



PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

March 2, 2026

A public meeting of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission will be held on **March 13, 2026** at the **Sierra Vista Fire Department Station #3, 675 Giulio Cesare Ave, Sierra Vista, Arizona 85635**. 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 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, when final, 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, March 13, 2026 **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 recommendations of the Commission's legal counsel. Commission members may remove certain items if further public input or discussion is deemed necessary.

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5000 W. CAREFREE HIGHWAY, PHOENIX AZ 85086

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

- a) **Approve a Request from Region V for Road Closures on State Trust Land. Presenter: Daniel Sturla, Landowner Relations and Habitat Enhancement Program Manager.** The Commission may approve a petition requesting to close two (2) short roads on State Trust lands where reasonable access has been identified.
- b) **Requests from Regions V and VI for Short Road Closure Renewals on State Trust Land. Presenter: Daniel Sturla, Landowner Relations and Habitat Enhancement Program Manager.** The Commission may approve three (3) requests to renew existing Commission authorized vehicle closures.
- 3) **Briefing of the Department's Off Highway Vehicle Program. Presenter: Micah White, OHV Law Enforcement Program Coordinator.** The Commission will be provided a briefing of the Department's Off Highway Program.
- 4) **Recruitment and Retention Efforts. Presenter: A.J. Lander, Wildlife Manager.** The commission will be presented with a summary of the many different outreach camps Region V personnel participate in every year.
- 5) **Ben Avery Shooting Facility Master Plan, Range Protection Zone Update. Presenter: Mike Raum, Shooting Sports Branch Chief.** The Commission will be provided the quarterly 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

- 6) **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.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Docket</u>	<u>Conviction</u>
Scott Bellamy	2026-0004	Take Deer Within ¼ Mile of an Occupied Structure
Rudy Owes	2026-0006	Take Javelina Without a Valid Tag
Rhett Ruiz	2026-0007	Take Mule Deer by Unlawful Method
Rhett Ruiz	2026-0008	Take Elk Without A Valid License Take Elk in Closed Season Take Elk With Aid of Artificial Light Take Elk With Aid of Vehicle

- 7) **Species of Greatest Conservation Need Briefing on the Department's Watershed Management Plans. Presenter: Julie Carter, Aquatic Wildlife Branch Chief.** The Department will provide an informational briefing about the Department's Watershed Management Plans and process to balance native aquatic species management and conservation with recreational angling opportunities in each watershed across the state.
- 8) **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.
- 9) **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.
- 10) **Commission Priorities Update. Presenter: Luke Thompson, Special Assistant to the Director.** The Department will provide an update on the Commission Priorities and Metrics, and Heidi Rayment will provide an expanded report on Commission Priority: Long Term Fiscal and Sociopolitical Sustainment.
- 11) **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.
- 12) **Future Agenda Items and Action Items.**
- 13) **Litigation Report.** The Department's legal counsel may report on the status of the following litigation matters and the Commission may take action: *In re General Stream Adjudication for the Little Colorado River and Gila River*; *Center for Biological Diversity v. Haaland*, CV 22-303/453; *Desert Tortoise Council v. Burgum*, CV 25-00272-JGZ.
- 14) **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. Burgum*, CV 22-303/453; *Desert Tortoise Council v. Burgum*, CV 25-00272-JGZ; *Koury v. Marsha Petrie Sue, et al.*, CV 2025-030971.

- 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 requirements for removing a species from the endangered species list after the species reaches its recovery objectives.
- d) **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 and staff in order to consider its position and instruct its legal counsel and staff regarding the Commission's pending application with ADWR for Type 2 grandfathered water rights for the new Crane Lake.
- 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 the Commission's authority to lock gates and close roads providing access to State Trust lands where there is reasonable alternative public access.
- 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 for legal advice regarding the designation of the Grand Canyon National Monument.
- g) **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.
- 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) & (4) for the purpose of discussions and consulting with legal counsel for legal advice and to instruct Department staff on contract negotiations regarding a cooperative multi state agreement for law enforcement resource exchange.
- 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”