

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation

Annual Report & Accomplishments

2023



Review from the Ridge

As another year comes to a close, tradition dictates we look back and assess what happened; the positives, the high points, the successes, and of course the accomplishments. We also look at what didn't work, what wasn't a success, and what could we have done better? It's an enlightening exercise tying together twelve months of work and effort and putting it into perspective.

In the following pages you will get an overview of all that AZSFWC, and our member organizations worked on, talked about, reviewed, commented, and advocated for. Our year will end with 39 member, affiliate and associate organizations and businesses supporting our mission and objectives. That many groups creates a healthy diversity of opinion and credibility across a wide spectrum. We don't always agree but are respectful in the disagreements. Our Opt-in process allows us to weigh in on issues, noting the supporters, and allowing the others to not be included on any particular issue.

AZSFWC endeavors to have an impact on issues important to our passions and we pursue those objectives for the results, not for recognition.

Arizona had 18 National Monuments prior to the President's Proclamation last summer with the Grand Canyon. We did not advocate for such a designation, however we were afforded an opportunity by Senator Sinema and Representative Grijalva to work with their staffs to join the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and Department in outlining what was needed to make the inevitable monument palatable for wildlife, conservation, the Commission/Department's authority, as well as hunting and angling. The Proclamation and accompanying Fact Sheet went further in enshrining those needs than any Monument had before.

As the new year commences, we already have two organizations seeking to join our ranks. As our base expands, so will our impact, and if this year is like the others, that will become even more important with the issues we'll face!

You can help; become a member and buy a "Conserving Wildlife" license plate!

Yours in Conservation,

Jim Unmacht
Executive Director



2023 Officers

President - Rich Williams
Vice President - Chip Wittrock
Treasurer - Zack May
Secretary - Eddy Corona

Staff

Executive Director - Jim Unmacht
Administrator - Tracy Unmacht

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AZSFWC would like to thank George Andrejko, AZGFD, for contributing many of the photos in this publication.



Wildlife, Habitat & Conservation

- Partnership with the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) and Commission
- Comment and input:
 - ⇒ Legislation
 - ⇒ Hunt Guidelines
 - ⇒ CO River Management
 - ⇒ MX Wolves and Wolf-Coyote Education
 - ⇒ Mandatory Reporting
 - ⇒ Leftover tags
 - ⇒ Fair Chase
 - ⇒ Land Management Plans
 - ⇒ Travel Management Plans
 - ⇒ Renewable Energy Projects
 - ⇒ Unauthorized Livestock and Feral Horses and Burros
 - ⇒ Wildlife Waters Redevelopment and Prioritization
 - ⇒ OHV Issues
 - ⇒ National Monument parameters
 - ⇒ Wildlife Crossings
- Tracking Annual Statewide Conservation Spending with AZGFD comes to fruition



Access, Input & Outreach

Arizona State Agencies and Communities:

- Requested National Hunting and Fishing Day Proclamation from Gov. Hobbs for 9/23/23
- AZ Office of Resiliency Policy Advisor meeting and ongoing dialog
- Commission Appointment Recommendation Board (CARB) support
- Commissioner Candidate letters of support for Marsha Sue and Jeff Buchanan with to Governor Hobbs, AZ Senate President Petersen, and Senate Natural Resources Chair Kerr, 5/11/23
- Outdoor Recreation Business Summit participation
- AZ Attorney General and Gila County Common Interest Agreement on Tonto roads
- AZ Department of Transportation, License plate management communications and letter supporting a Federal grant request to repair the Apache Trail, SR 88, 8/14/23
- AZ Water Protection Fund Grant application by AZTU, submitted a letter of support, 10/26/23

Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) comments:

- CO wolf 10j review 3/6/23, comment letter submitted 4/13/23, consistent with comments on ESA Proposed Rule Changes on Historical Range, submitted 8/7/22
- National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) proposed lead ban tracking
- Proposed Delisting of Apache Trout, letter of support sent 9/9/23



Access, Input & Outreach

U.S. Department of Interior:

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) input

- Renewables and Solar Planning discussions with BLM staff
- Solar EIS Scoping Zoom, 1/12/23
- Table Mesa Recreation Area Scoping Project meeting, 1/18/23 and review
- Jove Solar Project review and comments submitted 2/1/23
- Enterprise Ranch LWCF acquisition support with Trust for Public Land, and follow up
- Hoodini Solar Project review with no comment
- Ajo TMP review, comment letter submitted, 6/6/23
- Sonoran Desert National Monument Recreational Shooting: Assessment, 6/19/23, follow up meeting, 6/30/23, and comment letter submitted 8/5/23



- BLM Land Rule Proposal assessment and review
- Ironwood Forest National Monument inquiry and response on concerns, 6/22/23
- Middle Gila South TMP/EA meeting 3/7/23, comment letters, 4/3/23, 8/31/23
- Needles Eye Wilderness Access project follow up with Tucson office
- Grand Canyon NM public meeting in Flagstaff, 7/18/23, follow up meetings, 7/27/23, 8/2/23
- YPG Land Management Withdrawal proposal review
- Lake Havasu habitat enhancement discussions with Anglers United
- Ranegrass Plains Energy Center EIS review
- YLE Ranch Rd bypass access route assessment
- TMP for Gila and San Simon Area correspondence with SEAZSC
- National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) Strategy meeting, 11/14/23

Access, Input & Outreach

Department of Agriculture - Forest Service:

Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (NF):

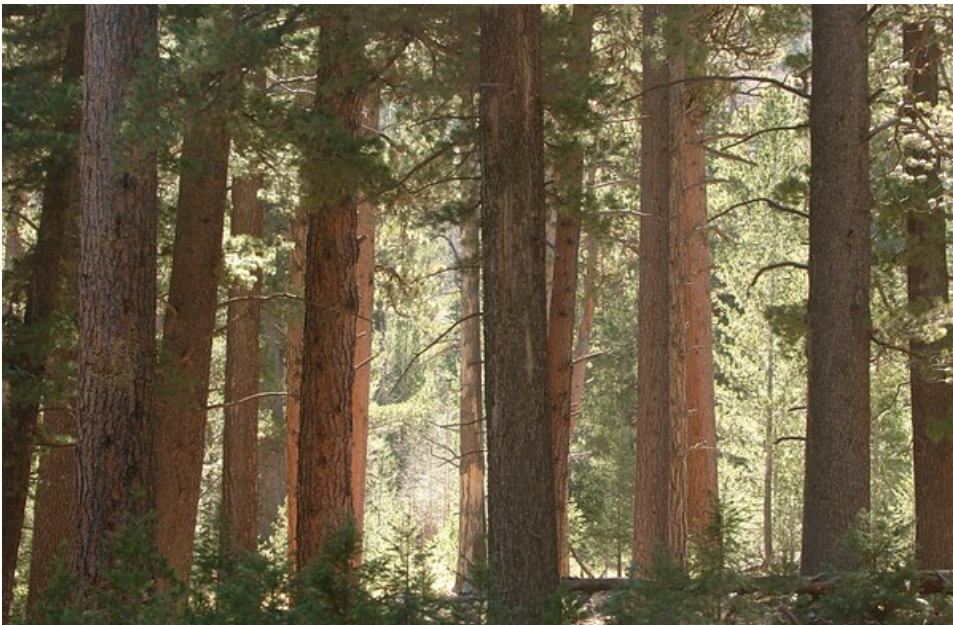
- Unauthorized Livestock, HOWL Action Alert
- Black River Landscape Restoration review
- Alpine Horse matters, Press Release on Feral horse roundup contributions, 9/30/23
- The West Camp Wind Farm Project review in 4B

Coconino National Forest (NF):

- Wildlife Crossings along I-17 and I-40 review, support and letter sent 8/28/23
- Red Rock Trails Access Plan review

Coronado National Forest (NF):

- Peloncillo FireScope Scoping project review, comments submitted 6/12/23
- Chiricahua Public Access Project, assessment, and follow-up
- CBP Proposed Road Repair and Construction project review



Kaibab National Forest (NF):

- House Rock Bison Project EA, letter of support sent 8/31/23

Prescott NF:

- Yavapai Ranch LWCF discussions and follow up with Senate staff
- Yavapai Ranch Phase 3 letter of support, 8/11/23
- Upper Verde Wild & Scenic Suitability Study
- Prescott NF and Yavapai Apache Land Exchange review

Tonto NF:

- Land Management Plan (LMP) Objection meetings, follow up letter and comments, and response received
- Travel Management Plan (TMP) and Sierra Ancha Wilderness (SAW) access efforts to keep the Workman Creek and Cherry Creek Roads open, 41 groups supporting the position
- Collaboration with Arizona Attorney General and Gila County, follow up and declarations
- Salt River Horse NEPA lawsuit collaborative meetings and communications
- OHV plan discussion with Game & Fish

Legislative, Planning & Advocacy

AZ State Legislature

- RTS Registration and Advocacy at Capitol
- National Association of Sportsmen's Caucus (NASC) Advisory Council role with AZ Legislators for Wildlife (AZLW) Caucus
- Opposed the Alpine Horse Bill SB1057
- Supported HCM2005 in support of Hunting, Angling and Wildlife Conservation
- Senate Natural Resources Committee meeting on Commissioners confirmation, 7/31/23
- OHV Committee Participation

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF)

- HuntFish 30x30, America the Beautiful, & ATLAS engagement
- Dialog and discussions:
 - ⇒ Renewable Energy
 - ⇒ Right to Hunt & Fish
 - ⇒ "Wild" Horse Management
- Recovering America's Wildlife Act signatory <https://ournatureusa.com/our-partners/>

U.S. Congress

- Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) continuing support
- Upper Verde Watershed and Yavapai Ranch (Phase II) LWCF application for Farm Bill ACEP
- Correspondence with AZ Congressional delegation on various matters
- Monitoring Chiricahua National Monument to National Park
- Farm Bill review of Conservation Easements
- Grand Canyon Heritage Act research and assessment
- Grand Canyon National Monument review, discussion, assessment, and input
- Monitoring Great Bend of the Gila



“Conserving Wildlife” License Plate

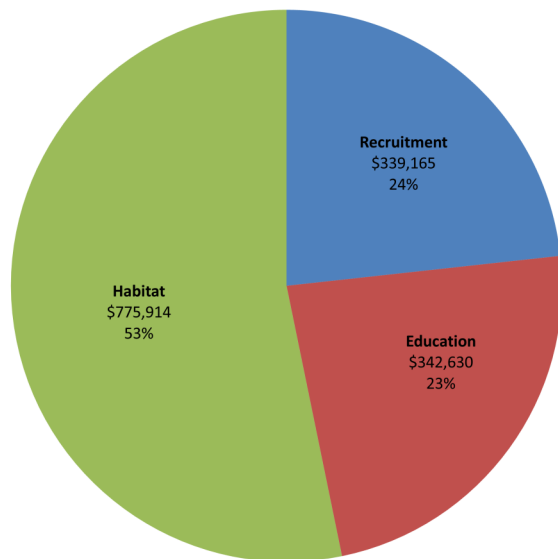


- For the 13th year in a row, our annual license plate revenue increased!
- AZGFD updated plate image and link on the homepage of their website
- AZSFWC Pop-up license plate banners into all Game & Fish offices
- AZSFWC License Plate postcards revised and updated
- Press Release to Outdoor Wire, On the Road for Wildlife, 3/27/23

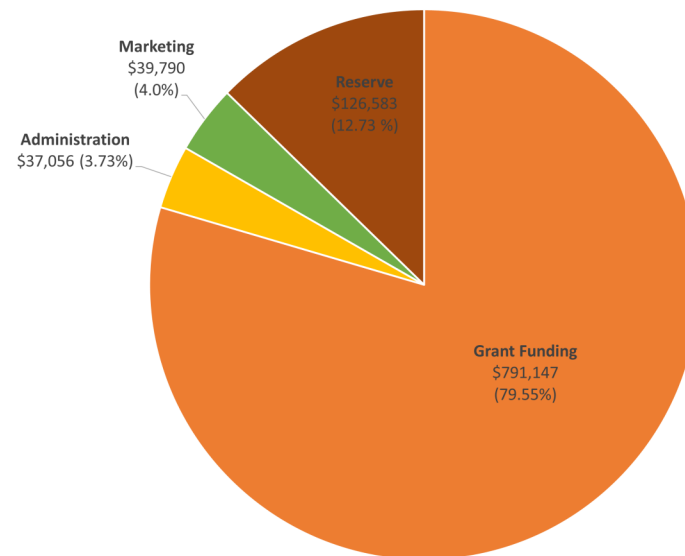
2023 License Plate Sales and Grant Activity:

- We averaged \$18,9215 per month in plate revenue for a total of \$226,979 exceeding 2022 by \$4,154
- We awarded 23 Stinson Grants totaling \$185,868
- Grant awards included \$105,327 for habitat, \$50,698 for Education and \$29,863 for Youth Recruitment
- **From 2012 - 2023 we approved 240 grants totaling \$1,508,257**

AZ Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation Grant History 2012-2023
Total Approved - \$1,508,257
Total Utilized - \$1,276,987



AZ Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation License Plate Fund 5 Year Analysis 2019-2023
Total Revenue - \$994,577



Business Matters & Marketing

- Enews and Action Alerts Distributed to 14,250 individuals per release:
 - ⇒ On the Road for Wildlife
 - ⇒ Update from Downtown
 - ⇒ Sanderson Ford Delivers
 - ⇒ The State of Monuments
 - ⇒ The Dog Days
 - ⇒ “CWD – There’s No Do Over”
 - ⇒ Around the Horn
 - ⇒ Tis the Season
- “From the Ridgeline” Daily News Alerts
- HOWL Action Alerts; Unauthorized livestock, 2/2/23 and Commissioner confirmation, 5/13/23
- Special Land Use Designations Resolution updated and circulated to Board
- AZGFD Commission Banquet Sponsor, 1/21/23, Outdoor Business Summit participation
- Corporate Sponsor - Sanderson Ford, again sponsors Ford F-150 Truck Raffle
- New Member Organizations - Friends of Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, AZ Mule Deer Organization
- New Affiliate Member - Western Hunter Magazine
- New Associate Member - Mohave Sportsman Club
- New individual members 11, with 3 Life Members
- City of Goodyear presentation, 8/3/23
- Sun City Sportsmen Club Presentation planning for 2024
- Legal review of our Grant program & application update 6/16/23
- Merchant account assessment with MiCamp Solutions



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FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

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ARIZONA
GAME & FISH

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC) is the leading 501c-3 non-profit organization dedicated to wildlife conservation, habitat improvement, youth recruitment and retention, as well as providing education for outdoor enthusiasts on issues important to their passions.

In 2022, AZSFWC was supported by 42 member, associate and affiliate organizations spanning the spectrum of hunting, angling, shooting, and outdoor recreation across Arizona.

Since 2012, AZSFWC has provided over \$1.36 Million in grants from the "Conserving Wildlife" license plate revenue!

Partnerships and Collaboration



- Outdoors America: Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) planning and meetings
- National Forest Foundation presentation at July Board meeting
- North American Non-Lead Partnership: Update and Kaibab Deer Program
- Payson Wildlife Fair exhibitor, 5/6/23
- Ranching and Wildlife Work Group meetings coordinated with AZGFD including: AZSFWC, AZ Cattle Growers Association (ACGA), AZ Farm & Ranch and Gila County Cattlegrowers
- Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP): GCNM and Clean Water Act discussions
- Upper Verde Watershed Collaborative, Upper Verde Fact Sheet Signatory
- Western Rivers Action Network ongoing support
- Wildlife for Tomorrow presentation at June Board meeting

- Salt River Project (SRP) MOU 6/29/22: Press Release on INFN Grant, 2/14/23, Board presentation from Elvy Barton at November meeting
- AZ Trout Unlimited Native & Wild Trout Conference, 4/6/23 and Annual Meeting, 4/8/23
- HOWL for Wildlife Board presentation and discussions on future collaboration
- Central Arizona Conservation Alliance (CAZCA) discussions on collaboration, 12/13/23
- Greater Chino Valley Collaborative (GCVC) participation and Outdoor Recreation Working Group involvement, Del Rio Springs Ranch letter of support, 6/23/23
- Lower Gila River Collaborative & Rio Reimagined Partnership
- Land Advisors Organization collaboration, Upper Verde Watershed and Yavapai Ranch matters



AZSFWC Members

