

Heritage Fund Public Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes, August 21, 2010

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Phoenix, Arizona

Committee Members:

Norm Freeman, Chino Valley (Chairman) - Absent

Randy Lamb, Prescott (Co-chairman) - Present

Steve Campbell, Pinetop - Present

Lorna Thurman, Overgaard - Present

Rachel Edelstein, Flagstaff - Absent

Tom Mackin, Flagstaff - Absent

Cindi Labash, Prescott Valley - Present

John King, Yuma - Absent

Ron Pearce, Yuma - Absent

Sharon Foltz, Tucson - Absent

James Terlep, Tucson - Present

Thom Hulen, Tempe - Absent

Eddie Corona, Phoenix - Absent

Dale Turner, Tucson - Present

Mary Jo Forman Miller, Scottsdale - Absent

Maggie Sacher, Marble Canyon - Present

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- 1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks:** Mr. Randy Lamb, Committee Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.
 - 2. Introductions:** Randy Lamb asked committee members and Department Staff to introduce themselves. Members were provided a copy of the revised Charter.
 - 3. Approval of Minutes from January 16, 2010:** Minutes from the previous meeting held on January 16, 2010 could not be approved at this time because there was not a quorum present.
 - 4. Presenter: Tony Guiles, Legislative Liaison, Arizona Game and Fish Department:** Mr. Guiles provided an update of legislative issues affecting the department and the Heritage Fund. He recapped how the Heritage Fund distribution changed in early 2010. The Arizona Lottery was reauthorized until 2035, with the Arizona Game and Fish Department Heritage Fund left intact and the State Parks Heritage Fund redirected permanently to the general fund. Tony relayed that the fund will most likely be challenged again in the coming legislative session to balance the 2011FY budget, but he doesn't have a sense of the level of threat the Arizona Game and Fish Department Heritage Fund will face. There will be high turnover in the legislature this year and the department will be working to educate new legislators on the Game and Fish mission. The Nature Conservancy noted that their state legislative liaison has left, but they do intend to fill the position. Timing is still to be determined.
 - 5. Presenter: Bob Broscheid, Deputy Director, Arizona Game and Fish Department:** Mr. Broscheid gave an overview of current fiscal year budgets and issues including the Heritage Fund. One of the first steps the department took was to freeze all open Heritage-funded positions and the current cycle of Heritage Grants. The department was informed that it wouldn't receive its portion of Heritage until January or February. AGFD had to bank money in order to carry \$3.2 million in expenses until the Heritage Fund allotment is received. The department is working with the Commission to develop and adjust budgets for both the current fiscal year and 2012 and 2013 budgets. The state of Arizona is looking at a shortfall of between \$328 million and \$1.2 billion. The department has lost \$1.3 million and has cut programs and expenses to cover the shortage. The department cancelled the Heritage Grants for 2010 due to the new distribution timing and budget concerns. The department's 2011FY budget was \$110 million, but has been readjusted to \$82 million due to sweeps and decreased revenues. Before the department cut a program, numerous criteria were considered: would the cut result in wildlife mortality, risks to public safety and health,

or would there be a ripple effect if program funding was reduced, etc. Many of the cuts or changes in funding sources were guided by federal and state statutes. The department did not have to lay off any employees. The Heritage Fund is full, or fully committed and earmarked, with very little room for flexibility.

- 6. Presenter: Ty Gray, Assistant Director, Information and Education Division, Arizona Game and Fish Department:** Mr. Gray gave a presentation on key messages on the importance of the Heritage Fund to Arizona. The department developed multiple outreach tools during the budget sweeps to educate constituents and the public on what the Heritage Fund does for Arizona. Tools included a webcast on the fund, key messages for different constituent groups, presentation materials, etc. The presentation gave an overview of how the department's nongame program operated before the Heritage Fund, history of the fund and information on the different Heritage funded programs and how those programs would be affected by a loss of Heritage. The department's Heritage Fund equates to approximately 7 percent of the Lottery's revenue.
- 7. Presenter: Tom Jones, Amphibian and reptile program manager, Arizona Game and Fish Department:** Mr. Jones gave a presentation on the nongame subprogram, its role in wildlife conservation, and updates on specific species programs like mollusk conservation, native fish recovery, and ranid frogs.
- 8. Presenter: Kellie Tharp, Education Branch Chief, Arizona Game and Fish Department:** Ms. Tharp gave an overview of the Education Branch, including the recent reorganization, new program offerings and the new North American Model curriculum. She also gave a presentation on the Adobe Mountain Wildlife Center – it's history and future, budget, operation and general facts.
- 9. Larry Riley, Wildlife Management Division Coordinator, Arizona Game and Fish Department:** Mr. Riley, gave an overview to the committee about the Heritage Grant Improvement Team and its purpose in improving the Heritage grant process prepared to discuss the Heritage Grant scoring process.

Committee members suggested that the department consider the grant application process used by the State Forester, which is user-friendly and simplified. They also provided comments on the lack of fairness of the current judging system, and that it needs to be reworked so that the score of one reviewer can't override the opinions/scores of the majority.

10. Committee Business - Open Committee discussion:

None.

11. Call to the Public: No members of the public requested to be heard.

12. Future Meetings: The Committee discussed the next meeting that will be held January 2011. The Department will keep the Committee informed on state budget developments as they occur and provide recommendation on future meeting dates as appropriate.

- 13. Adjournment:** Randy Lamb motioned that the Committee adjourn. Dale Turner seconded the motion, passed unanimously. Committee adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

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