



Habitat Partnership Committee Connection

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FROM YOUR STATEWIDE HPC CHAIRMAN Commissioner Kurt R. Davis

Recent changes to state statute have enabled Arizona Game and Fish Commission to operate more like a smart business enterprise that is even more committed to serving its constituents by providing bundled license packages and permit fees with greater value to our customers. Beginning on January 1, 2014, implementation of the license fee simplification process will provide a simpler structure and more value for buying hunting and fishing licenses. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission and Department must operate like a business because we are not supported by general tax revenues. Hunters, anglers, and recreational shooters still pay for the bulk of conservation, and they do so willingly. I applaud those willing constituents that continue to step forward and do their part to make wildlife and wildlife habitat better for the next generation. It is a worthwhile investment. This remains a very important tenet of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

Also, an additional change will assist the agency achieve our mission regarding increased habitat enhancement, access, and recruitment and retention through enhanced revenue. This enhanced revenue will come from changes to our application fee structure (that fee you submit to apply for a hunt or purchase a bonus point). The application fee is now \$13 for residents and \$15 for nonresidents. A portion of the application fee will provide funding to enhance three critical areas. As part of the new resident application fee: \$1 will be allocated for habitat improvement, \$1 for access, and \$1 for recruitment and retention projects. For non-resident application fees: \$2 will be allocated for habitat improvement, \$2 for access, and \$1 for recruitment and retention projects.

Although the allocation guidelines above were unanimously approved by the Commission, the overall administration and rules for allocating these resources are still to be determined. Regardless, we expect that this change to generate at least \$200,000 annually will benefit wildlife habitat in Arizona. As a committee that partners to benefit habitat, this will be an opportunity to further our collective efforts. In my discussions with Game Program staff, I know that the Department is eager to expand efforts to improve quail and mule deer habitat, and focus on specific vegetative communities like aspen. We will continue to share information as this develops.

As a reminder, the next State HPC meeting will be held on Saturday, February 1, 2014 at the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Headquarter Office in Phoenix, Arizona. The meeting agenda will be available on the [HPC website](#), as well as the draft meeting minutes from the July 2013 State HPC meeting. Thank you for your continued support of the HPC program.

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

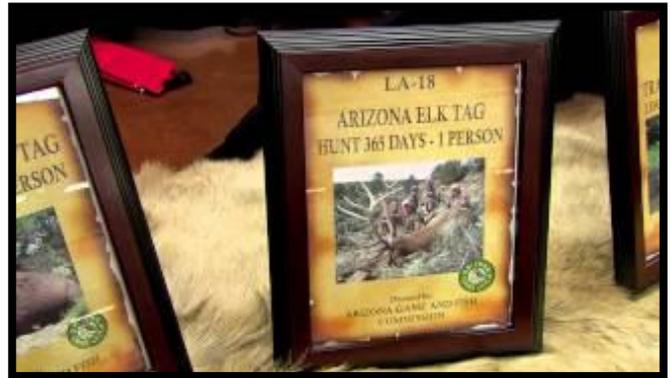
Reuben Terán, HPC Coordinator

2013-2014 HPC Funding Cycle Update

87 project proposals have been submitted, with a total of \$2,781,334 in Special Big Game License Tag (SBGLT) funds being requested to implement these projects. This year's funding coordination meeting between the Arizona Game and Fish Department (Department) and wildlife conservation organizations participating in the SBGLT fund program will take place on **January 11, 2014** at the Department's Headquarters Office in Phoenix, AZ. The final discussion and formal approval of projects recommended for funding will take place at the State HPC meeting on **February 1, 2014**. For a list of all 2013-2014 proposals submitted for funding consideration please visit the [HPC website](#).

Arizona Wildlife Views Video Segment

Just last month, the Department's Information Branch released an Arizona Wildlife Views video titled "[Partners in Wildlife Habitat Conservation](#)". This segment is dedicated to the Habitat Partnership Committee and Special Big Game License Tag Programs. The video can be accessed through the Department's website on the media page, or through the hyperlink above. A very special thanks goes out to Ms. Carol Lynde and Mr. David Majure for all their assistance in the development and production of this Arizona Wildlife Views program. Be looking out for this program to air on the Arizona Wildlife Views TV show in 2014.



Local HPC Updates

Following their first meeting on September 11, 2013, the newly formed Arizona Strip Habitat Working Group voted to operate under the umbrella of the Arizona HPC, with Wildlife Manager Supervisor Luke Thompson serving as the Local HPC Coordinator. A "Core Team," consisting of members from the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service, will initially serve as liaisons for other interests such as the Natural Resource Conservation District board members, grazing board members, and conservation organizations, and work to bring those messages and interests to the core team for project funding opportunities and implementation. It is hoped that as this working group refines its function, members of these other organizations will become engaged in the activities of the Local HPC. The Arizona Strip Habitat Working Group will coordinate habitat planning efforts and projects within Game Management Units 12A, 12B, 13A, and 13B.

The Southwest Arizona HPC (SWHPC) has updated its bylaws, and has now partnered with the Yuma Valley Rod and Gun Club (YVRGC) for promoting sustainable wildlife populations and wildlife recreational opportunities through the enhancement of habitat. Meetings of the SWHPC will now coincide with meetings of the YVRGC on the first Wednesday of each month.

Last Call for HPC Charter Comments

The [Arizona HPC Charter](#) is currently open for review and comment. Any proposed changes to the charter will be reviewed and approved at the February 1, 2014 State HPC meeting. This document is currently available on the home page of the [HPC website](#), or can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlink above. Please forward any comments or suggestions to rteran@azgfd.gov.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2013 SUMMER STATE HPC MEETING

This year's summer State HPC meeting was held on July 27, 2013 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 mangament.



Carl Lutch, Region 2 Wildlife Program Manager, accepts a Certificate of Achievement from Commissioner J.W. Harris on behalf of the Williams/Flagstaff HPC.

This year the Williams-Flagstaff 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 \$124,900 of SBGLT funds was awarded to projects within the Williams-Flagstaff HPC, which also included and additional \$449,380 of stated cost share funds. This is another example of how SBGLT funds can be leveraged using partnerships.

The Mule Deer Foundation was recognized as *Wildlife Conservation Organization of the Year* in appreciation of their contributions to mule deer management and habitat enhancements in Arizona through the use of Special Big Game License Tag Funds and the Habitat Partnership Committee process. In 2012, a total of \$240,000 was raised by the Mule Deer Foundation in support of mule deer management in Arizona.

Other meeting highlights included the formal change of the State HPC Chair from Commissioner J.W. Harris to Commissioner Kurt Davis, a presentation on the Landowner Relations Program Recreational Access Database, the 2-year reiew and call for comments on the State HPC charter, an update on new water development construction designs for Department water developments, notification of the widlife conservation organizations awarded SBGLTs for 2013-2014, and updates from wildlife conservation organizations and Local HPCs. Minutes from this meeting and previous HPC meetings can be found on the [HPC website](#).



Terry Herndon, Regional Director of Arizona for the Mule Deer Foundation, accepts a Certificate of Achievement from Commissioner J.W. Harris.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Project Title: Bar T Bar Prescribed Burn	
Project Proponent: U.S. Forest Service – Mogollon Ranger District	
Region and Game Management Unit: Region II – GMU 5A	
Local Habitat Partnership Committee: Williams-Flagstaff HPC	
Special Big Game License Tag Funds:	\$24,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$12,000 Special Antelope Tag Funds • \$6,000 Special Elk Tag Funds • \$6,000 Special Mule Deer Tag Funds 	
Cost Share Funds:	\$24,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coconino National Forest - Mogollon Ranger District 	
Total Project Costs:	\$48,000

In coordination with the Bar T Bar Ranch and the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Coconino National Forest – Mogollon Ranger District is implementing a landscape level project to maintain and improve grassland habitats. Since the 1950s, the Bar T Bar Ranch has removed encroaching juniper on about 30,000 acres.

The purpose of this specific project was to continue restoring grassland habitat and improve the herbaceous plant community on the Bar T Bar allotment. Many different tools and methods were used to reduce the encroachment of junipers, which included clipping and masticating with a skidsteer, prescribed burning, and the use of a terra-torch. While prescribed burning was the most cost effective method, using it during the best time of year to optimally implement prescribed fire was a challenge due to social considerations and environmental variables.

Overall accomplishments on this project included 2,300 acres of prescribed burning, 140 acres of specific treatment with terra-torch, and 1,280 acres cleared through mastication and clipping, for a total treatment of about 3,510 acres of habitat.

On October 12, 2010 and April 12, 2012, pre and post burn vegetative inventories were administered to a site within the Maverick Pasture. The preliminary data assessment showed an overall increase in production for the herbaceous categories, and juniper mortality will be assessed again two years post burn.



PROJECT FUNDING UPDATE**Ruth Gregory, Game Program Administrative Coordinator**

A HUGE THANK YOU to our wildlife conservation partners for the extraordinary fundraising they accomplished in the past year. The amount raised by the sales of Special Big Game License Tags beat the record amount raised in 2006 by over \$400K! **AGFD is aware and greatly appreciative of the incredible amount of work these organizations do to raise this money.** Their outstanding efforts in conducting auctions and raffles to sell these tags make it possible for the HPC program to fund a multitude of wildlife projects that benefit both game and nongame wildlife species and their habitats. Here's this year's list:

TAG	ORGANIZATION	SPECIAL BIG GAME LICENSE TAG FUNDS RAISED
Bighorn Sheep	Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society	\$160,000
Bighorn Sheep	Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society	\$ 97,000
Bighorn Sheep	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$132,750
	Total Bighorn Sheep Tag Funds	\$389,750
Black Bear	Arizona Bowhunters Association	\$3,800
Black Bear	Safari Club International – Phoenix Chapter	\$2,000
Black Bear	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$6,995
	Total Black Bear Tag Funds	\$12,795
Buffalo	Arizona Elk Society	\$18,500
Buffalo	Arizona Bowhunters Association	\$15,500
Buffalo	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$31,880
	Total Buffalo Tag Funds	\$65,880
Elk	Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	\$385,000
Elk	Arizona Elk Society	\$210,000
Elk	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$110,225
	Total Elk Tag Funds	\$705,225
Javelina	Arizona Bowhunters Association	\$1,100
Javelina	Safari Club International - Arizona Chapter	\$950
Javelina	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$5,865
	Total Javelina Tag Funds	\$7,915
Mountain Lion	Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society	\$5,500
Mountain Lion	Arizona Deer Association	\$1,000
Mountain Lion	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$6,265
	Total Mountain Lion Tag Funds	\$12,765
Mule Deer	Arizona Deer Association	\$245,000
Mule Deer	Mule Deer Foundation	\$240,000
Mule Deer	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$86,140
	Total Mule Deer Tag Funds	\$571,140
Pronghorn Antelope	Arizona Antelope Foundation	\$40,000
Pronghorn Antelope	Arizona Antelope Foundation	\$21,000
Pronghorn Antelope	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$31,980
	Total Antelope Tag Funds	\$92,980
Whitetail Deer	Safari Club International - Arizona Chapter	\$25,000
Whitetail Deer	Arizona Deer Association	\$25,000
Whitetail Deer	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$23,920
	Total Whitetail Deer Tag Funds	\$73,920
Wild Turkey	National Wild Turkey Federation	\$6,560
Wild Turkey	National Wild Turkey Federation	\$5,600
Wild Turkey	Arizona Big Game Super Raffle	\$9,950
	Total Wild Turkey Tag Funds	\$22,110
TOTAL SPECIAL BIG GAME LICENSE TAG FUNDS FOR 2013		\$1,954,480

MEET YOUR LOCAL HPC CHAIRPERSONS

as of December 2013

<i>HPC</i>	<i>Chairperson</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>AGFD Contact</i>	<i>Email</i>
Forage Resource Study Group	Stephen Williams	swilliams@azland.gov	Larry Phoenix	lphoenix@azgfd.gov
Arizona Strip Habitat Working Group	Vacant		Luke Thompson	lthompson@azgfd.gov
Kingman HPC	Vacant		Velma Holt-Buhr	vholt-buhr@azgfd.gov
Payson Natural Resources Committee	Vacant		David Daniels	ddaniels@azgfd.gov
Prescott HPC	Gail Steiger	gailsteiger@msn.com	Darren Tucker	dtucker@azgfd.gov
Show Low HPC	Vacant		Bob Birkeland	bbirkeland@azgfd.gov
Safford HPC	Daniel Ward	wardsbuilders@q.com	Duane Aubuchon	daubuchon@azgfd.gov
Sierra Vista-Douglas HPC	John Millican	j2dbmill@msn.com	Brad Fulk	bfulk@azgfd.gov
Southwest Arizona HPC	Jean Wilson	jeanrenegade@gmail.com	Mike Sumner	msumner@azgfd.gov
Springerville-Alpine HPC	Bill Masters	billy.masters@empire-cat.com	Michael Godwin	mgodwin@azgfd.gov
Tucson HPC	Brian Dolan	bfd@dakotacom.net	Joe Sacco	jsacco@azgfd.gov
Williams-Flagstaff HPC	Tom Mackin	tmmackin@q.com	Larry Phoenix	lphoenix@azgfd.gov
Winslow HPC	Vacant		Bob Birkeland	bbirkeland@azgfd.gov

Got questions about the HPC Program?**Contact:**Reuben Terán, HPC Coordinator at 623-236-7350 or by email at rteran@azgfd.govRuth Gregory, Game Program Administrative Coordinator at 623-236-7349 or by email at rgregory@azgfd.gov

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MEETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **HPC Project Funding Coordination Meeting - January 11, 2014**
Arizona Game and Fish Department Headquarters (Eagle Room)
5000 W. Carefree Highway
Phoenix, AZ 85086
9:00 AM
- **State HPC Meeting - February 1, 2014**
Arizona Game and Fish Department Headquarters (Eagle Room)
5000 W. Carefree Highway
Phoenix, AZ 85086
9:00 AM
- **HPC Project Progress Reports - Due March 1, 2014**
- 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. Microsoft Word documents are preferred (please try to keep articles to between 500-700 words). Pictures of your projects and volunteers are always welcome!