



WEEKLY REPORT

ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

Larry D. Voyles, Director
5000 W. Carefree Highway Phoenix, AZ 85086
www.azgfd.gov

Arizona Game and Fish Commission

Norman W. Freeman, Chairman
Jack F. Husted, Vice Chair
John W. Harris
Robert E. Mansell
Kurt R. Davis

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W *Weekly Report* is published by the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Legislative and Government Affairs Division. While the state's Legislature is in session, Legislative staff provides a summary of bills that pertain to the Department, or that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission has voted to support or oppose, and a tracking list of bills that may have potential impacts to the state's wildlife and wildlife resources. The Legislative and Government Affairs staff also actively monitors and reports on Congressional Legislation with potential impacts to the Department, and those reports (Congressional Courant) are also available online at: http://www.azgfd.gov/inside_azgfd/edits/legislative_update.shtml

Legislative News:

State Legislature

The Governor has signed all three agency bills.

- The Game and Fish continuation bill [SB1300](#): **game and fish department; continuation** continues the Department and commission for 10 years and requires that the Department complete a performance audit by 2013, as described in Title 41-1278.
- [HB2639](#): **game and fish omnibus act** seeks to address administrative issues and improve the Department's law enforcement capabilities to investigating wildlife poaching violations.
- [HB2322](#): **watercraft; registration; fees** was signed by the Governor last week. This measure seeks to comply with federal coast guard requirements by eliminating the higher watercraft registration fees for nonresident watercraft owners and removes all residency distinctions in registration fee and instead assesses a nonresident boating safety infrastructure fee for watercraft registered by nonresidents. The fee is based on the length of the watercraft. The fee amount is set in statute and is revenue neutral. Not bringing watercraft fee structures into alignment with 46 USC Chapter 123 will result in registration fee reductions of \$2.23M to Game and Fish and \$1.45M to Law Enforcement Boating Safety Funds/State Lake Improvement Funds.

Today is the 110 legislative day, 1395 bills were introduced and 329 bills have passed, 287 have been signed, and 18 have been vetoed. The legislative session has been extended to May 3, and a budget deal is rumored at-hand.

Yesterday, the House recessed from the floor without voting on bills to allow for lawmakers to be briefed behind closed-door "small-group" meetings signaling that the parties are close to

agreement on a budget for the 2013 fiscal year. The budget is expected to be in the \$8.5 to \$8.9 billion range. The earliest a budget vote could occur is Monday, April 30. Wedged in between the budget negotiations is [HB2571](#): **S/E state personnel system** (Governor's proposed personnel reform) which has passed the House and has been approved by the Senate's Appropriations Committee but has not advanced since March 20.

Ahead of the April 30th deadline, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has approved the Arizona's Independent Redistricting Commission's legislative redistricting plan. With DOJ approval, final legislative districts lines have been set; resulting in angst among lawmakers to finalize a budget and begin the campaign season.

Other Bills of Interest:

- o [HB2640](#): **hunting; firearm; magazine capacity** has been signed by the Governor.
- o [HB2728](#): **firearms; sound suppressors; hunting** has been signed by the Governor.
- o Commission supported, [HB2457](#): **S/E possession of weapons while hunting** has been signed by the Governor.

The following are Department related measures that never received a hearing or died along the legislative process:

- o HB2072: sale of big game tags
- o HB2535: private possession of wildlife; permits
- o HB2536: prohibit computer-assisted remote hunting
- o HB2537: hunting endangered species; criminal penalty
- o HB2538: game and fish appointment board
- o HB2539: hunting at night; prohibited
- o HB2540: Arizona wildlife conservation service
- o HB2786: off-highway vehicles; indicia
- o SB1305: game and fish omnibus act
- o SB1453: applying aquatic poisons (Rotenone)
- o SB1521: heritage fund; audit; hearing
- o HCR2047: state parks heritage fund; restoration

Congress

Congress will be on a week-long recess from April 30th - 4th.

The Department provided a tour of the Tonto Fish Hatchery to Congressman Gosar and Staff, The Congressman was interested in the economic benefit the hatchery program provides Arizona. Also discussed was ways for the Congressman to provide additional details to the Department on congressional budgetary issues. ([Recent tweet](#) from Congressman Gosar concerning his hatchery visit).

The Department continues to monitor the recently marked-up 2012 Farm Bill, at this point only minor changes may impact the Department's revenue through EQUIP & WHIP. More details to follow.

A Quick Reference to the Department's Monitored, Opposed, and Supported Legislation

To view the most current language please click the links below.

[MONITOR](#)

[OPPOSE](#)

[SUPPORT](#)

LEGEND

- Monitor – The Game and Fish Department is monitoring the progress of these measures, and the Arizona Game and Fish Commission has not taken a position.
- Oppose – The Arizona Game and Fish Commission has voted to oppose these bills.
- Support – The Arizona Game and Fish Commission has voted to support these bills

**If you have questions relating to legislation, please contact:
Tony Guiles, Legislative Liaison: aguiles@azgfd.gov**

or

Jorge Canaca, Asst. Legislative Liaison: jcanaca@azgfd.gov

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