



Last week the Arizona Legislature forwarded to Governor Hobbs their version of a budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and it quickly met the Governor's veto pen. https://mcusercontent.com/44a5186aac69c13c570fca36a/files/d4aba755-de3e-f9fe-7de1-a869382400e3/SKM_C751i26050516440.pdf

The Legislators are now on recess until June 1st pending any budget negotiations. Several issues remain outstanding and of concern to the Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD), Commission, and sportsmen and women.

The first is the exclusion of AZGFD's hatchery funding request in the Legislative budget. The good news is Governor Hobbs has included the hatchery funding request in her Executive budget. The AZGFD request is for an appropriation of \$11M for FY27. The key here is the request has no impact on the General Fund as AZGFD is a self-funded agency. Hopefully, the fact that we (the sporting community) have created these funds will help to ensure this AZGFD priority makes it into the final budget.

Arizona's hatcheries play a critical role in supporting recreational fishing opportunities and drive economic benefits for communities all across Arizona. It is of utmost importance to modernize aging hatchery infrastructure in order to address challenges such as reduced water availability, biosecurity risks, and increasing operational demands.

This video will explain some of those issues and also showcases how strategic investments in hatchery modernization will help ensure quality angling opportunities for future generations. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55odQjMCXhQ>

Next up, the Legislature decided to sweep some targeted AZGFD funds. They are proposing to transfer \$10M from the AZGFD's Heritage Land Acquisition Fund and \$4.3M from the Watercraft Licensing Fund to the State General Fund.

Several other bills of interest are in limbo for now:

HB2156 – livestock compensation fund; appropriation bill would provide \$250K in funding for the Livestock Loss Board, which is now out of money. That is pending in the Senate Rules Committee.

SB1519 – Strike Everything: off-highway vehicles; weight; enforcement fund, in its current form would update the definition of an OHV to include vehicles up to 3500 pounds, up from the current 2500 pound limit. Discussions continue around ways to ensure that while the OHV community would enjoy the benefit of this change, there would also be additional resources made available for law enforcement and for mitigating natural resource damage. This bill is pending in the House Committee of the Whole (COW), and it is anticipated that it will be amended again as a result of ongoing discussions.

SB1199 – Strike Everything: Salt River horse herd; this bill will negatively impact the management of the horses, require genetic study and testing, and put any herd reduction on hold. Unfortunately, this would effectively reverse the recent advances the state has taken to manage these animals. Here's the bill:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/7e428b58001/6d5eef3c-543f-4840-9bf5-d9f0d3aff2e6.pdf?rdr=true>

It has passed the House COW, and is pending floor votes in both the House and Senate.

Recently appointed Rep. Cody Reim has taken up the crusade on this issue. Here's his press release:

<https://azhousegop.com/rep-cody-reim-leads-push-to-protect-salt-river-horses/>

AZSFWC has asked Rep. Reim to meet on two occasions so far, and we await his response.

[Click here](#) to read AZSFWC's position in an op-ed to the AZ Republic from April 8, 2026.

Yours in Conservation,
Jim Unmacht
Executive Director

L. Gary Stinson Grant Program

WATER WATER WATER is on all conservationist's minds, especially at this time of year. Wildlife Water Works is an AZSFWC member organization that provides critical water relief to Arizona's wildlife. They were awarded a Stinson grant to continue this important work. The grant provided funding for the construction of 2 water trailers that volunteers use to transport water to remote areas in the state. Read more [here](#).



Applicants must be a 501(c)(3) organization in existence for at least 2 years, in good standing with the AZ Corporation Commission and have a physical presence of a chapter or other unit in Arizona. Additional eligibility requirements, instructions and program information can be found [HERE](#).

Applications for project funding will be submitted using our online submission form [HERE](#) and funding decisions will be made by the AZSFWC Board at the end of August 2026.

Please support our Member Group Activities

Community Meeting
Wednesday, May 13th, 2026
King's Anvil Ranch
Coffee 8:30 a.m Coffee
9:00 - 3:00 Meeting
[Info](#)



**ARIZONA ANTELOPE FOUNDATION
Rocky Prairie Fence Modification
MAY 16, 2026**

Project Location: We will be working on the Apache National Forest about 12 miles south of Big Lake in the White Mountains.

Project Begins: Saturday May 16th at 7:30AM. Meet at camp for specific work instructions. The campsite is located within two miles of the project site.

Project Activity: We will be modifying approximately 2 miles of existing low hanging four and five strand fence by removing the bottom strand(s) of barbed wire and replacing with a single strand of smooth wire at a height of 18 inches.

Pronghorn Benefits: The project is located in a rather isolated grassland that is key summer range for approximately 35 pronghorn. This grassland supports a good number of summering does who give birth in this localized habitat. Modifying these fences will allow easier mobility for these animals. These pronghorn are associated with the population that summers in the Big Lake area. This project is our seventh project to enhance habitat for these migratory pronghorn.

Volunteer Benefits: All volunteer work hours will be used as in-kind match for federally funded wildlife enhancement projects including the Arizona Game and Fish Habitat Partnership program.

What to Bring: Workgloves (The AAF will have a limited supply), snacks, water, sunscreen, personal gear.

Meals: Please provide your own lunches to eat in the field on the Saturday work day. The AAF will be providing dinners on Friday and Saturday nights and continental breakfasts with coffee and juice on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Contact: Please register online by Monday May 11th, so we can plan to have enough food and tools for everyone. The direct link to register online for this project is https://volunteer.azgfd.gov/need/detail/?need_id=1243166. You may also RSVP to info@azantelope.org or call 480-702-1045. If you have any specific questions pertaining to the campsite location or other local questions, please contact Dave Cagle at (928) 242-9871.

Directions to Camp: AAF camp site will be located at Horse Springs Group camping site, located on the East Fork of the Black River. This site is located about 13 miles South of Big Lake

-Travel 26 miles east of Pinetop towards Springerville on Highway 260;

-Turn right (south) on State Highway 273 at the Sunrise turnoff

-Go about 19.5 miles South/East on Highway 273 to the 249E turnoff and turn right (south). The 249E turnoff is approximately .5 miles after you pass Big Lake.

-Drive .6 miles on 249E and turn left on F.S. 24 road. Drive East on F.S. 24 road for 9.9 miles, until you reach a 4-way junction

-Turn left at junction onto F.S. 276 (North) for approximately 2 miles. Horse Springs Campground will be on the right-hand side.

Please note this is a semi-public camping area, but efforts will be made to "reserve" a specific AAF camping area. The campground will have limited water and restrooms to use. There is great fishing behind the campsite as well.



Hunter Clinic

June 20, 2026

12:00 - 4:00

Ben Avery Clay Target Center



[Info](#)



Valley of the Sun Quail Forever Banquet June 27, 2026

5:00 PM

SRP Pera Club
1 E Continental Dr

[Info](#)

Hall of Fame Banquet

Save the Date - August 22, 2026 at The Wigwam Resort



[Info](#)

Corporate Partners



Members

Alter Valley Conservation Alliance
AZ Adaptive Water Sports
AZ Antelope Foundation
AZ Big Game Super Raffle/Conservation First USA
AZ Chapter Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
AZ Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation
AZ Chapter Safari Club International
AZ Council Trout Unlimited
AZ Deer Association
AZ Desert Bighorn Sheep Society
AZ Elk Society

AZ Predator Callers
Conserve and Protect Arizona
Delta Waterfowl
Diablo Trust
Ducks Unlimited
Friends of the Buenos Aires NWR
Into the Wild Outdoors
Mogollon Sporting Association
Mule Deer Foundation
No Excuse Hunting & Outdoors
Outdoor Experience 4 All
Southern AZ Chapter Quail Forever

AZ Flycasters Club
AZ Houndsmen Association
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Hunter Nation
Mohave Sportsman Club
Sun City Sportsmen Club

Affiliate Members



Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation is a 501-c-3 not-for-profit organization whose mission is to educate and inform sportsmen, wildlife conservation organizations throughout the state and the public at large on important issues related to wildlife and wildlife habitat and to provide, via grants or other sources, funding to conserve Arizona's wildlife populations through habitat enhancement initiatives.

[DONATE](#)

The AZSFWC is responsible for managing the conservation license plate program (L. Gary Stinson Grant Fund). The fund is derived from the sale of wildlife conservation license plates and member organizations as well as non-member organizations are eligible to apply for those funds.



Not Just Another Pretty Plate

By purchasing this plate you will be making a contribution to Arizona's wildlife and wildlife habitat. Seventeen dollars (\$17) of each twenty-five (\$25) special license fee will go to AZSFWC's L. Gary Stinson Grant Fund. AZSFWC will review and approve all grants from the special license plate program revenues. These grants will fund important outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and on-the-ground wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement projects. (More info [HERE](#)).

These plates can be purchased online and can also be personalized. To order an AZSFWC Conservation License Plate go to: <https://azmvdnow.gov/plates>

Scroll through the page, to the "See All" button. Plates will be listed alphabetically with our plate entitled "Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation". Click on the plate and follow the prompts. Order your plate as a sequential shelf plate for \$25.00 per year or as a personalized plate for \$50.00 per year.

The plate is also available for all categories of trailers as well as with the International Symbol of Access for Disabilities.

The AZSFWC Conservation Plate gives all Arizonan's an opportunity to contribute to programs that benefit our wild creatures. **Step up and support "Wild Arizona".**



Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation | P.O. Box 75731 | New River, AZ 85087 US

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