



August 21, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Re: North Kaibab National Forest Closure

Dear Secretary Rollins,

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission (Commission) regarding the impacts to Arizonans associated with the forest closure area on the North Kaibab National Forest following the White Sage and Dragon Bravo fires. The Arizona Game and Fish Department (Department) formally requests the Secretary to act swiftly, directing the United States Forest Service, Kaibab National Forest (Forest) leadership to recognize the State's authority to administer State hunts in the management of wildlife, and allow full access for Arizona's hunters west of Highway 67 on the Forest.

Since the beginning of these fires, the Department has provided solutions for and communicated to Forest leadership the need to allow public access for State managed and permitted hunts for bison, mule deer, and other wildlife species. These hunts are administered by the State of Arizona through the Department, and Arizonans often wait decades to be able to participate in these hunts. Further, limiting hunter access reduces the ability of hunters to support local businesses and communities that are trying to recover from the fires.

It is important to note, the Department recognizes current efforts and engagement of Forest staff with the Department, to provide access to the forest west of Highway 67. However the solutions provided by the Forest have been inadequate and do not meet the needs of Arizona's hunters and the Department. The current closure area is unnecessarily large when weighed against the current lack of public safety concerns and areas of active fire. The closure includes thousands of acres of

ARIZONA
azgfd.gov | 602.942.3000

5000 W. CAREFREE HIGHWAY, PHOENIX AZ 85086

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unburned habitat that is not currently in danger of burning. In addition, the closure does not fully recognize the needs of hunters to access core hunting areas on the North Kaibab Forest.

We welcome the opportunity to continue to work closely with your agency in the future and ask that the Secretary act swiftly, directing the Forest leadership to recognize the State's authority to administer State hunts in the management of wildlife, and allow full access for Arizona's hunters west of Highway 67 on the Forest. Thank you for your attention and continued partnership.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Marsha Petrie Sue". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Marsha Petrie Sue
Chair

cc:

The Honorable Doug Burgum, Secretary of the Interior
Chad Campbell, Chief of Staff, Office of Governor Katie Hobbs