would be to provide an objective definition of a 15 percent impact trigger to begin wolf removal.

Proposed three wolf management zones in Arizona that allow dispersal to almost the entire state south of I-40 despite many of these areas offering unsuitable habitat and prey base. Possible resolution would be to expand wolf management in the experimental population area in phases.

It is hoped these negotiations with the Service will lead to the development of a final Mexican wolf 10(j) rule in 2015 that addresses the Commission and Department's key concerns.

### AZGFD works with federal partners on bison management at Grand Canyon

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) is working with the National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regarding bison management at and near the vicinity of Grand Canyon National Park. Since the late 1990s, bison from AZGFD's House Rock Wildlife Area on the Kaibab National Forest have made their way into Grand Canyon National Park, and most now spend a majority of their time there, with many not leaving at all. The current abundance and movement of these bison creates concerns for other park resources such as soils, vegetation, archeological sites, and water resources. Additionally, the current situation makes it difficult to provide bison hunting opportunities outside the park and meet bison management goals. NPS began public scoping as part of the process to prepare a bison management plan and environmental impact statement (EIS) for Grand Canyon National Park, with AZGFD, USFS and BLM participating as formal cooperating agencies.



*The Department joins a multi-agency effort to create a process for dealing with bison management at Grand Canyon National Park.*



*Education, public outreach and enforcement have been stepped up to deter the spread of invasive species, like the quagga mussel, on Arizona's waterways.*

### **AZGFD undertakes quagga awareness campaign, beefs up enforcement**

The Arizona Game and Fish Department has continued to be vigilant in its fight to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) in Arizona lakes and waterways. With a stepped-up public information campaign and increased law enforcement, more Arizonans are aware of the need to stop species such as quagga mussels, New Zealand mudsnails and didymo from infesting lakes, canals, power plants and other infrastructure. News releases, TV interviews and promotional materials warned Arizona boaters of the need to “Clean, Drain and Dry” their watercraft when leaving an AIS-affected waterway. Further stories warned of enforcement crackdowns, and beginning January 1, 2014, Game and Fish law enforcement officers stepped up citations of boat owners who failed to follow decontamination protocols. The combination of enforcement, education and public outreach may prove to be an effective deterrent to the spread of invasive species in Arizona.

### **AZGFD comments on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service jaguar critical habitat decision**

In March 2014, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated more than 760,000 acres in southern Arizona as critical habitat for the jaguar. The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) issued a news release with comments reiterating those submitted by AZGFD during the public comment period in 2012, stating that AZGFD does not believe the designation to be warranted. The Department has a long history of supporting endangered species, including designation of critical habitat, but believes critical habitat designations should be based on good science and effective conservation, both of which are lacking in this designation.



*More than \$20,000 was raised to be used as part of the “Respected Access is Open Access in Arizona” campaign.*

### **Event raises funds for educational campaign to help maintain access**

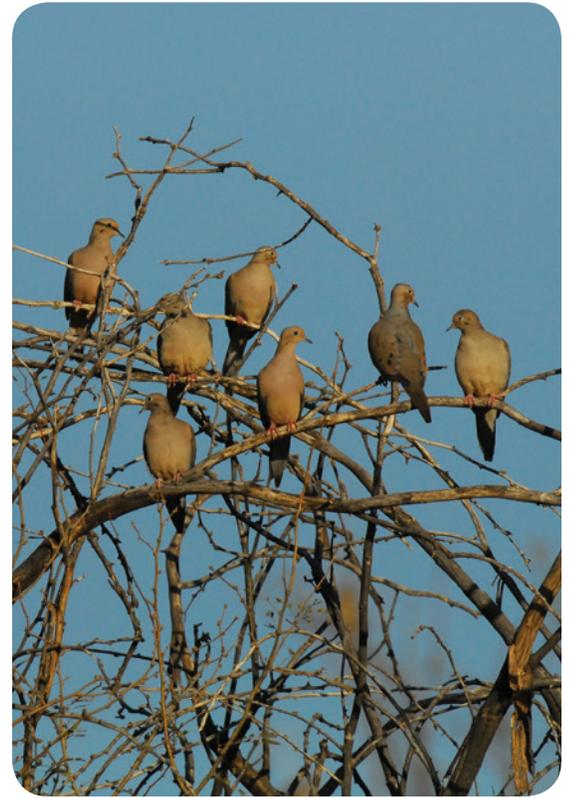
A successful fundraising event at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility in Phoenix in April raised more than \$20,000 to be used as part of the “Respected Access is Open Access” campaign. The educational campaign promotes and encourages good stewardship so that the public can continue to engage in multiple recreational uses, including recreational shooting, that are compatible with the resource. Recreational shooting in Arizona came under increased scrutiny when the Sonoran Desert National Monument, one of the last parcels of public land open to recreational shooting near Phoenix, was ready to ban target shooting. As an

proposed alternative, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, BLM, U.S. Forest Service and Tread Lightly!, a national organization that promotes responsible outdoor recreation, developed a model public/private partnership to build awareness and encourage good stewardship to help keep Arizona's public lands open to multiple recreational uses. As part of the campaign, a number of cleanup events were scheduled for 2014 and 2015.

### **Commission revokes wildlife rehabilitator's licenses for five years due to insufficient animal care**

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission voted in August to revoke, for a period of five years, the licenses of Pinal Wildlife Rescue and its owner to hold and rehabilitate restricted live wildlife. The licenses were revoked after years of continual violations of the minimum care and captivity standards that are considered appropriate and humane for wildlife. AZGFD repeatedly attempted to work with the owner to bring her facility and animal care into compliance. Early in 2014, the Department acted on its trust responsibility to ensure that license holders adhere to the standards and seized 17 animals, suspended the owner's wildlife rehabilitation license, and denied renewal of her wildlife holding license. The owner appealed the actions to the Commission. The case appeal was originally heard by a judge with the Arizona Office of Administrative Hearings (AOAH) on behalf of the Commission. The AOAH judge agreed that the facility's licenses to hold restricted live wildlife should be denied and revoked. When the case came before the Commission in August, the Commission chose to increase the judge's recommended revocation period from two to five years due to aggravating factors in the case.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**



*The bag limit for doves is now 15 per day, of which only 10 can be white-winged during the early season.*

### **Dove bag limit increased**

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission increased the bag limit for this year's dove hunts. Hunters are now allowed 15 doves per day. For the early dove season, only 10 of those per day can be white-winged doves. For the late dove season, the bag limit is 15 mourning doves per day (no hunting of white-winged doves in the late season). The possession limit is now 45 birds (for the early season, no more than 30 may be white-winged doves).

## **AZGFD partners with Project Healing Waters on event for wounded or disabled veterans**

The Arizona Game and Fish Department partnered with Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc. (PHWFF) to host a fly-fishing clinic Oct. 1 at Silver Creek Hatchery near Show Low. This was the seventh year that Game and Fish joined with PHWFF to offer fishing opportunities to wounded military service members and disabled veterans. Basic instruction was provided to those who have never fly-fished before. This year, the event was attended by PHWFF groups from Ft. Huachuca/Sierra Vista and Phoenix. Cabela's provided lunch for the clinic participants and volunteers. The event coincided with the opening of Silver Creek's catch-and-release season, which runs Oct. 1 to March 31. During this time, only artificial flies/lures and single barbless hooks are allowed.



*A fishing event hosted by the Department and Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing Inc. provided an opportunity for wounded military service members and disabled veterans to try their luck on Silver Creek.*



*A nightcrawler was all it took to fool this 5.78-pound redear sunfish, a pending world record caught in February at Lake Havasu by Hector Brito.*

## **Pending record 5.78-pound redear sunfish caught at Lake Havasu**

A pending world record, Arizona-style, was caught at Lake Havasu in February. Hector Brito's redear sunfish weighed 5.78 pounds and was 17 inches long. He caught the plump panfish by the chalk cliffs with a dropshot rig that included a No. 8 Aberdeen gold hook and a nightcrawler. The record awaits certification by the International Game Fish Association. The previous record, set by Bob Lawler, was 5.55 pounds in 2011. Redear sunfish have been growing to trophy-size in Lake Havasu, and it wouldn't be surprising to see an even bigger one to be caught within the next couple of years.

## AWARDS

### Headquarters facility wins international award

The Arizona Game and Fish Department headquarters facility in Phoenix won the Outstanding Building of the Year (TOBY) Award of 2013-2014 at the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA)

International Annual Conference on June 24 in Orlando, Florida. The commercial real estate industry honored 14 properties. The AZGFD facility, winner in the Government category, was recognized for excellence in the areas of “green” technologies, cost-effective building management and operations, sustainability, access for disabled people, and overall excellence. Built in 2007, the facility became one of the first Arizona State government buildings to receive a Platinum-certified designation, the highest ranking awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council program for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

### AZGFD wins multiple communications awards

The Arizona Game and Fish Department continues to be recognized for its work in



*A lot of hardware was won in October 2014 at the Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.*

conservation communications. The Department’s video production staff took home eight Emmy Awards at the Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS) in October. They also won five “Excellence in Craft” awards from the Outdoor Writers Association of America (OWAA) in the “Television/Video/Webcast” contest in May. AZGFD’s publications staff and video production staff received 11 awards in the 20th Annual Communicator Awards competition in April. The Information Branch staff won eight awards (one second place and seven third place) at the Association for Conservation Information (ACI) annual conference in Nebraska in July.

*The Department’s headquarters facility was recognized for excellence in the areas of “green” technologies, cost-effective building management and operations, sustainability, access for disabled people, and overall excellence.*



## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Fiscal Year Revenues by Fund	2012-13	2013-14
Game and Fish Fund	\$28,149,498	\$31,327,652
Watercraft Licensing Fund	\$4,213,943	\$4,600,643
Game, Nongame Fund	\$144,684	\$170,218
Federal Assistance (Includes Matching Funds)	\$34,583,403	\$33,760,611
Heritage Fund	\$10,118,464	\$10,722,168
Off-Highway Vehicle Fund	\$1,593,241	\$1,667,105
Capital Improvement/Conservation Dev. Funds	\$1,463,771	\$1,361,627
Wildlife Conservation Fund	\$6,204,704	\$6,254,247
Indirect Cost Fund	\$3,344,078	\$4,346,619
Other Funds (See Detail Below)	\$3,259,743	\$4,286,268
<b>Total Revenue All Sources</b>	<b>\$93,075,529</b>	<b>\$98,497,158</b>

### Other Funds Detail

GF Land & Water Conservation/Recreation Dev.	\$269	\$265
Wildlife Theft Prevention Fund	\$137,229	\$131,366
Waterfowl Conservation Fund	\$72,739	\$49,503
Wildlife Endowment Fund	\$148,721	\$219,627
Interagency Service Agreement Fund	\$0	\$818,293
Federal Economic Recovery Fund	\$264,002	\$15,967
Trust/Donation Fund	\$2,423,886	\$2,834,250
Firearms Safety and Ranges Fund	\$0	\$34,746
W/L Habitat and Restoration Fund	\$3	\$3
Game & Fish California/Coll Stamp	\$2,817	\$1,332
Game & Fish Kaibab Coop	\$40,060	\$24,731
Publications Revolving Fund	\$170,017	\$156,185
<b>Total Other Funds</b>	<b>\$3,259,743</b>	<b>\$4,286,268</b>

Fiscal Year Expenditures by Fund	2012-13	2013-14
Game and Fish Fund	\$26,361,062	\$28,412,482
Watercraft Licensing Fund	\$3,167,827	\$3,351,095
Game, Nongame Fund	\$104,051	\$154,220
Federal Assistance (Includes Matching Funds)	\$33,672,698	\$33,909,728
Heritage Fund	\$9,240,124	\$7,657,709
Off-Highway Vehicle Fund	\$1,403,884	\$1,513,307
Capital Improvement/Conservation Dev Funds	\$2,122,187	\$1,522,907
Wildlife Conservation Fund	\$5,040,170	\$5,460,787
Indirect Cost Fund	\$2,664,346	\$4,087,045
Other Funds (See Detail Below)	\$3,068,082	\$3,591,099
<b>Total Expenditures All Sources</b>	<b>\$86,844,431</b>	<b>\$89,660,379</b>

### Other Funds Detail

Federal Grants	\$0	\$0
Wildlife Theft Prevention Fund	\$163,223	\$60,518
Waterfowl Conservation Fund	\$84,762	\$166,227
Interagency Service Agreement Fund	\$114,600	\$882,589
Federal Economic Recovery Fund	\$313,204	\$769
Trust/Donation Fund	\$2,202,456	\$2,309,055
Firearms Safety and Ranges Fund	\$0	\$18,503
Game & Fish Kaibab Coop	\$12,880	\$16,667
Publications Revolving Fund	\$176,957	\$136,771
<b>Total Other Funds</b>	<b>\$3,068,082</b>	<b>\$3,591,099</b>

Calendar Year Sales in Numbers by Group	2012	2013
All Licenses/Tags (see detail below)	439,244	441,097
Resident Trout stamps	64,105	61,225
Nonresident Trout Stamps	285	10
Tags (excluding special hunts)	164,915	161,329
Misc Permits/Licenses	2,042	2,241
Special Use Licenses/Stamps	57,730	35,242
Misc No Cost Licenses/Permits	2,082	1,910
Two Pole Stamp	58,492	55,703
Resident Additional Day Stamps	1,888	1,879
Nonresident Additional Day Stamps	1,908	2,141
Arizona Waterfowl Stamps	6,821	6,657
Migratory Bird Stamps	47,126	51,652
Kaibab 12A Habitat Stamps	1,790	1,606
Restricted Non-permit Tags	0	0
Supplemental Hunt Tags	58	10
Companion Hunt Tags	131	221
<b>Totals</b>	<b>848,617</b>	<b>822,923</b>

Lifetime License/Stamp Sales	2012	2013
Lifetime License Fish	49	111
Lifetime License Hunt	102	152
Lifetime License Combo Hunt/Fish	95	148
Lifetime License Trout Stamps	40	38
Wildlife Benefactor Combo License	14	44
<b>Totals</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>493</b>

Calendar Year License Sales by Category	2012	2013
Resident General Fish	130,466	126,056
Nonresident General Fish	803	0
Family/Primary Fish	5,750	5,481
Family/Spouse Fish	3,037	2,738
Family/Child Fish	2,294	2,004
Resident Super Fish/Trout/Urban License	13,976	14,468
Nonresident Super Fish/Trout/Urban License	1,925	2,523
Resident General Hunt	59,450	62,331
Nonresident General Hunt	21,818	22,845
Family/Primary Hunt	980	1,127
Family/Spouse Hunt	505	561
Family/Child Hunt	2,369	2,563
Super Hunt w/Stamps	163	172
Resident Combo Hunt/Fish	74,608	76,607
Nonresident Combo Hunt/Fish	714	400
Family/Primary Combo Hunt/Fish	3,705	4,277
Family/Spouse Combo Hunt/Fish	1,993	2,132
Family/Child Combo Hunt/Fish	2,187	2,269
Super Combo Hunt/Fish w/Stamps	722	785
Resident Youth Combo Hunt/Fish	23,293	24,221
Nonresident 3-Day Hunt	7,083	7,228
Urban Fishing	27,824	26,737
Nonresident Colorado River Fish	1,295	1,574
Nonresident 5-Day Fish	7,677	7,900
Nonresident 4-Month Fish	7,658	7,443
Resident 1-Day Fish	16,823	16,759
Nonresident 1-Day Fish	14,969	15,158
Resident Youth Group 2-Day Fish	96	86
Resident General Fish Nov/Dec	3,023	2,972
Nonresident General Fish Nov/Dec	128	1
Family/Primary Fish Nov/Dec	53	44
Family/Spouse Fish Nov/Dec	11	27
Urban Fishing Nov/Dec	1,846	1,608
<b>Totals</b>	<b>439,244</b>	<b>441,097</b>

Calendar Year License and Tag Sales	2012	2013
Licenses	\$19,989,591	\$18,014,097
Stamps	1,812,907	1,648,163
Tags	7,666,141	7,872,671
<b>Total Value</b>	<b>\$29,468,639</b>	<b>\$27,534,931</b>



John W. Harris



Robert E. Mansell



Kurt Davis



Edward "Pat" Madden



James Ammons

## **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.

# Arizona Game and Fish Department

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to the Director

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**JIM HINKLE** Field Operations  
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