

Arizona Game and Fish Department 2009-2010 Annual Report





Larry D. Voyles

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Arizonans have time and again demonstrated their passion for wildlife. More than 80 years ago, hunters, anglers and wildlife enthusiasts were the driving forces in creating the state's Game and Fish Commission system, which established the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and Department and put in place today's science-based system of wildlife management and conservation. Twenty years ago, voters overwhelmingly passed the initiative that created the Heritage Fund, which provides a portion of lottery ticket sales to the Department for conservation purposes. Game and Fish receives no Arizona tax dollars, and this critical funding source has provided benefits to the state in the form of native species conservation, public access to recreational opportunities, and economic benefits to local communities.

Arizona's citizenry is indeed passionate about wildlife. It is also a diverse citizenry with differing values, desires and opinions on how wildlife and habitat should be managed and conserved. Those differences sometimes escalate into conflict between interests that quite frankly have more in common than they realize. Disagreement is going to occur; however, we must all work to ensure that conflict does not become a drain on finite resources that could be better used toward on-the-ground conservation efforts. As our state continues to grow, our diverse individuals and groups must look to the values they share to find common ground for the betterment of wildlife.

Fortunately, there are many instances of groups doing just that by coming together to achieve conservation success. You'll read about a number of Department accomplishments in this annual report. Many of those successes would not have been possible without collaborative conservation with other partners. We are working on a number of fronts with federal land managers, state and local entities, nongovernmental organizations and private landowners on projects that address wildlife conservation, habitat, and access to recreational opportunities. Successfully taking advantage of these opportunities can be a win-win for our state by conserving resources for the public while sustaining wildlife-related recreation, a significant economic driver in our state.

It's important to also look at where we're heading. Among my goals for the future are a revamped Department planning process that integrates a number of current initiatives and is linked to budget and priorities; development of GIS-based conservation tools that will inform and influence the impact of development on wildlife and habitat; development of a wildlife recreation action plan to recruit and retain hunters, anglers, wildlife viewers and other outdoor recreationists; and continuing to effectively manage and protect the Department's funding sources which have enabled this agency to forge an entrepreneurial model that has provided a foundation of fiscal responsibility and success during these tough economic times. We look forward to working together with all of you over the coming year and beyond.

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

Larry D. Voyles

Director



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Heritage Fund celebrates 20 years of conserving Arizona's wildlife

If you voted in Arizona in 1990, chances are you voted in favor of the initiative that created the Heritage Fund. Arizonans showed their overwhelming support for wildlife by passing the measure by a 2-to-1 ratio. For the past 20 years the Heritage Fund has made a difference not just to wildlife conservation efforts, but also to the state's economy, public access, environmental education and outdoor recreation. Just some of the notable accomplishments of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Heritage dollars over the past two decades include: contributing to local economies through the awarding of more than 640 grants totaling nearly \$13 million dollars across all of Arizona's counties; supporting the award-winning and nationally-recognized Bald Eagle Nestwatch Program, which has been key in helping the state's bald eagle population grow more than 600 percent over the past 30 years; securing public recreational access to more than 2 million acres in the state; reintroducing

black-footed ferrets, California condors and black-tailed prairie dogs, which had disappeared from the state; recovering threatened Apache trout to allow fishing opportunities for this native species; and, supporting representation of Arizona's interests with regard to wildlife conservation, land use and water policy decisions. The Heritage Fund comes from a portion of Arizona Lottery ticket sales.

Hunters and anglers make huge economic contribution to Arizona

Many people may not realize it, but hunting and fishing make a significant economic contribution to our state. Annual expenditures by more than 160,000 hunters and 420,000 anglers (residents and nonresidents) toward equipment and trip expenses are about \$1.1 billion a year, benefitting retailers and local communities through jobs and tax revenues. Wildlife conservation benefits, too. The purchase of hunting and fishing licenses helps fund wildlife management and recreational opportunities, as does the purchase of certain hunting and fishing gear, which provides

The Heritage Fund has been a key source of support for successfully increasing Arizona's bald eagle population.



New OHV law enforcement officers are helping better manage growing off-highway vehicle use in Arizona.

federal funding through an excise tax that is redistributed to the states through the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration programs. These programs are a unique partnership between the federal government, state agencies, private industry, and hunters and anglers.

New OHV officers deployed in the field

Game and Fish has been in the process of hiring, training or deploying new officers dedicated to enforcement of the new off-highway vehicle (OHV) laws, as authorized by OHV legislation enacted in 2008. The Department currently has two of these officers in the field, two scheduled to finish training and be assigned in January 2011, and three scheduled to start law enforcement academy in January 2011. Because these positions are dedicated primarily to law enforcement rather than the full array of responsibilities of a wildlife manager, the Department worked with the Arizona Department of Administration to establish a new position classification—recreational law enforcement officer—that offers flexibility to hire an officer dedicated to OHV, watercraft, or wildlife recreation law enforcement, or any combination of the three. Further actions are currently in process for the recruitment of two more of these wildlife recreation officers. Overall, the additions

will increase Game and Fish's field law enforcement capacity by more than 10 percent. The Department will continue to look for opportunities over the next few budget cycles to fund and deploy an additional five officers in this classification, pending funding availability.

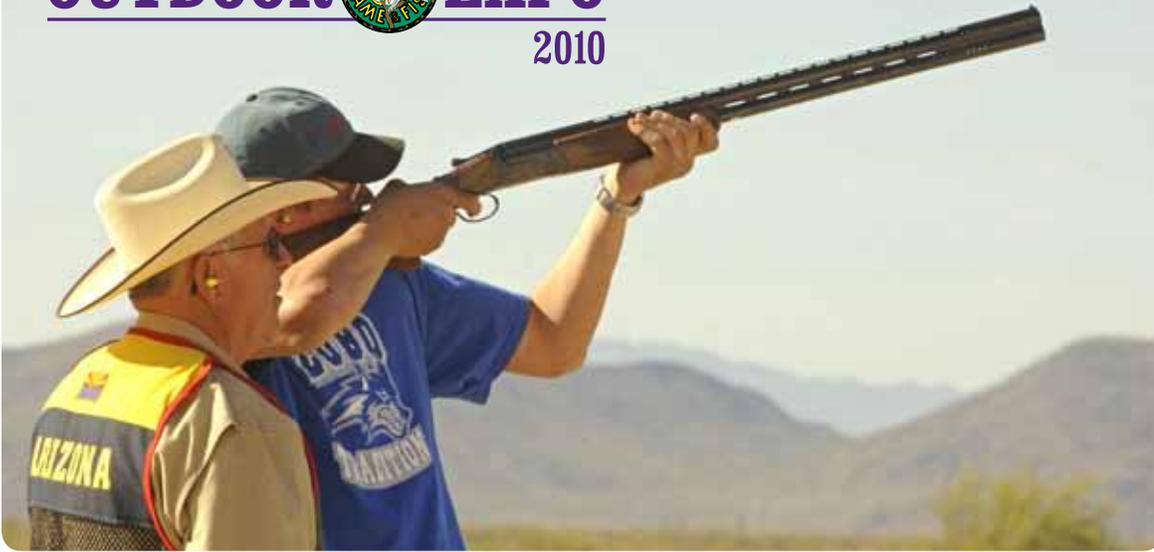
Future for endangered black-footed ferrets shines thanks to recovery efforts

The future for Arizona's endangered black-footed ferrets looks promising with two new exciting developments: the best-ever population survey results, and the opening of a new breeding facility for the species at the Phoenix Zoo. Fourteen years after they were first reintroduced to the state, black-footed ferret surveys conducted in the fall by the Arizona Game and Fish Department showed a record 96 animals in the Aubrey Valley population located outside of Seligman, Arizona. Because not all ferrets were captured and included in the fall survey count, the number of animals identified during the survey is a minimum population estimate, and the actual population could be larger. Not only is the number of ferrets identified a record high for Arizona's population, but it also exceeds the state's objective that needs to be met in order for the species to be "downlisted" from endangered to threatened on the endangered species list. "Downlisting" means that the species has recovered to a point where its classification on the Endangered Species List has improved. All states with black-footed ferret populations are given state-specific recovery guidelines that lead to a larger national recovery effort. The national recovery guidelines must be met before "downlisting" the species can be considered.

Game and Fish gets grant to improve access to public lands

The Department was awarded a \$600,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to improve outdoor recreational access to public lands. Game and Fish will use the funding to help ensure private landowners allow recreational access to their private land holdings or allow the public access through their private landholdings to otherwise inaccessible public

Arizona Game & Fish Department **OUTDOOR EXPO** 2010



The Outdoor Expo offered a variety of hands-on outdoor recreation activities to visitors of all ages.

lands. The Department has used a portion of Heritage Funding from the Arizona Lottery during the past 20 years to aggressively provide outdoor recreationists ready access to public lands. Lately, the Game and Fish Access Program has secured access to nearly 2 million acres per year that would otherwise not be available to the public. With this new funding, the expectations are for that number to climb to 3 million acres per year. The Department's public access program is one of 17 such programs across the nation that will receive grants totaling \$11.76 million through the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program. The Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program incentivizes owners and operators of privately held farm, ranch and forest land to voluntarily give hunters, anglers, hikers, campers, bird watchers and other outdoor recreational enthusiasts access to land for their enjoyment.

Outdoor Expo draws 32,000 people

The Arizona Game and Fish Department Outdoor Expo drew 32,000 people over the March 27-28, 2010 weekend at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility in Phoenix. The event offered the public an opportunity to learn about wildlife-related and outdoor recreation activities, including wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting,

archery, shooting sports, camping, boating, off-highway vehicle recreation, and the mission of the Department. People were also able to visit with more than 150 exhibitors, including sportsmen's and conservation organizations, government agencies and commercial vendors of outdoor products and services. The 2011 Expo will be held March 26-27, 2011 at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility.

Number of breeding bald eagles in Arizona grows

The state's bald eagle population continues to flourish. For the 2010 breeding season, three new active breeding areas were identified, bringing the total number of occupied breeding areas in the state to 52. The total number of breeding adult bald eagles also grew to 104, which is the highest on record. This past year, under the careful watch of the Arizona Game and Fish Department and a coalition of 22 other partners that make up the Southwestern Bald Eagle Management Committee, 44 eaglets also reached the critical point of taking their first flight, an important milestone for a young bird's chances of survival. Bald eagle numbers over the past 30 years have grown more than 600 percent in the state. Cooperative on-the-ground management efforts include: monitoring and survey flights; recreational area closures



Game and Fish has completed a variety of due diligence activities on the site of the Northern Arizona Shooting Range, including a sound study.

during the breeding season; banding and visual identification; contaminants analysis; and a nestwatch program to protect breeding activities. The bald eagle program is supported by the Heritage Fund, a voter-passed initiative that provides funding for wildlife conservation through Arizona Lottery revenue.

Site acquired for long-awaited Northern Arizona Shooting Range

In a historic moment in the effort to establish a public shooting range in the Flagstaff area, the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and Department finalized the purchase of the 160-acre Foster Ranch property in Coconino County for the future site of the Northern Arizona Shooting Range. The property was selected after evaluation of nearly 50 possible sites that met objectives shaped in part by a public survey. An open house about the planning and development of the range was held on Sept. 23, 2010 to give the public a chance to see some conceptual designs, ask questions, and provide input on the designs.

The Department receives no Arizona tax revenues, and the property was purchased and will be developed through the sale of licenses to hunters and anglers. A \$3 surcharge is imposed on hunting and fishing licenses to acquire, construct, renovate, or improve Game and Fish facilities. The fund for the development of the Northern Arizona Shooting Range was established beginning in 2001. The Department has been in the process of a variety of due diligence activities, including such items as a sound study, environmental compliance, and coordination with other agencies. Factors such as funding, process time for environmental compliances, resources, and weather will dictate a phased-in development approach of the range over the next three years and beyond. Flagstaff is one of Arizona's largest communities without a designated place for recreational shooting. Providing a safe, controlled range will reduce use impacts to surrounding areas, provide a venue for law enforcement training, and provide a positive economic benefit to the local communities.

New Wildlife Recreation and Shooting Range branches help serve constituents

The Department reorganized its Information and Education Division by creating two additional branches to better serve constituents across a broad spectrum of outdoor recreational interests. Staffing for these branches came primarily from reallocating current resources within the agency. The Shooting Ranges Branch will focus on the development, operation and maintenance of commission-owned and supported shooting ranges in Arizona. The Wildlife Recreation Branch will focus on engaging the public to become involved in outdoor recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, shooting sports, archery, wildlife viewing, and other activities related to wildlife or the outdoors.

Commission adopts fishing regulation changes

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission approved several changes to the 2011-2012 Arizona Fishing Regulations as proposed by Department biologists. The commission removed the slot limit at Roosevelt Lake, in part because most anglers now practice catch-and-release, but also because this popular lake in the Tonto Basin is experiencing tremendous productivity; this change went into effect during the fall of 2010. After two years of intensive studies at Roosevelt, biologists determined that the bass population is healthy, reproduction is good, size classes are well balanced, bass grow-outs are superb, and less than seven percent of anglers catch and keep bass. Starting Jan. 1, 2011, several other changes will occur. Becker Lake will become a blue ribbon trout fishery (catch-and-release-only year round with artificial lure and fly only with a single barbless hook). The maximum size limit at Lees Ferry will increase from 12 to 14 inches to allow greater harvest of the smaller trout and provide more angler opportunity. Ash Creek along with Marijillda Creek and its tributaries (Mt. Graham) will be closed to fishing until a fishable population of native Gila trout is established. Snake Creek in the White



Mountains will be open to angling. Bag and possession limits of catfish, trout and sunfish at Redondo Pond (Yuma Lakes) will be reduced. About 13 miles of Bonita Creek in Graham County will be closed to fishing as part of an effort to re-establish native fish populations in this remote creek that receives minimal angling pressure. And, the daily bag and possession limit for largemouth bass at Pena Blanca Lake will be changed to “no harvest” until Dec. 31, 2012 (the lake was completely drained this past year and is on the comeback trail).

Mentored small game camps help introduce the public to hunting

The Department once again hosted small game hunting camps across Arizona as part of its ongoing hunter and angler recruitment program. Game and Fish teams up with a number of sportsmen’s organizations and others to conduct these camps, which focus on everything from quail and squirrels to ducks and geese. A list of camps and contact information is posted at www.azgfd.gov/hunting (see the “Mentored Hunting & Juniors-only Events” information).

Don’t move a mussel – now it’s the law

The Department instituted new regulations in 2010 to help prevent the spread of invasive quagga mussels to other Arizona waters. The regulations, called “Director’s Orders,” were authorized by the Aquatic Invasive Species Interdiction Act passed in 2009 by the Arizona Legislature. They require boaters to drain, clean and dry their boats when leaving the

The protected size limit (slot limit) has been removed at Roosevelt Lake.



The Department offers wind and solar power guidelines with voluntary recommendations aimed at helping alternative energy developers consider wildlife conservation in their project planning.

vicinity of a water known to contain quagga mussels. There are also requirements for waiting a certain period of time before launching your watercraft in another water. Boaters who don't follow the procedures outlined in the newly-created regulations can be cited by law enforcement officers. Quagga mussels were first discovered in Arizona waters in Lake Mead in January of 2007 and are now found in lakes Mead, Mohave, Havasu, Pleasant, and the Lower Colorado River below Havasu to the international boundary with Mexico. They can colonize rapidly on hard surfaces and can damage boat motors and clog water intake structures for power and water treatment plants.

New solar and wind power guidelines aim to help Arizona's wildlife

The Department made available its newly-developed wind and solar power guidelines aimed at helping alternative energy developers consider wildlife conservation in their project planning. The voluntary recommendations will assist energy developers in identifying potential impacts to wildlife and habitats from their proposed project development, and potential alternatives to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate for those impacts. The solar guidelines are organized around five of the key development stages: (1) wildlife protection regulations; (2) Arizona Game and Fish Department regulations and review; (3) gathering preliminary information and conducting site screening; (4) identifying potential impacts to wildlife; and

(5) mitigating the impacts. The wind guidelines include recommendations on: (1) preliminary screening of proposed wind energy projects; (2) preconstruction study design and methods; (3) assessing direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to bats and birds in accordance with state and federal laws; (4) developing avoidance and minimization measures; (5) establishing appropriate mitigation; and (6) post-construction operations monitoring, analysis, and reporting methods. By considering wildlife in the early planning stages, it is hoped that renewable energy developers can design projects that impact wildlife in the smallest way possible.

Hunting and fishing licenses are available online again

They're back: Arizona hunting and fishing licenses are available for purchase online once again. It's simple and convenient: just visit the Arizona Game and Fish Department's website at www.azgfd.gov to decide what license or license package suits you or your family best, and make the online purchase using your Visa or MasterCard from the convenience of your own home or office. There is a \$1.50 Internet fee for buying your license online – the fee actually pays for the service. Be sure to have a printer handy; you must physically print out the license you purchase online (color or black and white will work). There are lots of hunting and fishing license options available, including some exceptional deals on Family Licenses. Be sure to shop online at "Buy a License" for the license package that works best for you.

No CWD detected in Arizona deer and elk testing

The Department reported no detection of chronic wasting disease (CWD) this past year in any of the 1,624 testable samples from hunter-harvested or road-killed deer and elk during Arizona's 2009-2010 hunting season. Arizona Game and Fish has tested approximately 14,500 deer and elk samples since beginning its surveillance program in 1998. None have tested positive for the disease. Although CWD has not yet been found in Arizona, it is present in three neighboring states: Utah, Colorado, and

New Mexico. Each year, hunters are encouraged to submit deer and elk heads for testing, particularly in Units 1, 12B, 27, and 28, as those units border CWD-positive areas in other states.

All-day early dove season returns to Arizona

For the first time in two decades, all-day dove hunting returned to Arizona for the early dove season, Sept. 1-15, 2010. The early season half-day dove hunting restrictions were eliminated by the Game and Fish Commission in response to some changes the state is experiencing, such as hunting areas being pushed further out from the urban centers and less hunting pressure and harvest on doves as compared to the 1980s. In addition, biologists reported dove reproduction was above average this past year due to favorable winter and spring rains.

Collaboration results in enhancements to Yuma fishing area

The Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Bureau of Land Management celebrated the opening of the Redondo Pond Fishing Pier in August 2010. Formed in an old gravel pit, the pond itself has existed for several years with limited access for fishing and recreation. The project, which took about a year-and-a-half to complete, included creating a parking area, providing disability access, and construction of the fishing pier. The completion of this partnership project now provides enhanced access to stocked fishing opportunities at three locations around Yuma, at Redondo, Fortuna Pond, and the West Wetlands Park pond.

CONSERVATION

Arizonans asked to remember Arizona's wildlife at tax time

The Department reminded Arizonans that they can “make a mark for wildlife” at tax time by making a donation to the Arizona Wildlife Fund on their state income tax form. The fund is a voluntary program that allows Arizona taxpayers to make a donation to help imperiled and endangered wildlife and other nongame species. Nongame wildlife are those



animals that are neither hunted nor fished in a traditional sense. The Department does not receive general tax dollars, so donations to the Arizona Wildlife Fund provide an important funding source for wildlife conservation. The cumulative effect of even small donations has tremendous impact on conserving the state's wildlife resources, which provide a variety of low-cost recreational opportunities for residents to enjoy as well as economic benefits to local communities.

Study begins on potential impacts of wind energy development to pronghorn

The Department initiated a two-year research project to evaluate potential impacts of wind energy development and operations on preferred areas of use and movement patterns of pronghorn antelope near the Dry Lake wind energy facilities in north-central Arizona. Using a helicopter and net gun, Department personnel captured 15 pronghorn from selected herds in early November 2010. Each animal was fitted with a global positioning system (GPS) collar, and then immediately released to rejoin its herd. The GPS collars will provide location data for each pronghorn six times daily, giving wildlife biologists detailed tracking information. The collars will operate for approximately two years before automatically dropping off the animal and being retrieved. Part of the project cost will

All-day dove hunting during the early dove season in September returned to Arizona for the first time in two decades.



Arizonans can assist wildlife by making a donation to the Arizona Wildlife Fund at tax time.

The August release of Chiricahua leopard frogs into the Tonto National Forest marked the release of the 10,000th frog of this rare species into the wild.



be paid by the Department through a Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program grant. Because of their interest in maintaining a viable pronghorn population in the Dry Lake area and in mitigating potential impacts to other pronghorn habitats with any future developments, the energy companies affiliated with the development are also helping fund the research.

Recovery program releases the 10,000th threatened Chiricahua leopard frog into Arizona's wilderness

A team of biologists from the Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, and the Phoenix Zoo's Conservation Center released more than 1,700 threatened Chiricahua leopard frogs into the Tonto National Forest in August 2010, marking the release of the 10,000th frog of this rare species released into the wild after being reared at the Phoenix Zoo's Conservation Center. The frogs, including adults and tadpoles, were released at multiple sites in the forest near Payson. The frogs were raised from eggs collected near Young. Additionally, 100 frogs that were bred and reared at the zoo were released near Camp Verde in the Coconino National Forest. Thanks in part to Game and Fish's Heritage Fund, great strides are being

made in re-establishing Chiricahua leopard frogs to their native habitat in Arizona through this partnership effort.

Sportsmen raise more than \$369,000 for wildlife conservation in Arizona

The 2010 Arizona Big Game Super Raffle raised more than \$369,000 to benefit Arizona's wildlife. Twelve winners were selected at the July drawing. Raffle prizes included ten special big game tags (one for each big game species), one Swarovski optics package, and a guided New Mexico elk hunt. Every dollar raised for each species is returned to the Arizona Game and Fish Department for the specific management of that species. Decisions on funding specific projects are coordinated through a cooperative process of the Arizona Habitat Partnership Committee. Input from 12 statewide habitat partners and the organizations (state, local and conservation groups) collectively determine which projects will provide the most benefit to each species represented. Funding from the raffle allows for a multitude of wildlife conservation projects. For 2010, more than 60 projects were approved, including water developments, grassland restoration, game surveys, and monitoring of wildlife movements to map connectivity issues.

Sipe Wildlife Area named as a premier spot to experience elk

The Department's Sipe White Mountain Wildlife Area was named by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) as one of the top places in the country to view and learn about elk, other wildlife and their habitats. Of its list of 25 educational destinations for families to experience elk, Sipe is the only site in Arizona named by the national conservation organization. Although elk are present at Sipe year-round, September and October provide the most spectacular viewing opportunities. Sipe lies in the shadow of Escudilla Mountain in eastern Arizona, a few miles southeast of the towns of Eagar and Springerville. Since it acquired the property, the Arizona Game and Fish Department has steadily enhanced habitat values for wildlife on the property and attractions for visitors. A small visitor center and a series of hiking trails, complete with interpretive signage and wildlife viewing points, offer the public opportunities to learn more about Arizona's unique wildlife resources. The Department also conducts several educational wildlife-viewing programs at Sipe for the public throughout the summer and early fall.

Endangered fish find a new home at the Rio Salado Audubon Center

Two endangered species of native fish became the newest residents to the outdoor ponds at the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center in Phoenix. Nearly 500 desert pupfish and 550 Gila topminnows were released Aug. 31, 2010, into the center's ponds as part of a Safe Harbor program that allows non-federal landowners to actively participate in the recovery of these endangered fish by providing sites to establish populations of the species in areas where they no longer exist. The Audubon Center is the tenth participant enrolled in the program. The release was carried out through a cooperative effort between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish, Audubon Arizona, Phoenix Zoo, City of Phoenix, and the Desert Botanical Garden. The outdoor ponds at the Audubon Center were



constructed using a grant from the Heritage Fund, a voter-passed initiative that was started in 1990 to further wildlife conservation efforts in the state through Arizona Lottery ticket sales.

Arizona offers many opportunities to experience elk.

2010 survey results released for desert bighorn sheep on the Kofa NWR

A survey of the desert bighorn sheep population on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Kofa National Wildlife Refuge in southwestern Arizona resulted in a population estimate of 402 sheep. The survey estimate is down from the 2009 survey estimate of 410 sheep, but it is still slightly above the lowest recorded estimated level of the 2006 survey of 390. Due to standardized survey methodology and scientific margin of accuracy, biologists' analysis of the past five surveys indicates no significant decline or improvement to the herd's population. Wildlife management agencies

A collaborative Safe Harbor program allows non-federal landowners to participate in recovery efforts for endangered native fish species.



remain concerned about the low population levels on the refuge compared to the estimated 812 animals of the 2000 survey. Once a very robust population, the size of the herd on the refuge has dropped significantly since 2000. Wildlife experts attribute the decline to a variety of potential factors including drought, predation, water availability, disease and human disturbance. Due to the significance of this sheep population, the Service and the Arizona Game and Fish Department are conducting an ongoing, joint study to collect data on these and other suspected causes of the population's decline.

More California condors released to Arizona's wilderness

Four endangered California condors were released to the wild in the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument in northern Arizona in September 2010. This was the 16th public release of condors in Arizona since the multi-partner recovery program began in 1996. Condors are hatched and reared in captivity at The Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey in Idaho, Oregon Zoo, Los Angeles Zoo and San Diego Wild Animal Park and transported to Arizona for release to the wild. Currently, 73 condors are flying free in the Grand Canyon region. The world's total population of California condors is 384, with 186 of them gracing the skies of Arizona, Utah, California and Mexico. Condors were reduced to just 22 individuals in the 1980s when a program was started to save the species from extinction.

EDUCATION

Game and Fish offers online OHV education course

To better meet the needs of busy off-highway vehicle (OHV) enthusiasts, the Arizona Game and Fish Department created a new online OHV education course. The course was built after analyzing the most valuable OHV topics from across the country and integrating them with Arizona laws and regulations. It offers an overview of ATV, dirt bike, and recreational off-

highway vehicle (ROV) operation. Students will develop a better understanding of being "rider active," safety measures for operation, how to make ethical decisions when operating, and the importance of staying on roads and trails to minimize impact to natural resources. The new online course has been specifically developed for students of all ages and skill levels and is a self-paced program so students can learn at their own speed. Once completed, students can take a final exam for \$30 and receive a completion certificate.

New wildlife conservation curriculum offers free standards-based learning for high schoolers

The struggle to conserve America's wildlife is an amazing tale of national and natural history. It is a story of what can be accomplished when people work together towards a common goal. Now, a new curriculum developed by the Department as part of its Focus Wild program is available to help teachers convey this important lesson to students. "America's Wildlife: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow" is intended for high school science and social studies classrooms and consists of five interactive lessons set to state and national standards. It is available free of charge to educators. To help introduce the curriculum, Game and Fish hosted teacher workshops throughout the state in September and October 2010. Game and Fish's Focus Wild program is supported by the Heritage Fund, a voter-passed initiative that was started in 1990 to further wildlife conservation efforts in the state. Funding comes from Arizona Lottery ticket sales.

Arizona adds master instructors to further hunter education program

Hunter education in Arizona has been enhanced, thanks to a change aimed at increasing class availability for the public and facilitating better communication with volunteer hunter education instructors. The Department appointed 11 volunteer regional coordinators to serve as "master instructors" in response to input gathered through more than a year of discussions with current hunter



education instructors. Targeted at providing Arizona's communities with better access to hunter education courses, the master instructors—all long-time, experienced senior hunter education instructors—will facilitate, enhance and improve communication channels between the Department and its existing volunteer instructors by coordinating courses offered at the community level. They will also help establish objectives for courses and assist in achieving them.

Public outreach events

Game and Fish employees and volunteers staffed informational booths or provided educational presentations throughout the state on a variety of wildlife and outdoor recreational topics. Just some of the events the Department either conducted or participated in include the Arizona Game and Fish Department Outdoor Expo, International Sportsmen's Exposition, National Public Lands Day, High Country Hummingbird event, Tres Rios Birding and Nature Festival, Tri-State Boating Fair, Free Fishing Day events, Yuma Birding and Nature Festival, Wings Over Willcox, Verde

Valley Birding and Nature Festival, Payson Wildlife Fair, Bighorn Sheep workshops, Urban Watchable Wildlife Bat workshops, and Elk-viewing workshops. This is in addition to the numerous small game camps, shooting sports events, fishing clinics and other events that the Department either hosts or participates in.

ISSUES

Wild horse and burro management

The Department submitted comments and recommendations to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regarding the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Strategy Development Document, titled "Working Toward Sustainable Management of America's Wild Horses and Burros." The BLM document identifies draft goals, objectives, and possible management strategies under consideration to implement Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar's Wild Horse and Burro Initiative. Game and Fish, as the state agency responsible for managing resident wildlife populations in Arizona, encourages the evaluation of wild horse and burro management in order to improve the

Game and Fish staff and volunteers participated in numerous public outreach events.



Game and Fish believes wild horse and burro management proposals must take into consideration the needs of wildlife and habitat.

management efficiency and effectiveness across the landscape. However, the Department also believes that the original crafters of the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burro Act of 1971 (Act) wisely balanced measures to protect free-roaming horses and burros with measures to protect wildlife, habitats, rangeland resources, and private interests. The Department believes that any new strategy developed for the management of wild horses and burros must require that the BLM and Department of Interior meet their fiduciary and statutory obligations to appropriately identify and mitigate for impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and other statutes, regulations, and legislation, as applicable. The Department's comments can be viewed at www.azgfd.gov/inside_azgfd/WildHorseBurro.shtml. The Department is committed to helping the BLM develop a wild horse and burro management strategy that best meets the intent of the Act and the needs of wildlife resources throughout the West.

Lead and wildlife

Lead and its effects on wildlife have received increasing attention at the national and state scale. Arizona Game and Fish has been involved in lead and wildlife issues since the 1980s and continues to be actively engaged through the

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) and the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA). In keeping with the Game and Fish Commission's direction for the Department to continue expanding its dialogue with the public on ingested lead and wildlife, the Department conducted focus groups to help improve its understanding of the viewpoints and opinions of key constituencies. In another development, several advocacy groups petitioned the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in August 2010 to ban lead ammunition and fishing tackle under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). The EPA denied the portion of the petition dealing with lead ammunition, saying the agency does not have the legal authority to regulate ammunition under TSCA, but it continued reviewing the portion of the petition pertaining to fishing tackle. As part of EPA's solicitation of comments, Game and Fish submitted comments requesting that EPA reject the petition due to the fact that, biologically, there is currently no scientific evidence that lead fishing tackle poses a significant risk to Arizona's wildlife populations, and that state or local-level approaches, where and when there is scientific evidence to support them, make the most sense to address lead-wildlife concerns. The Department's comments can be viewed at www.azgfd.gov/lead. EPA in October denied the portion of the petition pertaining to lead fishing tackle. Game and Fish has seen success in voluntary, cooperative programs such as the voluntary lead ammunition reduction program to assist California condors in northern Arizona. The Department is committed to voluntary approaches through informational outreach, voluntary lead alternative programs, and surgically targeted responses, for addressing wildlife conservation and management needs.

Largemouth bass disease detected at Saguaro Lake

Arizona may have a new microscopic aquatic invader – largemouth bass virus, which can kill fish but is not harmful to people. Fish

samples from Saguaro Lake in October 2010 showed preliminary results for the largemouth bass virus, but due to testing timelines for this disease, the Department was still awaiting a full report from federal laboratories at the time of this writing. Confirmation of the detection will be sought with another, independent laboratory. If confirmed, Saguaro would be the first water in Arizona to test positive for the presence of the virus. Although not previously detected in Arizona, at least 18 other states have found the fish disease in bodies of water dating back to 1991.

Mexican wolf conservation

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission voted in December 2010 to support Congressional actions to delist the Mexican wolf from protection under the Endangered Species Act. In taking the action, the commission reaffirmed its strong commitment to Mexican wolf conservation, but recognized that progress on the program had been stalled since 2001 due to the current federal process that guides Mexican wolf conservation and is susceptible to litigation and gridlock. Through its action at this meeting, the commission anticipates that the Arizona Game and Fish Department would become even more heavily involved in planning the future of the species and the day-to-day activities in a more affordable, efficient and effective manner. Partnerships have been, and will continue to be, essential to continuing Mexican wolf conservation, and the commission invites all stakeholders to the table who are willing to participate in seeking solutions that will lead to effective, productive conservation. Earlier in the year (June 2010), the commission approved the Department's participation in a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that, if approved by all the signatory cooperators, would help re-establish a framework for interagency cooperation to make progress on the Mexican wolf reintroduction effort.

MISCELLANEOUS

Commission appointment recommendation board established

The Arizona Legislature passed, and Governor Brewer signed, a new law (ARS 17-202) in 2010 establishing an Arizona Game and Fish Commission Appointment Recommendation Board. The law stipulates that the board shall assist the governor by interviewing, evaluating and recommending candidates for appointment to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, and that it shall recommend at least two, but no more than five, candidates to the governor. The governor must select and appoint a commissioner from the list submitted by the board. The board met in November 2010 and ultimately forwarded a list of three candidates (chosen from an initial slate of 73 applicants) for Governor Brewer's consideration. At the time of this writing, the governor had nominated Robert E. Mansell for the 2011 appointment to the commission.

AZGFD helps bolster statewide watercraft law enforcement

The Department distributed grants to a number of Arizona counties to help them maintain watercraft law enforcement efforts during budget reductions resulting from the economic downturn of the last few years. Through an Intergovernmental Game and Fish grant of \$950,000 to the counties in fiscal year 2010 and anticipates distributing about \$500,000 in fiscal year 2011 to help our county partners maintain watercraft officer positions and a level of on-the-water enforcement presence. This cooperation across agencies has maintained critical enforcement presence on various Arizona waters.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Fiscal Year Revenues by Fund	2008-09	2009-10
Game and Fish Fund	\$27,632,527	27,132,427
Watercraft Licensing Fund.....	5,487,923	5,236,761
Game, Nongame Fund.....	232,857	205,572
Federal Assistance (Includes Matching Funds).....	31,052,942	32,440,397
Heritage Fund.....	6,295,957*	10,123,753
Off-highway Vehicle Fund.....	1,285,779	1,471,886
Capital Improvement/Conservation Dev. Funds.....	1,644,707	1,527,693
Wildlife Conservation Fund.....	6,245,815	5,635,240
Indirect Cost Fund.....	2,302,226	2,302,987
Other Funds (See Detail Below).....	2,965,363	3,271,876
Total Revenue All Sources	\$85,146,096	\$89,348,521

Other Funds Detail

GF Land and Water Conservation/ Recreation Development.....	\$592	349
Wildlife Theft Prevention Fund.....	136,604	144,528
Waterfowl Conservation Fund.....	74,278	69,769
Wildlife Endowment Fund.....	167,794	19,213
Federal Economic Recovery Fund.....	0	107,134
Trust/Donation Fund.....	2,215,063	2,705,651
Firearms Safety and Ranges Fund.....	3,519	73
W/L Habitat and Restoration fund.....	3,017	377
Game & Fish Kaibab Coop.....	182,552	43,659
Publications Revolving Fund.....	181,943	181,054
Total Other Funds	\$2,965,363	\$3,271,806

Fiscal Year Expenditures by Fund	2008-09	2009-10
Game and Fish Fund	\$28,892,431	31,505,473
Watercraft Licensing Fund.....	2,429,607	3,462,907
Game, Nongame Fund.....	292,642	311,435
Federal Assistance (Includes Matching Funds).....	30,404,832	33,028,877
Heritage Fund.....	5,474,767*	9,738,955
Off-highway Vehicle Fund.....	734,547	1,152,890
Capital Improvement/Conservation Dev. Funds.....	691,172	2,778,750
Wildlife Conservation Fund.....	6,012,389	5,912,414
Indirect Cost Fund.....	2,093,312	2,435,212
Other Funds (See Detail Below).....	3,936,997	2,792,595
Total Expenditures All Sources	\$80,962,695	\$93,119,508

Other Funds Detail

GF Land and Water Conservation/ Recreation Development.....	\$ 0	\$ 0
Wildlife Theft Prevention Fund.....	162,742	119,890
Waterfowl Conservation Fund.....	96,019	80,753
Wildlife Endowment Fund.....	0	0
Federal Economic Recovery Fund.....	0	86,572
Trust/Donation Fund.....	3,279,876	2,182,672
Firearms Safety and Ranges Fund.....	325,523	0
Game & Fish Kaibab Coop.....	3,003	129,774
Publications Revolving Fund.....	69,834	192,934
Total Other Funds	\$3,936,997	\$2,792,595

*Accounting correction involving real property escrow refund.

Calendar Year Sales in Numbers by Group	2008	2009
Licenses (see detail below)	451,790	457,605
Resident Trout Stamps	79,399	80,429
Nonresident Trout Stamps.....	258	297
Tags	154,562	154,443
Misc Permits/Licenses.....	2,980	3,270
Special Use Licenses/Stamps	64,678	61,311
Two Pole Stamp	60,064	60,755
Resident Additional Day Stamps.....	1,854	1,852
Nonresident Additional Day Stamps	1,902	2,025
Arizona Waterfowl Stamps	6,159	5,681
Migratory Bird Stamps	47,972	44,313
Kaibab 12A Archery Deer Stamps	2,631	2,343
Restricted Non-permit Tags.....	4	1
Supplemental Hunt Tags.....	12	46
Companion Hunt Tags	98	71
Totals	874,363	874,442

Lifetime License/Stamp Sales	2008	2009
Lifetime License Sales Fish.....	53	85
Lifetime License Sales Hunt.....	96	86
Lifetime License Sales Combo	115	99
Lifetime License Sales Trout Stamps	41	56
Wildlife Benefactor Combo License	-	1
Totals	305	327

Calendar Year License Sales by Category	2008	2009
Resident General Fish.....	155,214	158,262
Nonresident General Fish	1,097	914
Family/Primary Fish	3,590	4,191
Family/Spouse Fish	1,727	2,028
Family/Child Fish	1,582	1,829
Resident Super Fish/Trout/Urban License	10,995	12,772
Nonresident Super Fish/Trout/Urban License.....	1,335	1,722
Resident General Hunt.....	56,331	56,269
Nonresident General Hunt	20,466	19,443
Computer Family/Primary Hunt	540	566
Computer Family/Secondary (Spouse) Hunt	277	261
Computer Family/Youth & Child/10-13 Hunt	1,384	1,732
Resident Hunt/Fish.....	73,646	72,945
Nonresident Hunt/Fish	632	662
Computer Family/Primary Hunt/Fish	2,127	2,364
Computer Family/Secondary Hunt/Fish.....	1,162	1,307
Computer Family/Youth & Child/10-13 Hunt/Fish	1,566	1,597
Computer Super Hunt w/Stamps	207	177
Computer Super Hunt/Fish w/Stamps	1,143	851
Nonresident 3-Day Hunt.....	7,258	6,924
Urban Fishing	28,274	30,618
Nonresident Colorado River Fish	1,544	1,430
Nonresident 5-Day Fish.....	9,148	9,062
Resident Youth Hunt/Fish.....	23,212	23,602
Nonresident 4-Month Fish.....	7,927	8,244
Resident/Nonresident 1-Day Fish.....	32,751	32,819
Resident Youth Group 2-Day Fish.....	72	73
Resident General Fish Nov/Dec	3,878	3,028
Nonresident General Fish Nov/Dec	184	163
Computer Family/Primary Half Fish Nov/Dec	12	13
Computer Family/Spouse Half Fish Nov/Dec	1	2
Urban Fishing Nov/Dec	2,508	1,735
Totals	451,790	457,605

Calendar Year License and Tag Sales	2008	2009
Licenses.....	\$16,948,437	\$17,149,131
Stamps.....	2,159,937	2,100,230
Tags	8,063,170	7,928,344
Total Value.....	\$27,171,544	\$27,177,705



Jennifer L. Martin



Robert R. Woodhouse



Norman W. Freeman



Jack F. Husted



John W. Harris

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 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, enhance and restore Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and habitats through aggressive protection and management programs, and to provide wildlife resources and safe watercraft and off-highway vehicle recreation for the enjoyment, appreciation and use by present 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, 4040 N. Fairfax Dr., Ste. 130, 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

5000 W. Carefree Highway
Phoenix, AZ 85086
(602) 942-3000
www.azgfd.gov

LARRY D. VOYLES Director
GARY R. HOVATTER Deputy Director
ROBERT D. BROSCHEID Deputy Director

ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

MIKE SENN Wildlife Management
LEONARD ORDWAY Field Operations
JOHN BULLINGTON Special Services
TY GRAY Information & Education

REGIONAL OFFICES

Region I — JON COOLEY, Supervisor
2878 E. White Mountain Blvd., Pinetop 85935
(928) 367-4281

Region II — RON SIEG, Supervisor
3500 S. Lake Mary Road, Flagstaff 86001
(928) 774-5045

Region III — BOB POSEY, Supervisor
5325 N. Stockton Hill Road, Kingman 86409
(928) 692-7700

Region IV — PAT BARBER, Supervisor
9140 E. 28th St., Yuma 85365
(928) 342-0091

Region V — RAUL VEGA, Supervisor
555 N. Greasewood Road, Tucson 85745
(520) 628-5376

Region VI — ROD LUCAS, Supervisor
7200 E. University Drive, Mesa 85207
(480) 981-9400

