



# Habitat Partnership Committee Connection

## In This Issue:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Coordinator's Corner                     | 2 |
| Highlights from the Summer HPC Meeting   | 3 |
| Meet Your Local HPCs                     | 4 |
| In the Spotlight                         | 5 |
| Big Game Management Update               | 6 |
| Special Big Game License Tag Fund Update | 8 |
| Meetings and Announcements               | 9 |

December 2012

Issue 10



## From your Statewide HPC Chairman Commissioner John W. Harris

This summer I had the opportunity to participate in a site visit of the Wallow Fire with Department staff from the Headquarters and Region I offices. It was amazing to see the resilience of Mother Nature in the post-wildfire environment given a little bit of moisture and the initial rehabilitation efforts of the teams working through the U.S. Forest Service Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) program. Within one year of the fire, large stands of aspens have already begun to sprout throughout the burned area, although the extent of bare soils and altered watershed hydrology are some of the ecological issues that will still need to be dealt with into the future. These types of landscape changes that occur throughout the high elevation habitats in Arizona during the fire season can present both opportunities and challenges when it comes to the management of your wildlife resources. Other types of management issues can be found across some of the lower elevation areas across the state, especially within our desert and semi-desert habitats, where the availability of water and continued human development on the landscape continue to be a challenge in maintaining healthy wildlife habitats. Because all these factors ultimately drive the direction of wildlife conservation decisions into the future, I encourage the public to continue to stay engaged and informed in the various land management and wildlife planning activities that take place within Arizona and across the west. An excellent resource for keeping up with land management agency actions, renewable energy and transportation projects, and community development planning projects is the Department's [Lands Update](#) posted on the HPC website and also part of the AGFD Commission's meeting minutes.

In regards to wildlife planning in Arizona, the Department is continuing the development of the Comprehensive Game Management Plan (CGMP) with initial Management Focus Areas (MFAs) being evaluated for Units 1 and 27; 10; 13A and 13B; 15BW, 15C, and 15D; 24B; 33; 42, and 44A and 44B. More details on the status of this planning effort will be forthcoming from the Department as the various components continue to be developed.

For those that were not able to join us in Pinetop this June, be sure to see the highlights from the Summer 2012 State HPC meeting on page 3. In closing, I would like to give a sincere "Thank You" to the dedicated sportsmen and women and wildlife conservation organizations for all you do to make the Arizona Habitat Partnership Committee program a successful example of proactive management for Arizona's big game species and wildlife habitats. As a reminder, the next State HPC meeting will be held on **Saturday, February 9, 2013** at the Arizona Game and Fish Department Headquarters in Phoenix, Arizona.

## Coordinator's Corner

### Reuben Terán, HPC Coordinator

#### 2012-2013 HPC Funding Cycle

As part of 2012-2013 HPC funding cycle, 80 project proposals have been received with a total of \$2,210,571 in Special Big Game License Tag (SBGLT) funds being requested to implement these projects. As with most financial assistance programs, allocating limited funding to a multitude of high quality projects can be a very difficult process to get through. Fortunately this burden is not undertaken by any one entity, but is a collaborative process between the Department and sponsoring wildlife conservation organizations that help to raise funds through the SBGLT fund program. This year's funding coordination meeting will take place on **January 12, 2013**, with a final discussion and formalization of funding approval at the **February 9, 2013** State HPC meeting. For a list of all 2012-2013 proposals submitted for funding consideration, please visit the [HPC website](#).

#### HPC Projects Database Update

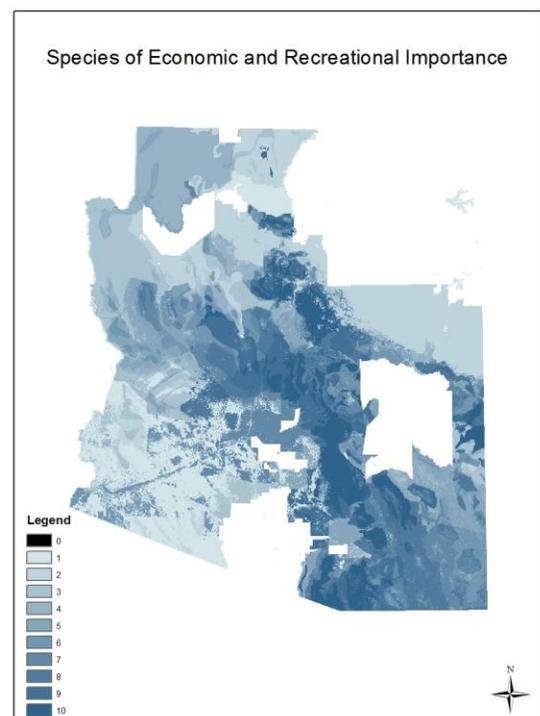
Work continues on the development of a Structured Query Language (SQL) database to maintain project information related to the HPC program. This information was kept in a Microsoft Excel format, but has recently been migrated to a SQL database environment. This not only allows records and data to be organized and queried more efficiently, but will also allow specific project spatial/location data to be stored and displayed within a mapping feature that is being incorporated into the database. There are nearly 1,000 individual project records within the existing HPC database from 2000-2011, and data management and record clean-up will continue to be an ongoing task. Updates on this effort will continue to be provided at State and Local HPC meetings as necessary.

#### What is the Species of Economic and Recreational Importance GIS Model?

As part of the Department's recently updated [State Wildlife Action Plan](#) (SWAP), several Geographic Information System (GIS) models were developed to identify areas of conservation potential within Arizona. Data for the Species of Economic and Recreational Importance (SERI) model was collected at the game management unit level, and represents the economic and recreational importance of 13 huntable species in Arizona (6 big game and 7 small game).

For big game species the Department considered 3 aspects in determining the importance value of deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, turkey, javelina, and bighorn sheep:

1. Demand for the Game Resource
  - $\text{First Choice Applicants} \div \text{Permits Issued}$
2. Economic Value of the Game Resource for Communities in Arizona
  - $\text{Daily Expenditure} \times \text{Hunter Days} / \text{sq mile}$
3. Revenue Generated by the Game Resource for the Department
  - $(\text{Tag} + \text{License cost}) \times \text{Permits Issued} / \text{sq mile}$

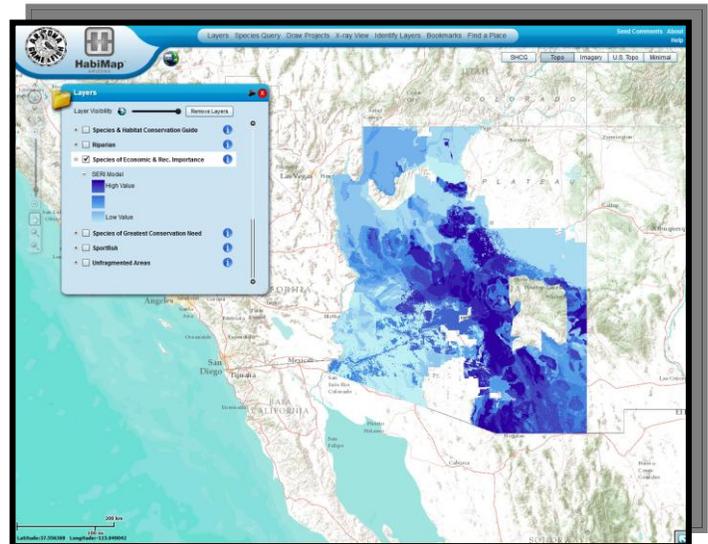


The SERI model values range from 0 - 10, with 10 representing the highest importance value for game species.

For small game species the Department considered 2 aspects in determining the importance value for tree squirrels, white-winged dove, band-tailed pigeon, blue grouse, Gambel's quail, scaled quail, and Mearn's quail:

1. Demand for the Game Resource
  - *Number of Hunters*
2. Economic Value of the Game Resource for Communities in Arizona
  - *Daily Expenditure × Hunter Days / sq mile*

Together, the economic and recreational importance of game species to hunters, the community, and the Department provide a realistic view of the importance of game habitat for conservation. It is important to note that the distribution of these game species influences important aspects of wildlife related recreation, and the distribution of consumer spending across the state.



The SERI model can currently be accessed and viewed through the [HabiMap™ Arizona](#) web-based GIS data viewer tool. For a full discussion of the model, technical information on how it was developed, and how it is incorporated into the Department's Species and Habitat Conservation Guide, please refer to the SWAP document available on the Department's website or via the SWAP web link above.

## Highlights from the 2012 Summer HPC Meeting

This year's summer meeting was held on June 30, 2012 at the Department's Region I Office in Pinetop, AZ. As part of this meeting, the annual HPC recognition awards takes place to recognize the success and efforts of groups dedicated to wildlife and habitat management.



*Field Supervisor Duane Aubuchon accepts a Certificate of Achievement from Commissioner J. W. Harris on behalf of the Safford HPC*

This year the Safford Habitat Partnership Committee was recognized as *Habitat Partnership Committee of the Year* for their efforts in engaging with local landowners, land management entities, and wildlife conservation organizations to implement projects using Special Big Game License Tag (SBGLT) funds and the Habitat Partnership Committee Process. It was noted that a total of \$100,000 of SBGLT funds was awarded to projects within the Safford HPC, which also included and additional \$281,289 of cost share funds. This is a perfect example of how SBGLT funds can be leveraged using partnerships.

The Arizona Big Game Super Raffle (ABGSR) was recognized as *Wildlife Conservation Organization of the Year* for their fund raising efforts for wildlife conservation, habitat enhancements, and big game management actions in Arizona using the SBGLT and the Habitat Partnership Committee processes. For 2011, a total of \$415,685 was raised by the ABGSR in support of all 10 big game species in Arizona.

Other meeting highlights included a presentation on the Management Focus Area database developed for Game Management Unit 10, a presentation on external grant funding opportunities by the Department's Grant Writer, Bonita Gibson, notification of the wildlife conservation organizations awarded SBGLTs for 2012-2013, and updates from WCOs and Local HPCs. Minutes from this meeting and previous HPC meetings can be found on the [HPC website](#).



Mr. Pete Cimellaro accepts a Certificate of Achievement from Commissioner J. W. Harris on behalf of the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle President, Mr. Charlie Kelly

## Meet Your Local HPC Chairpersons as of December 2012

| HPC                                | Chairperson                 | Email  | AGFD Contact   | Email  |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|----------------|--|
| Forage Resource Study Group        | Stephen Williams            | <a href="mailto:swilliams@land.az.gov">swilliams@land.az.gov</a>   | Larry Phoenix  | <a href="mailto:lphoenix@azgfd.gov">lphoenix@azgfd.gov</a>           |
| Fredonia HPC                       | <i>(currently inactive)</i> |  |                |  |
| Kingman HPC                        | <i>(currently inactive)</i> |  |                |  |
| Payson Natural Resources Committee | Vacant                      |  | David Daniels  | <a href="mailto:ddaniels@azgfd.gov">ddaniels@azgfd.gov</a>           |
| Prescott HPC                       | Randy Lamb<br>Gail Steiger  | <a href="mailto:ranman53@aol.com">ranman53@aol.com</a><br><a href="mailto:gailsteiger@msn.com">gailsteiger@msn.com</a>           | Tom Finley     | <a href="mailto:tfinley@azgfd.gov">tfinley@azgfd.gov</a>             |
| Show Low HPC                       | Vacant                      |  | Bob Birkeland  | <a href="mailto:bbirkeland@azgfd.gov">bbirkeland@azgfd.gov</a>       |
| Safford HPC                        | Scott Heap<br>Daniel Ward   | <a href="mailto:scottheap54@yahoo.com">scottheap54@yahoo.com</a><br><a href="mailto:wardsbuilders@q.com">wardsbuilders@q.com</a> | Duane Aubuchon | <a href="mailto:daubuchon@azgfd.gov">daubuchon@azgfd.gov</a>         |
| Sierra Vista-Douglas HPC           | John Millican               | <a href="mailto:j2dbmill@msn.com">j2dbmill@msn.com</a>   | Brad Fulk      | <a href="mailto:bfulk@azgfd.gov">bfulk@azgfd.gov</a>                 |
| Southwest Arizona HPC              | Jean Wilson                 | <a href="mailto:jeanrenegade@gmail.com">jeanrenegade@gmail.com</a>   | Mike Sumner    | <a href="mailto:msumner@azgfd.gov">msumner@azgfd.gov</a>             |
| Springerville-Alpine HPC           | Rex Brown                   | <a href="mailto:brownrm@frontiernet.net">brownrm@frontiernet.net</a>   | Michael Godwin | <a href="mailto:mikegodwin@frontier.net">mikegodwin@frontier.net</a> |
| Tucson HPC                         | Brian Dolan                 | <a href="mailto:bfd@dakotacom.net">bfd@dakotacom.net</a>   | Joe Sacco      | <a href="mailto:jsacco@azgfd.gov">jsacco@azgfd.gov</a>               |
| Williams-Flagstaff HPC             | Tom Mackin                  | <a href="mailto:tmmackin@q.com">tmmackin@q.com</a>   | Larry Phoenix  | <a href="mailto:lphoenix@azgfd.gov">lphoenix@azgfd.gov</a>           |
| Winslow HPC                        | Vacant                      |  | Bob Birkeland  | <a href="mailto:bbirkeland@azgfd.gov">bbirkeland@azgfd.gov</a>       |



***In the Spotlight:***



|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| <b>Project Title:</b> Sawmill Canyon Water Development  |                 |
| <b>Project Proponent:</b> Safford Ranger District - Coronado National Forest  |                 |
| <b>Region / Game Management Unit :</b> 5 / 31   |                 |
| <b>Local Habitat Partnership Committee:</b> Safford HPC   |                 |
| <b>Special Big Game License Tag Funds:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild Turkey Tag Funds</li> </ul>            | <b>\$8,000</b>  |
| <b>Cost Share Funds:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coronado National Forest</li> </ul>                           | <b>\$14,919</b> |
| <b>Other Project Cooperators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coronado National Forest Grazing Permittee</li> </ul> |                 |
| <b>Total Project Costs:</b>   | <b>\$22,919</b> |

The Sawmill Canyon Water Development project is located in the Pinaleno Mountains of southeastern Arizona. The purpose of this project was to provide a yearlong, permanent water source by reconstructing Sawmill Spring to improve habitat and water availability for whitetail deer, Gould’s turkey, black bear, and quail, in addition to serving as a cooperative water source for the livestock grazing permittee. The side of the spring had previously caved in crushing the spring box, and the pipeline was old and no longer serviceable. In addition, the closest permanent water source was Tripp Canyon Well which it is over four miles from Sawmill Spring. During the summer months, the lack of water in this area proved to be a limiting factor for wildlife.



Redeveloped spring box at Sawmill Spring

To implement the necessary water development improvements, the spring box at Sawmill Spring was reconstructed, and 2.5 miles of pipe and 3 new drinkers were added to an existing 10,000 gallon water storage tank. In addition, a drinker specifically for Gould’s turkey was installed at the storage tank and fenced to exclude livestock. As part of the U.S. Forest Service’s Annual Grazing Operating Instructions, the grazing permittee will be



Upper Tripp Canyon Trough

responsible for monitoring and maintaining these improvements.



Sawmill Canyon Spring Storage Tank

Through the support of the Safford HPC and the cooperative effort of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, US Forest Service, National Wild Turkey Federation, and grazing permittee, this project has helped to provide a necessary year round water source for game and nongame wildlife in the Sawmill Springs area.



## BIG GAME MANAGEMENT UPDATE

### Fawn Recruitment Enhancement Projects in Pronghorn and Mule Deer Habitats

In 2009, Special Big Game License Tag funds were requested to begin a predation management experiment in Unit 10 intended to directly benefit the pronghorn population by increasing fawn survival through a short term reduction in the coyote population. The project also had the potential to benefit those mule deer populations found within the control areas. This project employed variable approaches to reduce predator populations during the months of March, April and May, which included contract trappers using foothold traps on private lands and aerial control. Along with the active predation management action undertaken during the first three years of the project, additional wildlife surveys were used to estimate pronghorn fawn productivity and densities.



As a direct result of implementing this project through 2012, 226 coyotes were removed from the Aubrey Valley, and 443 coyotes were taken off the northern portion of the unit known as the Plains for a total of 669 coyotes removed within Unit 10 during the three years of this project [300 coyotes removed in 2010, 194 coyotes removed in 2011, and 175 coyotes removed in 2012]. The surveyed pronghorn fawn:doe ratio for Unit 10 was 15:100 in 2009, the year before the project, and increased to 31:100 in 2010, to 53:100 in 2011, to 35:100 in 2012. The 2011 fawn:doe ratio was the highest recorded in Unit 10 since 1970. It must be noted that the overall fawn:doe ratio is a bit misleading in that the number of pronghorn surveyed in Unit 10 increased from 157 total pronghorn observed in the 2009 survey to 626 total pronghorn, including 133 fawns, observed in 2012. Funding has been requested for the 2012-2013 HPC funding cycle to continue to increase the Unit 10 pronghorn population through increased fawn survival as a result of springtime coyote removal. The following table summarizes pronghorn survey data and corresponding predation management activities from 2006-2012.

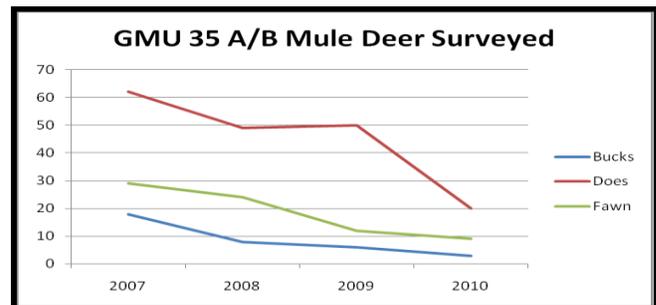
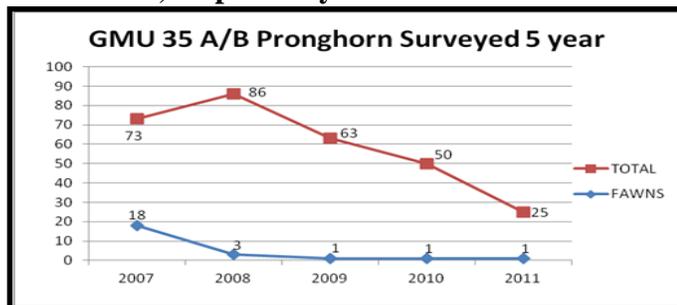
**Summary of Pronghorn Survey Data and Coyote Removal Efforts in Unit 10, 2006-2012**

| Unit 10                                  | Year | Bucks | Does | Fawns | Uncl. | Total | Bucks/ 100 Does | Fawns/ 100 Does | No. Coyotes Removed |
|--|------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
|  | 2006 | 126   | 324  | 56    | 0     | 506   | 39              | 17              | 0                   |
|  | 2007 | 44    | 89   | 10    | 0     | 143   | 49              | 11              | 0                   |
| Pre-treat Average (no removal)           |      |       |      |       |       |       | 41              | 16              |                     |
|  | 2008 | 35    | 117  | 25    | 0     | 177   | 30              | 21              | 96                  |
|  | 2009 | 41    | 101  | 15    | 0     | 157   | 41              | 15              | 74                  |
| Pre-treat Average (aerial only)          |      |       |      |       |       |       | 35              | 18              |                     |
|  | 2010 | 12    | 93   | 29    | 0     | 135   | 13              | 31              | 300                 |
|  | 2011 | 32    | 137  | 73    | 0     | 242   | 23              | 53              | 194                 |
|  | 2012 | 116   | 377  | 133   | 0     | 626   | 31              | 35              | 175                 |
| Post-treat Average (aerial and trapping) |      |       |      |       |       |       | 26              | 39              |                     |

In 2011, a similar pronghorn and mule deer fawn enhancement project was started in Units 35A and 35B. This project was intended to also supplement an upcoming pronghorn translocation in these Units. Predation management actions prior to and through the 2012 fawning season resulted in 20 pronghorn fawns surviving through the August 2012 fixed-wing surveys. The graph below identifies the past 10 years of pronghorn survey data as a reference to past fawn recruitment levels. From May to June 2012, 22 coyotes were removed from Units 35A and 35B. However, predation management efforts did not take place in Unit 35B as the pronghorn were located on private property that was not accessible to the contractor for predator removal.

With continued support from the Arizona Antelope Foundation, Arizona Deer Association, Mule Deer Foundation, and Safari Club International, the Department hopes to reach management objectives in Units 35A and 35B for pronghorn by increasing the pronghorn fawn:doe ratio to at least 40 fawns:100 does during the last two years of the project, and increasing the post hunt adult population to 125 animals by 2014. Benefits to mule deer population numbers and increases in fawn:doe ratios will continue to be monitored through annual surveys in Units 35A and 35B, and help to guide hunt recommendations as prescribed through the Department’s Hunt Guidelines process.

**Summary of pronghorn and mule deer survey results in Units 35A and 35B from 2007 - 2011 and 2007 - 2010, respectively**



## Special Big Game License Tag Fund Update

### Ruth Gregory, Game Program Coordinator

A very special THANKS goes out to our wildlife conservation funding partners for their outstanding fundraising activities completed in the last year. With the dollars raised through the Special Big Game License Tag (SBGLT) fund process, the Habitat Partnership Committee program is able to fund a multitude of wildlife projects that benefit both big game and nongame wildlife species and their habitats. Below is a summary of SBGLT funds raised from June 2011 to June 2012.

| TAG  | ORGANIZATION                                | SPECIAL BIG GAME<br>LICENSE TAG FUNDS<br>RAISED |
|--|---|---|
| Bighorn Sheep  | Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society        | \$160,000                                       |
| Bighorn Sheep  | Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society        | \$ 75,000                                       |
| Bighorn Sheep  | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$130,450                                       |
|  | <b>Total Bighorn Sheep Tag Funds</b>        | <b>\$365,450</b>                                |
| Black Bear   | Arizona Bowhunters Association              | \$2,300   |
| Black Bear   | Arizona Sportsmen For Wildlife Conservation | \$3,100   |
| Black Bear   | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$6,670   |
|  | <b>Total Black Bear Tag Funds</b>           | <b>\$12,070</b>                                 |
| Buffalo  | Arizona Bowhunters Association              | \$11,000  |
| Buffalo  | Arizona Elk Society                         | \$20,000  |
| Buffalo  | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$33,620  |
|  | <b>Total Buffalo Tag Funds</b>              | <b>\$64,620</b>                                 |
| Elk  | Arizona Elk Society                         | \$131,000                                       |
| Elk  | Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation               | \$ 85,000                                       |
| Elk  | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$110,700                                       |
|  | <b>Total Elk Tag Funds</b>                  | <b>\$326,700</b>                                |
| Javelina   | Arizona Bowhunters Association              | \$ 680  |
| Javelina   | Safari Club International - Arizona Chapter | \$ 600  |
| Javelina   | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$6,090   |
|  | <b>Total Javelina Tag Funds</b>             | <b>\$7,370</b>                                  |
| Mountain Lion  | Arizona Deer Association                    | \$2,700   |
| Mountain Lion  | Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society        | \$5,000   |
| Mountain Lion  | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$6,070   |
|  | <b>Total Mountain Lion Tag Funds</b>        | <b>\$13,770</b>                                 |
| Mule Deer  | Arizona Deer Association                    | \$135,000                                       |
| Mule Deer  | Mule Deer Foundation                        | \$220,000                                       |
| Mule Deer  | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$86,640  |
|  | <b>Total Mule Deer Tag Funds</b>            | <b>\$441,640</b>                                |
| Pronghorn Antelope                                       | Arizona Antelope Foundation                 | \$25,000  |
| Pronghorn Antelope                                       | Arizona Antelope Foundation                 | \$42,000  |
| Pronghorn Antelope                                       | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$32,560  |
|  | <b>Total Antelope Tag Funds</b>             | <b>\$99,560</b>                                 |
| Whitetail Deer   | Safari Club International - Arizona Chapter | \$15,000  |
| Whitetail Deer   | Arizona Deer Association                    | \$15,000  |
| Whitetail Deer   | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$27,480  |
|  | <b>Total Whitetail Deer Tag Funds</b>       | <b>\$57,480</b>                                 |
| Wild Turkey  | National Wild Turkey Foundation             | \$3,350   |
| Wild Turkey  | National Wild Turkey Foundation             | \$8,140   |
| Wild Turkey  | Arizona Big Game Super Raffle               | \$9,655   |
|  | <b>Total Wild Turkey Tag Funds</b>          | <b>\$21,145</b>                                 |
| <b>TOTAL SPECIAL BIG GAME LICENSE TAG FUNDS FOR 2012</b> |   | <b>\$1,409,805</b>                              |

## Arizona Game and Fish Department

5000 W. Carefree Highway  
Phoenix, AZ 85086

PHONE:  
(602) 942-3000

FAX:  
(623) 236-7929



We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.azgfd.gov](http://www.azgfd.gov)

### SUBSCRIBE ONLINE

Free news  
by email



Sign-up for Arizona Game and Fish e-News today by clicking [HERE](#).

## Meetings & Announcements

- **Funding Coordination Meeting: Saturday, January 12, 2013**  
Arizona Game and Fish Department  
Phoenix Headquarters – Eagle Room  
5000 W. Carefree Highway  
Phoenix, AZ 85086
- **State HPC Meeting: Saturday, February 9, 2013**  
Arizona Game and Fish Department  
Phoenix Headquarters – Eagle Room  
5000 W. Carefree Highway  
Phoenix, AZ 85086
- **HPC Project Progress Reports - Due March 1, 2013**
- Looking to get out into the field and assist with big game habitat improvement projects? Volunteer opportunities are currently available through some of our wildlife conservation partners. To see a list of upcoming habitat conservation projects please visit the [Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation](#) website.
- If you have an idea for an article, success story, announcement, project status update, or any HPC related news, please submit them to [rteran@azgfd.gov](mailto:rteran@azgfd.gov). Microsoft Word documents are preferred (please try to keep articles to between 500-700 words). Pictures of your projects and volunteers are always welcome!

Got questions on an HPC project???

Contact:

Reuben Terán, HPC Coordinator at 623-236-7350 or by email at [rteran@azgfd.gov](mailto:rteran@azgfd.gov)

Ruth Gregory, Game Program Coordinator at 623-236-7349 or by email at [rgregory@azgfd.gov](mailto:rgregory@azgfd.gov)

