



PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

Revision #1

June 11, 2025

A public meeting of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission will be held on **June 13, 2025** at the **Payson Town Hall, 303 N Beeline Highway, Payson AZ 85541**. The public may attend the meeting in person or view the meeting at www.azgfd.gov/commissioncam or may listen to the meeting by calling 404-397-1516, Access code: 280 046 234##. Members of the public may view the meeting from any Department Regional Office and the Department's Headquarters via video teleconference. Members of the public attending in person wanting to speak on a specific agenda item may submit Speaker Cards (Blue Cards) if they wish to speak to the Commission. Members of the public may only address the Commission by attending in person or from any regional office. Copies of any presentations, documents, etc. discussed during the meeting will be available by contacting sprice@azgfd.gov. Unless expressly provided otherwise with any matter, the Commission may discuss and may vote to take action on the following matters:

Friday, June 13, 2025 **Meeting location opens at 7:45 a.m.**
 Meeting begins at 8:00 a.m.
 Lunch Break at 12:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Welcome/Introductions

Awards and Recognition

Regional Highlights

- 1) **Call to the Public.** Those persons wishing to speak on a matter not on the agenda should complete a speaker's card and present it to the host. No discussion or action will be taken by the Commission. Any items requiring further discussion or action will be included on a future Commission meeting agenda.
- 2) **Consent Agenda.** The following items are hereby noticed as consent agenda items to expedite action on routine matters, which may not require public discussion. The Commission will be asked to approve briefings and updates without further public input or discussion and to approve other matters as presented, subject to approval or

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GOVERNOR: KATIE HOBBS **COMMISSIONERS:** CHAIRMAN CLAY HERNANDEZ, TUCSON | MARSHA PETRIE SUE, SCOTTSDALE | JEFF BUCHANAN, PATAGONIA
JAMES E. GOUGHNOUR, PAYSON | KURT KERR, PINETOP **DIRECTOR:** TOM P. FINLEY **DEPUTY DIRECTOR:** JOSHUA W. HURST

recommendations of the Commission's legal counsel. Commission members may remove certain items if further public input or discussion is deemed necessary.

- a) **An Agreement for Permit with the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside for the Purpose of Providing Access to the White Mountain Trail across the Commission's Pinetop Regional Office, Navajo County, Arizona. Presenter: Jim Ruff, Land and Water Program Supervisor.** The Commission may vote to approve the Agreement for a Permit with the Town of Pinetop-Lakeside for the Purpose of Providing Access to the White Mountain Trail on the Commission's Pinetop Regional Office.
- 3) **Approve the Notice of Rulemaking Docket Opening, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Economic Impact Statement Amending R12-4-114. Presenter: Christopher Dean, Rules and Policy Administrator.** The Department will ask the Commission to vote to approve the Notice of Rulemaking Docket Opening, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Economic Impact Statement Amending R12-4-114; the Commission may provide the Department direction on this item.
- 4) ***ITEM REMOVED***
~~**Approve Proposed Commission Order 29 for Special Big Game License-Tag Seasons for Mule Deer, White-tailed Deer, Pronghorn, Elk, Turkey, Javelina, Bighorn Sheep, Bison, Black Bear, and Mountain Lion for the 2026-2027 Special License-Tag Hunting Seasons. Presenter: Erin Butler, Big Game Management Program Supervisor.**~~ The Commission will consider and may vote to approve Commission Order 29: Special Hunts, establishing seasons and season dates, bag and possession limits, permit numbers, and open areas for Special Big Game Hunt License-Tags for the 2026-2027 seasons.
- 5) **Approve the Notice of Rulemaking Docket Opening, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Economic Impact Statement Amending Rules Within Article 2 Licenses; Permits; Stamps; Tags. Presenter: Dr. Larisa Harding, Small Game Program Manager.** The Department will ask the Commission to vote to approve the Notice of Rulemaking Docket Opening, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Economic Impact Statement Amending Rules Within Article 2 Licenses; Permits; Stamps; Tags; the Commission may provide the Department direction on this item.
- 6) ***ITEM REMOVED***
~~**Special Big Game Tag Revenue Update. Presenter: Andrew Cavalcant, Habitat Partnership Committee Coordinator Terrestrial Wildlife Branch.**~~ The Department will provide the Commission with an update on the current status of the Special Big Game Tag revenue and account balances.
- 7) ***ITEM REMOVED***
~~**Authorize Issuance of Special Big Game Hunt Tags to Wildlife Conservation Organizations for Pronghorn, Bighorn Sheep, Black Bear, Bison, Elk, Javelina,**~~

~~Mountain Lion, Mule Deer, Turkey and White-tailed Deer for 2026-2027. Presenter: Andrew Cavalcant, Habitat Partnership Committee Coordinator Terrestrial Wildlife Branch. The Commission will consider and may vote to take action on applications from organizations for 2026-2027 Special Big Game Tags as per R12-4-120. A detailed description of proposals is available for public review at all Department offices.~~

- 8) **Ben Avery Shooting Facility Master Plan, Range Protection Zone Update. Presenter: Mike Raum, Shooting Sports Branch Chief.** The Commission will be provided an update on the Department's ongoing evaluation of future range protection zone planning as designated in the Ben Avery Shooting Facility Master Plan. The Commission may vote to take action on and provide the Department direction on this item.

TIME CERTAIN AT 10:00AM

- 9) **Hearings on License Revocations for Violations of Game and Fish Codes and Civil Assessments for the Illegal Taking and/or Possession of Wildlife. Presenter: Gene F. Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief.** The Commission will consider and take action on the license revocations and/or civil assessments for the individuals listed below.

Name	Docket #	Conviction
Victoria Andersen	2025-0015	Take Deer Without A Tag. Discharge Arrow Within ¼ Mile.
Dillan Owens	2025-0017	Take Wrong Sex. Possess Unlawfully Taken Elk.
Ezra Tenney	2025-0018	Possess Unlawfully Taken Elk.
Anthony Currey	2025-0019	Take Bighorn Sheep Without A Permit/Tag. Take Bighorn Sheep During Closed Season. Take Bighorn Sheep with An Unlawful Device.

- 10) **Rehearing Request Regarding Previous License Revocation/Civil Assessment. Presenter: Gene F. Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief.** Mark Hafkey has requested a rehearing regarding the revocation of his license privileges and imposed civil penalty.
- 11) **Ethically Fishing Arizona Course. Presenter: Chase Newlon, Fishing R3 Coordinator.** The Commission will be provided a briefing on the development of the Ethically Fishing Arizona online course.

- 12) **Elk Movement Study. Presenter: Joe Sayer, Field Supervisor, Payson.** The presentation will be an overview of the work done on the Elk Movement Study currently underway in GMU22 including collaring efforts and initial data analysis.
- 13) **Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) Briefing. Presenter: Kenneth “Tuk” Jacobson, Raptor Management Coordinator.** The Department will provide an informational briefing on the Department’s monitoring and management of bald and golden eagles in Arizona.

Agenda items 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 are first read items. The Commission may choose to take action on first read items as needed or may direct the Department to place first read items on the consent agenda for approval at the next Commission meeting.

- 14) **Petition to Close Road on State Trust Land Near Kirkland, Arizona. Presenter: Dan Sturla, Landowner Relations Program Manager.** A petition submitted by Jeff Harkless to close a road to vehicle access on State Trust Land (STL) located just east of Kirkland, Arizona will be presented to the Commission. The road provides vehicle access to the ranch which is a combination of leased State Land, and private land. Alternative vehicular routes in either direction of the petitioned closure provide reasonable access to the same area. The Commission may vote to take action on, or provide the Department direction on this item.
- 15) **License Agreement with Southline Transmission LLC to construct a new transmission line on the Willcox Playa Wildlife Area. Presenter: Callie Cavalcant, Habitat, Evaluation and Lands Branch Chief.** The Department will present to the Commission a license agreement with Southline Transmission LLC to construct, operate, and maintain a new transmission line, electric poles and related electrical equipment across a portion of the Willcox Playa Wildlife Area.
- 16) **Request for Approval to Apply Rotenone in Knoll Lake. Presenter: Julie Carter, Aquatic Wildlife Branch Chief.** The Department will present to the Commission the Department’s request to apply rotenone in Knoll Lake to remove illegally stocked Green Sunfish.
- 17) **An Agreement for Permit with the City of Show Low for the Purpose of Providing Access to the White Mountain Trail across the Commission’s Fools Hollow Lake Wildlife Area, Navajo County, Arizona. Presenter: Jim Ruff, Land and Water Program Supervisor.** The Department will present to the Commission a Permit with the City of Show Low for the Purpose of Providing Access to the White Mountain Trail on the Commission’s Fools Hollow Lake Wildlife Area.
- 18) **Disposal of the Commission’s 7.3 acre GSA parcel, located in Maricopa County, Arizona. Presenter: Jim Ruff, Land and Water Program Supervisor.** The Department

will present to the Commission the disposal of the 7.3 acre GSA parcel, located along the Lower Gila River in Maricopa County, Arizona.

19) *ITEM REMOVED*

~~**Commission Resolution for the Disposal, Transfer or Conversion of Public Lands. Presenter: Callie Cavalcant, Habitat, Evaluation and Lands Branch Chief.** The Department will present to the Commission a resolution regarding the disposal, transfer or conversion of public lands within the state of Arizona.~~

20) State and Federal Legislation. Presenter: Ed Sanchez, Legislative Policy Administrator. The Commission will be briefed on the status of state and federal legislation and may take a position or provide direction to the Department for coordination, action, or proposed changes to legislation related to Department responsibilities.

21) State and Federal Lands Planning Update. Presenter: Callie Cavalcant, Habitat, Evaluation and Lands Branch Chief. The Commission will receive an update on Department activities and involvement with land management planning and other actions regarding state and federal lands in Arizona.

22) Commission Priorities Update. Presenter: Luke Thompson, Special Assistant to the Director. The Department will provide an update on the Commission Priorities and Metrics, and Dan Sturla will provide an extended presentation for Commission Priority: Public Access and Improve Landowner Relations.

23) Proposed Dates and Locations of Arizona Game and Fish Commission Meetings for 2026 and January 2027. Presenter: Luke Thompson, Special Assistant to the Director. The Department will ask the Commission to consider and select proposed meeting dates and locations for the Year 2026 and for January 2027.

24) Election of Commission Chair and Vice-Chair for July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Presenter: Luke Thompson, Special Assistant to the Director. The Commission will vote to elect a Commission Chair and Vice-Chair for July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

25) Chairman, Commissioners and Director Comments. The Chairman, Commissioners and Director may provide brief comments on current events and issues. This item is for information only. Items requiring discussion, deliberation or legal action must be placed on a future Commission meeting agenda.

26) Future Agenda Items and Action Items.

27) Litigation Report. The Department's legal counsel may report on the status of the litigation matters: *In re General Stream Adjudication for the Little Colorado River and Gila River; Center for Biological Diversity v. Haaland, CV 22-303/453.*

28) Executive Session. (The Commission will not vote to take on any action during the Executive Session).

- a. Litigation and Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) and (4) for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel for legal advice in order to consider its position and to instruct legal counsel regarding the Commission's position concerning: In re General Stream Adjudication for the Little Colorado River and Gila River; Center for Biological Diversity v. Haaland, CV 22-303/453; OAH No. 24A-0001-AH-AZGFD; Notice of Intent to Sue concerning the Alamo Wildlife Area and In re Ernesto Bernal (OAH case).
- b. Litigation and Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) and (4) for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel for legal advice in order to consider its position and to instruct legal counsel regarding the Commission's position concerning the legal strategy recommendations from the Department's legal strategies team.
- c. Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel for legal advice regarding the Commission's authority to lock gates and close roads providing access to State Trust lands where there is reasonable alternative public access.
- d. Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel for legal advice regarding the designation of the Grand Canyon National Monument.
- e. Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel for legal advice regarding a proposed petition to amend Commission rules related to the lawful methods of take and seasons for taking wildlife.
- f. Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel regarding trespasses and other unauthorized activities on Commission-owned Lands.
- g. Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(4) for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel in order to consider its position and instruct its legal counsel regarding the Commission's position regarding a proposed right-of-way and right-of-entry agreement with Southline Transmission that is the subject of negotiations.

- h. Purchase or Disposal of Real Property and Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) and (7) for the purpose of discussion or consultation with Department staff in order to consider its position and instruct its representative regarding the purchase or disposal of real property and for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel for legal advice.
- i. Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel for legal advice regarding Commission practices related to communication, agendas and public records.
- j. Legal Advice.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) for the purpose of discussing and consulting with legal counsel for legal advice regarding the sale of special big game tags by raffle and the Commission's position on new terms and conditions for the special big game tag agreement with wildlife conservation organizations.
- k. Personnel Matters.** The Commission may vote to go into executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(1) to discuss personnel matters associated with the Director's duties, responsibilities and performance. The Commission may take action in the public session or defer any action to a later date.



Tom Finley
Director

The agenda may be revised and additional items may be added prior to the meeting as authorized by A.R.S. §38-431.02. In that event, an addendum to the agenda will be noticed and posted prior to the meeting at Department offices. Commission agenda items not noticed for a specific time may be taken out of order. Background materials provided to Commission members concerning public agenda items are available for public inspection at the main office of the Arizona Game and Fish Department at 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix, at Department regional offices in Pinetop, Flagstaff, Kingman, Yuma, Tucson, Mesa and at the meetings.

During the public meeting, the Commission may afford any person, their duly authorized

representative, or both, the opportunity to present statements relating to agenda items, with or without the opportunity to present them orally. The Commission may go into Executive Session for the purpose of obtaining legal advice from the Commission Attorneys on any of the above agenda items pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03 (A) (3) & (4). One or more members of the Commission may appear and participate in the meeting telephonically or by other electronic means.

Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation, such as a sign language interpreter, or this document in an alternative format, by contacting the AZGFD Deputy Director, 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix, Arizona 85086, 602-942-3000. Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department is responsible for managing Arizona's fish and wildlife resource as an enduring public trust. In addition, the Department is charged with promoting safe and responsible use of watercraft and off-highway vehicles. Funding is provided from the sale of licenses and permits; watercraft registration fees; federal excise taxes on firearms, fishing equipment, boats, and other sporting goods; State lottery revenues; donations on State income tax forms; and various contracts and grants. Department policy is set by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, whose five members are appointed by the Governor.

“Managing Today for Wildlife Tomorrow”