



Contact

Bruce Sitko, (928) 367-4281
Public Information Officer, AGFD

Arizona Game and Fish Department

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release July 21, 2009

\$1,000 reward offered in large theft of Apache trout

PINETOP, Ariz. – The Arizona Game and Fish Department is asking for the public's help in finding the individual or people responsible for the theft of numerous Apache trout and vandalism at the Silver Creek Fish Hatchery. Over the weekend of July 11-12, someone broke into the hatchery complex and stole approximately 270 trout from one of the raceways.

Hatchery workers discovered the vandalism and missing fish the following Monday morning. The Silver Creek Hatchery, located near the community of White Mountain Lake northeast of Show Low, stocks thousands of Apache trout each year into regional waterways such as the Black River, Little Colorado River, Lee Valley Reservoir and Silver Creek.

"The theft of these trout is essentially stealing money from the pockets of Arizona anglers," says Paul Greer, wildlife manager in Units 3A and 3C. "Anglers foot the bill for department-operated hatcheries to raise and stock trout throughout Arizona by the purchase of a trout stamp with their fishing license. An entire stocking of a state waterway will not occur now because of the irresponsible behavior of a couple of people."

"Unfortunately, this is not the first time fish have been stolen from this facility," adds Greer. "These aren't the actions of a sportsman. They're acts of criminals stealing wildlife assets and resources from the people of Arizona."

To report information on this incident, or any Game and Fish violation, call the department's Operation Game Thief hotline at (800) 352-0700. Caller identities may remain confidential upon request. Callers are eligible to receive a reward of up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of the violator(s) responsible for these crimes.

-30-

The Arizona Game and Fish Department prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability in its programs and activities. If anyone believes they have been discriminated against in any Game and Fish program or activity, including its employment practices, the individual may file a complaint alleging discrimination directly with the Game and Fish Deputy Director, 5000 W. Carefree Hwy., Phx., AZ 85086, (602) 942-3000 or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4040 N. Fairfax Dr., Ste. 130, Arlington, VA 22203. If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact the Game and Fish Deputy Director as listed above or by calling TTY at 1-800 367-8939.