Public Fact Sheet

The public meeting dates and locations are:

Meetings will be held on the following dates and locations:

- Tuesday, Oct. 4, 6-8 p.m., **Phoenix**, Arizona Game and Fish Department headquarters, Eagle Room, 5000 W. Carefree Highway.
- Wednesday, Oct. 5, 6-8 p.m., **Black Canyon City**, Albin's Civic Center, 19055 E. K-Mine Road.
- Thursday, Oct. 6, 6-8 p.m., **Mayer/Cordes Junction area**, Mayer High School, Mayer (follow signs to public meeting room).

For more information on these meetings, contact Randy Babb, Information and Education Program Manager for the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Mesa Regional Office, at (480) 324-3546 or rbabb@azgfd.gov.

What are the goals of the Horseshoe Ranch?

The Horseshoe Ranch and associated allotments would be managed towards 3 primary goals that ultimately strive for the long-term sustainability of native wildlife populations, native habitats, public access to open space, outdoor education and recreation opportunity and the tradition of ranching in central Arizona.

Goal 1— Protect, enhance or restore wildlife, habitats and habitat connectivity within the central Agua Fria watershed

Goal 2— Manage the Ranch and allotments through a collaborative and multi-disciplinary approach. Use research and monitoring to inform management practices that promote optimum habitat conditions for game and nongame species, while allowing the tradition of livestock grazing when and where habitat conditions are compatible.

Goal 3— Use the Ranch to promote a wide range of outdoor experiences, environmental education and recreational activities.

How was the Horseshoe acquired?

The Horseshoe Ranch (not inclusive of the allotments) was acquired through:

- Heritage funds
    - Arizona voters created the Heritage Fund in 1990, designating up to $10 million a year from lottery ticket sales for the conservation and protection of the state's wildlife and natural areas.
- USFWS Section 6 Endangered Species Recovery Land Acquisition Grant

What are the natural resource values?

The Ranch is located adjacent to the Agua Fria River and is surrounded by expansive desert grassland mesas transected by streams and riparian habitats. These grasslands and riparian corridors support impressive biodiversity and have

received designations as the Agua Fria National Monument and the Agua Fria Important Bird Area, in part for these wildlife values.

Those values include:

- Fish, birds, amphibians and reptiles whose populations are considered threatened, endangered or sensitive and in need of proactive management and conservation to pro-tect for future generations.
- Economically important populations of game species; such as pronghorn, mule deer, javelina, Gambel quail, mourning dove, and others.

What are the potential management alternatives?

A. Traditional Model:

- Operated by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and occupied by an Area Manager
- Ranch used as center of species and habitat management operations and subleased grazing operations
- Visitor's center and some amenities; interpretive gateway to area
- Ranch and facilities available for internal/external projects, activities & events
- Funding for operations derived strictly from Arizona Game and Fish Department resources

B. Outreach Facility:

- Operated by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and occupied by an Area Manager
- Ranch used as center of species and habitat management operations and subleased grazing operations
- Ranch with visitor's center and some amenities; interpretive gateway to area
- Developed and used as a "destination facility" for outdoor and environmental education- camps, workshops, events and similar; considerable infrastructure development for these purposes
- Uses might result in cost-sharing
- Ranch may be occupied for periods of time by educational staff/leaders. Supervision of some activities delegated to others (educators, etc.)

C. Cost Recovery

- Operational control maintained by the Arizona Game and Fish Department
- Ranch used as center of species and habitat management operations and subleased grazing operations
- Office and other spaces rented to other users, limiting availability for outreach and to visitors
- Some Users charged via "User Play, User Pay" for access to property for parking and camping, etc.
- Operational funding would likely be a mix of Arizona Game and Fish Department and external sources
- Other lessees might share appropriate levels of contracted management responsibility

D. Private Arrangements/Concessionaire

- Ranch may or may not have a live-on-site Area Manager
- Ranch may or may not be used as center of habitat management operations, but acquisition purposes must be maintained
- Ranch may or may not have a visitor's center, amenities, and interpretive elements.
- Much or most of ranch turned over to a concessionaire to run as dude ranch, bed and breakfast, RV camping facility, etc.
- Concessionaire may or may not be our livestock operator
- Most operational funding would come from and be used by concessionaire, with lease income to the Arizona Game and Fish Department

What are the next steps in the management planning process?

The Arizona Game and Fish Department will consider the public input received during the public process for incorporation into the development of the final alternatives that would then be presented to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission for a final management decision.

What is the process for the management of the allotments?

The AGFD, BLM and Tonto National Forest, have entered into an MOU specific to the management of the Horseshoe ranch grazing allotments. The allotments would be adaptively managed through a collaborative coordinated resource management planning process (CRMP). This process would recognize the natural resource management needs that are identified and resolved on a local scale. The process encourages direct communication and consensus building among all interested groups for achieving common goals, effective process, involving the community and agencies from the beginning of the process. In addition, the process is guided by the Arizona Coordinated Resource Management Handbook and Guideline and in the spirit of the Memorandum of Understanding that was developed by 19 state and federal agencies to establish this coordinated resource management in the state of Arizona. The results of this collaborative effort would include a coordinated resource management plan to guide management actions and ensure an adaptive approach toward agreed upon objectives. The process is in the early stages of development and the three agencies are working to design the public stakeholder process. Below are the identified dates for the stakeholder meeting and field tour.

The stakeholder meetings will be held on the following date and location:

- Wednesday, Nov. 2, 6-8 p.m., Albins Community Center, Black Canyon City

In addition to the stakeholders meeting, a field tour is scheduled for those interested in participating (follow-up information will be made available at the Nov. 2nd meeting):

- Tuesday, Nov. 8 and Wednesday, Nov. 9, 9 a.m., Horseshoe Ranch