



Arizona Game and Fish Department Wildlife Matters Legislative Monthly

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Legislative Tour Opportunities



Vehicle barriers on the border help prevent illegal roads and trails that destroy wildlife habitat.

Bills Supported by the Commission

The Following Bills are supported by the Game and Fish Commission:

- **HB 2117** *big game permits; transfers*
- **HB 2443** *off-highway vehicles; user fee*

Legislative Tour Opportunities

Several Legislators have joined with the Department to view Wildlife projects, habitat, patrols etc. Popular Tours have included Border Impact Tours, Operating Under the Influence (OUI) Patrols and view wildlife projects. **A list of possible Tours will be coming to your office soon.**



Representatives Cloves Campbell, Warde Nichols and Department legislative liaison Tony Guiles view impacts of illegal immigration on wildlife habitat. (March 23, 2007)

Possible Tours Include:

Wildlife Viewing Tour – dates apply

Choose a species or place you would like to go and view wildlife.

- View California Condors
- Go on an Elk Survey (late August)
- Urban wildlife, see the effects of feeding wildlife first hand.
- Capture Big Horn Sheep, Elk and other species for collaring.



(Pic: Mark Bogart helps collar elk)

Border Impact Tour – flexible dates (winter, fall and spring are better)

This tour shows the impact of illegal immigration on border habitat as well as international cooperation and projects on the border.

- Aerial viewing of improved wildlife habitat and wildlife refuges
- Viewing of dumpsites, polluted catchments and damaged habitat

Law Enforcement Patrols – flexible dates (choose one or more)

Ride along with a Game Ranger or join a “wolf-pack” OUI patrol on an Arizona Lake.

- OUI “wolf-pack” patrol
- Check License and tags during a hunt season
- Check guide and fishing licenses on the Colorado River.

Wildlife Habitat Tour (choose your area of the state!) –flexible dates

This tour shows how wildlife habitat in Arizona is slowly eroding and what we can do to help stop this.

- Aerial viewing of improved wildlife habitat and denigrated habitat.
- View projects going on in your area. (water catchments, etc.)
- Learn about OHV (off-highway vehicle) use on public lands.



Pic: Rep. Weiers in the Canyon

I want to Learn to ? Tour- flexible dates

Choose what you want to learn and schedule a date!

- Learn about the Department’s shooting ranges and shoot some targets!
- Learn how to fish! Try fly-fishing or cast a spin rod.

Create Your Own Tour – flexible dates

Is there something else you want to learn about at the Department? Let us know we will create a tour for you!



Sen. Johnson looks at the devastation.



Rep. Jerry Weiers heads down the Grand Canyon

OUI Patrols Up



Final Count for 2006 indicates increase in arrests for OUI on Arizona Waters.

PHOENIX - Last year's multi-agency numbers on Operating Under the Influence (OUI) enforcement and alcohol related boat accidents have now been tallied. Statistics show there has been a significant increase in OUI arrests while operating a boat statewide. In 2005, there were 375 OUI arrests, but last year it increased to 535. The obvious assumption is that there are more intoxicated boat-operators on Arizona's waterways, but other factors have been considered.

Arizona Game and Fish Department has expanded law enforcement efforts along the Colorado River, a highly used body of water that includes lakes Havasu, Powell, Mohave and Mead. Over the years, these waters have become more problematic for the states bordering it.

"Although there are a number of law enforcement agencies from Arizona, California and Nevada, including the U.S. Coast Guard, that patrol the Colorado River, it is challenging managing and coordinating public safety along the 500-mile stretch in Arizona," said Kevin Bergersen, Boating Law Administrator for the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

"We have improved training for water enforcement officers, increased the number of OUI task force patrol and check points, and improved communications and coordination with our neighboring states," he said. Naturally, as the number of boat enthusiasts increase, there will be more boat use days on the Colorado River each year, but these enforcement efforts have been a major contributor to the increase in OUI arrests last year.

Also last year, there were a record number of fatalities. In 2006 alone, Arizona waterways saw 14 deaths, the worst boating fatality record since 1998. Thirteen of those fatalities were on the Colorado River, which also saw 387 accidents and 185 injuries.

"We can't do it alone," Bergersen said. Boating education classes are available to the public statewide. "We'll continue to do our part. We're planning 16 to 20 OUI special projects this summer." The state's high rate of boating OUI arrests and accidents make it clear that changing behavior and educating the boating public is essential.

April Events



The top reasons for boating accidents in Arizona are operator inexperience, weather, navigation rule violations, and operating under the influence. The Arizona Game and Fish Department currently offers boating safety education free to the public. To sign up for a free boating safety course, call Arizona Game and Fish Department at (602) 789-3235 or go to azgfd.gov.

March Key Dates & Events

April 4, 2007

7:00 p.m.

Predator Calling

The Phoenix Varmint Callers will hold its monthly meeting at 12851 N. 19th Ave., Lodge No. 2, Phoenix, AZ. Predator-calling demo included. Public is welcome. For more information please visit pvc.org.

April 7, 2007

8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

AWF Habitat project-Buenos Aires Nat Wildlife Refuge

The Arizona Wildlife Federation Habitat Project will be conducting a barbed wire fence removal at Buenos Aires Refuge. For more information, call Larry Audsley at (520) 749-1582 or Bonnie Swarbrick at (520) 823-4251 ext. 108 if you wish to help.

April 7, 2007

9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.

SoLS Takes a Hike

ASU School of Life Sciences' faculty and students will put aside their microscopes and lecture notes to lead guided hikes for the community in Tres Rios Wetlands. Located west of downtown Phoenix, just off 91st Avenue and close to the confluence of the Gila, Aqua Fria and Salt rivers, the wetland reserve is a haven for birdwatchers, plant lovers, and folks just looking for a cool break from the heat. This event is free and open to the public. This year's hike organizers Pierre Deviche, a birding expert, and Susanne Neuer, an oceanographer, will just be two of more than a dozen ecologists, geologists and field biologists, who lead four short nature walks looping through the park. Besides these guided tours for families, reptile expert Andy Holycross will attend with his snakes, to talk about snake safety, as well as their beauty. Holycross is the coauthor of "A Field Guide to Amphibians and Reptiles in Arizona," with co-author Thomas Brennan, recently released by Arizona Game and Fish. So if you are curious about wetlands or just looking for shared fun with the family, a Tres Rios tour with ASU experts is the place to be. For more information about the hike contact: 480-727-8934 or Margaret.Coulombe@asu.edu.

April 7, 8, 21, 22

8:30 a.m.

April Guided Birdwalks

Rufous Hummingbird, Painted Redstart and Lazuli Bunting are a few of the Spring migrants visitors might see on a birdwalk at Boyce Thompson Arboretum during April. Guided birdwalks alternate on the first and third Saturday and also the second and fourth Sunday during April. Walks are included with adult admission of \$7.50, or \$3 for ages 5-12. The Arboretum is located at U.S. 60, milepost 223, about one hour due east of Phoenix.

April 14, 2007

6:00 a.m.

Special Olympics Bass Tournament

The Coconino County sheriffs office is hosting a bass tournament open to the public to help raise funds to support the special olympics. Please visit arizonatorchrun.com for further information.

April 28-29, 2007

7:00 a.m.

Pointing Dog Field Trial

The Arizona Pointing Dog Club is holding a field trial open to all pointing/sporting dog breeds near Parks, Ariz. Please visit www.azpdc.org for more detail or contact the field trial chairperson at Todd.Fielitz@hughes.net or Lance Gerdes at (602) 942 1542



For additional information about *Wildlife Matters* Legislative Publication contact:

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Department Staff have contributed to this publication in the form of articles and photographs.

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Wildlife Matters

Legislative Affairs

