



March 10, 2021

Keisha Tatum
State Conservationist
Natural Resources Conservation Service
230 N First Avenue, Suite 509
Phoenix, AZ 85003-1733

RE: Yavapai Ranch ACEP-ALE-GSS Application by Central Arizona Land Trust

Dear Ms. Tatum:

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC) is a 501c-3 non-profit organization dedicated to wildlife conservation, habitat work, youth recruitment and retention, as well as educating outdoor enthusiasts on issues important to their passions. AZSFWC member, affiliate, and associate groups reach across the spectrum of conservation, hunting, angling, shooting, outdoor recreation, and businesses from across Arizona. Our member groups represent more than 16,000 people from Arizona.

On behalf of AZSFWC, we want to express our support for the Central Arizona Land Trust (CALT) grant request for acquisition of an agricultural conservation easement of 5,120 acres from the Yavapai Ranch. We understand CALT is seeking cost share funding from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Land Easements – Grasslands of Special Significance (ACEP-ALE-GSS).

AZSFWC recently signed on as a proponent of the Upper Verde Fact Sheet, supporting scientific management of the Upper Verde River for sustainable use, conservation, and responsible recreation, which includes the Yavapai Ranch. AZSFWC has also supported several conservation initiatives on the Yavapai Ranch over time, and some of our member organizations have undertaken conservation projects on and near the ranch to help wildlife and enhance habitat.

Landscape scale conservation efforts in Arizona are of critical importance as our state's population continues to grow. The natural resources benefiting from this conservation easement are outlined in the February 26, 2021 letter from CALT and the February 16, 2021 letter from Arizona Game & Fish Department. AZSFWC concurs with the projected benefits.

Another key component of this conservation easement is the preservation of access for hunting and outdoor recreation. AZSFWC and our member organizations fully support this aspect of the process too.

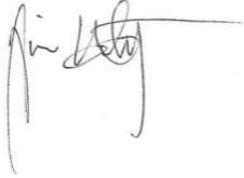
AZSFWC support for Yavapai Ranch Conservation Easement Funding Application – 3-10-21

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation
PO Box 75731 New River, AZ 85087

Finally, I have attached a list of our member organizations that support the conservation easement funding request.

Thank you!

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Unmacht", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jim Unmacht
Executive Director

CC: Fred Ruskin, Yavapai Ranch
Becky Ruffner, President, Central AZ Land Trust
Heather Reading, Conservation Advisor, Land Advisors Organization

AZSFWC support for Yavapai Ranch Conservation Easement Funding Application – 3-10-21

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation
PO Box 75731 New River, AZ 85087