ARIZONA HABITAT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CHARTER

This Arizona Habitat Partnership Committee Charter will serve to provide clear and concise details that explain:

- Purpose
- Goals, Objectives, Deliverables
- Authorities, roles, and responsibilities
- Timeframes

Purpose, Authorities

Established by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission in 1992, The Arizona Elk Habitat Partnership Committee and affiliated Local Habitat Partnership Committees were created to reduce elk and livestock conflicts and to promote partnerships through cooperative projects. In January 1996, the program concept had expanded beyond elk and livestock conflicts and the program was renamed the Arizona Habitat Partnership Committee (AHPC) to better reflect an ecosystem approach to wildlife habitat management and related projects. Active Local Habitat Partnership Committees (LHPC) meet in Payson, Prescott, Williams-Flagstaff, Winslow, Show Low, Springerville-Alpine, Yuma, Safford, and Tucson. The Forage Resource Study Group in Coconino County also participates as an affiliate member. Other LHPCs that are recognized are on the Arizona Strip and in Kingman. The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) process owner for the AHPC is the Coordinator as described below. The process owner for the LHPC is the Regional Supervisor within the Region of the Committee.

AHPC Goals, Objectives, Deliverables:

1. Encourage an atmosphere of partnership between wildlife managers, habitat managers, and public and private interests.
2. Establish local committees to ensure appropriate public involvement in identifying habitat and wildlife management opportunities and concerns and recommending actions and solutions through submittal of project proposals and providing local input to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.
3. Identify the necessary funds to implement these solutions and develop local funding partners, which should include coordination with Landowner Relationship Program to explore eligible funding avenues and maximize cost-share opportunities.
4. Ensure that private land and habitat issues are considered in comprehensive game management plans as they are developed and reviewed.

AHPC Structure, Roles, and Responsibilities

Chairman: The chairman of the AHPC is a seated Arizona Game and Fish Commissioner and is annually appointed by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission Chairman.

The AHPC Chairman's role and responsibilities include:

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- Ensures meetings are properly staged, prepared, and coordinated.
- Runs meeting and keep meeting discussion on track with AHPC objectives.
- Manages agenda for each meeting.
- Uses committee member feedback to improve meeting efficiency, (meeting evaluation).

Coordinator: The Coordinator of the AHPC is the Habitat Partnership Program Coordinator in Game Branch. The term is perpetual.

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The Coordinator role and responsibilities include:

- Sets up meeting location, provides equipment, tools, and comfort items.
- Coordinates with Chairman and committee members and prepares agenda. Draft meeting agenda is reviewed by the AHPC chairman 4 weeks in advance of the meeting date.
- Sends material in advance of meeting for review and preparation. Final agenda is sent to AHPC distribution list 3 weeks in advance of the meeting date.

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- Ensures final acceptance of minutes at next meeting.
- Ensures completion of assignments from previous meetings.
- Reviews action items from previous meetings.
- Coordinates with the Game Branch Chief to select a meeting Recorder for each AHPC meeting.
- Coordinates with the Information and Education Program to select the Regional I&E representative to serve as Facilitator.
- Ensures success stories and ensures feedback concerning ongoing and completed projects.
- Ensures all Grant participants are notified annually if funded (including timeline for spending funds), and provides feedback to non-funded project writers.

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Recorder: The Recorder of the AHPC is provided by AZGFD and there is no term of office.

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The Recorder's roles and responsibilities include:

- Ensures all discussion topics, decisions, and action items are captured and written in meeting minutes.
- Distributes draft meeting minutes to Chairman, Coordinator, and committee members for review and comment within 30 days after each meeting.
- Revises draft minutes, using committee member feedback, for official approval at next meeting.
- Maintain current HPC mailing list. Crosscheck with sign-in sheet at each meeting.

Facilitator: A Facilitator may be assigned by the Commissioner through the Coordinator for the AHPC meeting at his or her discretion and as needed.

The Facilitator's roles and responsibilities include:

- Is not a member of the team and does not interject opinion, or assume role as team member.
- Facilitates discussion only if needed.
- Captures discussion items on flip chart at the meeting if necessary.

- Facilitates activities such as brainstorming, multi-voting, and other activities so Chairman can participate as an active member.

Committee Members: Committee Members of the AHPC will include a representative from each of the local habitat partnership committees. Committee members are subject to change due to turnover within LHPCs.
Committee Members roles and responsibilities include:

- Contribute positively to overall goals of the AHPC.
- Resolve conflicts professionally.
- Provide input and constructive feedback to move toward consensus.
- Attend all AHPC meetings or appoint a representative to serve if absent.
- Act as official voting member of the AHPC

Meeting Frequency: The AHPC will meet twice a year in December–February and June–August. The winter meeting main topic is the review and discussion of recommendations for funding of projects submitted by the local partnership committees and affiliates from the wildlife conservation organization partners. The summer meeting main topic is solicitation of site-specific issues and concerns and identification of priorities for future projects. Other meetings can be called at the discretion of the Chairman of the State Habitat Partnership Committee.

LHPC Objectives, Deliverables: LHPCs are intended as a forum to facilitate collaborative problem solving and habitat improvement at the local level. AZGFD Regional Supervisors will maintain a leadership role as the process owner of LHPCs within their region regardless of the level participation by individuals or groups from outside the AZGFD. LHPCs and affiliates are encouraged to develop landscape goals and objectives for the geographic area they encompass. To be eligible for HPC funding resource management plans at a ranch unit or larger level are required to identify site specific issues, concerns, strategies, guidelines, objectives, monitoring plans, and project or management needs.. Resource monitoring efforts should tie to measurable objectives in resource plans for the geographic area. AZGFD will develop comprehensive game management plans and revise periodically so that management objectives for each game species are considered. Input to these plans will be solicited through the LHPCs. The LHPCs are encouraged to cooperate with AZGFD regional biologists and wildlife managers in development of appropriate management plans within the LHPC geographic area. All members of the Partnership are encouraged to develop local support for projects in the form of donated labor, materials, services, or funding. Funding wildlife conservation organizations and government agencies will be apprised of projects eligible for funds they oversee. Identified potential funding partners and the wildlife conservation organizations sponsoring the Special Big Game License-Tag Funds will be invited to the winter projects meeting of the AHPC.

LHPC Structure, Roles, and Responsibilities: All LHPC meetings will be conducted in a moderated manner. Agendas will be prepared for each meeting and most agenda items will be identified in advance and addressed through the Coordinator. Meetings should have a main theme or topic and, if appropriate, invited speakers.

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Coordinator: The Coordinator for the LHPC is selected by the Regional Supervisor of the Region in which the LHPC is located. The Coordinator shall be a Field Supervisor. The term of the Coordinator is at the discretion of the Regional Supervisor.
The Coordinators role and responsibilities include, either directly or by delegation:

- Appointing a representative and voting member to the AHPC meetings (appointee should be an individual from outside the AZGFD whenever possible).
- Ensuring meetings are properly staged, prepared, and coordinated.
- Using committee member feedback to improve meeting efficiency, (meeting evaluation).
- Coordinating with AHPC coordinator to ensure agenda input and representation at the State AHPC meetings.
- Setting up meeting locations, providing equipment, tools, and comfort items.
- Coordinating with committee members and preparing agenda.
- Sending material in advance of meeting for review and preparation.
- Ensuring final acceptance of minutes at next meeting.
- Reviewing action items from previous meetings.
- Distributing draft meeting minutes to State Coordinator and committee members for review and comment within 30 days after each meeting.
- Revising draft minutes, using committee member feedback, for official approval at next meeting.
- Maintaining current HPC mailing list. Crosschecking with sign-in sheet at each meeting.
- Coordinating mailing list with the State Coordinator.
- Ensuring coordination between regional Wildlife Managers and the Resource Management Plan Coordinator.

LHPC Resource Management Plan Coordinator: The LHPC Resource Management Plan (RMP) Coordinator is selected by the Regional Supervisor of the Region in which the LHPC is located. The RMP Coordinator will be a member of the Regional Wildlife Management or Habitat Program. The term of the RMP Coordinator is at the discretion of the Regional Supervisor.
The RMP Coordinator's roles and responsibilities include:

- Assimilate species specific and site specific information and planning efforts from Wildlife Managers, in the form of District Habitat Management Plans which can be shared with LHPCs. RMP Coordinator will ensure a collaborative approach to habitat planning, taking district plans and prioritizing them into regional priorities.
- Coordinate with Regional staff, other agencies, Game Branch, Habitat Branch, and the Landowner Relations Program to update RMPs and ensure they clearly identify habitat priorities at least once annually.
- Facilitate the review of comprehensive game management plans or other management plans.
- Assist LHPC project proponents in writing proposals and implementing projects.

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Recorder: The recorder of the LHPC is designated by the LHPC Coordinator and committee members and may be from private or governmental entities. The term of the recorder is determined by the LHPC committee.

- The Recorders' roles and responsibilities include: ensures all discussion topics, decisions, and action items are captured and written in meeting minutes.
- Ensures delivery of draft minutes to the Coordinator within 25 days after each meeting.

Facilitator: The I&E Program Manager (or assigned substitute) from the AZGFD Region in which the LHPC is located shall serve as the LHPC facilitator when needed. The Facilitators roles and responsibilities include:

- Is not a member of the team and does not interject opinion, or assume role as team member.
- Facilitates discussion only if needed.
- Captures discussion items on flip chart at the meeting if necessary.
- Facilitates activities such as brainstorming, multi-voting, and other activities Coordinator can participate as active members.

Committee Members

Open to anyone interested in wildlife and wildlife habitat management at the local level and development of local plans for landscape management objectives that include wildlife resources in context with other land uses and objectives. Local or state representatives of conservation groups that help to generate Special Big Game Tag Funds are expected to participate as members of the LHPCs to give input to regional planning and project priorities.

Committee Members' roles and responsibilities include:

- Contribute positively to overall goals of the LHPC.
- Resolve conflicts professionally.
- Provide input and constructive feedback on landscape level goals provided by resource managers to move toward consensus.

Meeting Frequency and Suggested Topics:

LHPCs should attempt to schedule as many meetings as possible on weekends to facilitate attendance by representatives of the statewide conservation groups. The following meeting dates and topics are suggested, however the number of yearly meetings is at the discretion of the LHPC:

June–August: Issues, concerns, opportunities related to Arizona hunting season strategies. Provide annual update of comprehensive game management plan and discussion of monitoring information and/or needs. Presentation by AZGFD Wildlife Managers regarding big game population objectives and previous years hunt results. Input on habitat issues and monitoring data will be incorporated into the Regional hunting season recommendations for Arizona Game and Fish Commission consideration

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and approval. Finalize and discuss proposed projects for September 1st deadline. Field trips, planning, and data gathering for habitat improvement projects.

September–December: Guest Speakers to inform and educate members on topics such as game management, habitat management, and/or Commission updates. LHPC success stories provided by Wildlife Managers in PowerPoint format summarizing completed habitat improvement and volunteer projects. Field trips to visit completed or ongoing projects.

January–May: The AZGFD should present the hunting recommendation changes that will be going to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and forward any comments to the Commissioners. Review landscape plans and local priorities identified by AZGFD personnel through collaborative planning processes (in conjunction with other agencies and landowners). Identify opportunities to involve local committees in planning and projects. Scheduling and implementation of approved projects from the previous cycle, local prioritization of habitat improvements for the current cycle. Identify, discuss, and schedule summer volunteer habitat improvement projects. Scoping issues and needs for projects. Scheduling and implementation of approved projects.

LHPCs can serve as an important and productive forum for collaboration and information exchange, and Regional Supervisors are encouraged to take all steps necessary so that LHPCs in their regions continue to fill this role. However, if an LHPC has consistently suffered from a lack of participation by non-AZGFD personnel, and the Regional Supervisor is satisfied that all reasonable steps to correct the situation have been attempted, the Regional Supervisor may authorize the following to be pursued and presented to the AHPC:

- Combining two or more LHPCs that are suffering from a lack of participation
- Combine the LHPC with a different but related group (local sportsmen's club, livestock operator's association).
- Suspend or modify the formal meeting format. LHPC will still exist as an entity, mailing lists will be maintained when possible, and the LHPC should be re-activated if requested by individuals from outside AZGFD.
- In the event that formal LHPC meetings are suspended, the Regional Supervisor shall ensure that habitat planning decisions, project priorities, and relevant management plans are presented for public comment annually at public hunt meetings or other public venues, and that pertinent information is sent to individuals on the LHPC's mailing list.
- To be eligible for funding through the AHPC process, Regional Supervisors shall ensure at least one LHPC exists within their region.

Affiliate Membership:
Other groups organized for the purpose of collaborative management of a geographic area may become affiliate members to the Arizona Habitat Partnership Committee. These groups will operate according to their own charter and/or bylaws. As affiliates they will share minutes of their meetings for quarterly distribution to the statewide mailing list.

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Affiliates will be represented at the AHPC as voting members. Affiliates may submit project proposals.