



PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

April 27, 2026

A public meeting of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission will be held on **May 8, 2026** at the **Yavapai County Administrative Services Building, Board of Supervisors Hearing Room, 1st Floor, 1015 Fair Street, Prescott, AZ 86305**. 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, May 8, 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

Swearing in of Game Rangers

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.

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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 | JESSICA MANUELL, PARKS **DIRECTOR:** TOM P. FINLEY **DEPUTY DIRECTOR:** JOSHUA W. HURST

- 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.
- a) **Approve FY 2028 Proposed Budget & FY 2027 Amendments. Presenter: Marvin Mendieta, Budget and Payroll Administrator.** Approve FY 2028 proposed budget and the proposed amendments to the FY 2027 budget.
 - b) **License Agreement with Sanders Farms for Farming Forage Crops for Wildlife at Arlington Wildlife Area. Presenter: Jim Ruff.** The Commission may approve a 5-year renewal of a License Agreement with Sanders Farms for the purpose of cultivating up to 85 acres for wildlife forage crops on the Commission-owned Arlington Wildlife Area, Maricopa County, Arizona.
 - c) **Conveyance of the Commission's 320 acre Topock property, located in Mohave County, Arizona. Presenter: Jim Ruff.** The Department will ask the Commission to consider the conveyance of the 320 acre Topock property, located in western Mohave County, Arizona.
 - d) **Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Buckeye for the Community Fishing Program at Sundance Lake. Presenter: Scott Gurtin, Community Fishing Program Manager.** The Commission will consider and may approve an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Buckeye to implement the Community Fishing Program at Sundance Lake.
- 3) **Briefing on Research Branch Activities and Projects. Presenter: Esther Rubin, Research Branch Chief.** The Department will provide an informational update on the Research Branch's projects and activities.
- 4) **Species of Greatest Conservation Need Wildlife Briefing. Presenter: Holly Hicks, Small Mammal Project Coordinator.** The Commission will be provided a briefing on the Department's management efforts regarding the Black-Footed Ferret.

TIME CERTAIN AT 10:00AM

- 5) **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 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>
Hunter Munoz	2026-0011	Take Elk Without Permit.

Take During Closed Season.
Take Elk with Aide of Artificial Light.
Take Elk After Dark.

Robert Lopez III 2026-0012

Take Black Bear in Closed Season.

Brian Nicholson 2026-0013

Waste Eligible Game Meat.
Litter while Hunting.

James Douros 2026-0014

Possess of Unlawfully Taken Elk.
Take Elk in a Closed Area.

Kevin John Valery 2026-0015

Possess Unlawfully Taken Elk.
Take Elk in Closed Area.

Don Smith 2026-0017

Waste Edible Game Meat.

- 6) **Community Engagement in the Quad-Cities in Yavapai County. Presenter: Samantha Martin, Wildlife Manager, Region III.** The Commission will be provided a briefing on various community engagement efforts undertaken by Wildlife Managers in the quad-city area.
- 7) **State and Federal Legislation. Presenter: Ed Sanchez, Legislative Branch Chief.** 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.
- 8) **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.
- 9) **Commission Priorities Update. Presenter: Luke Thompson, Special Assistant to the Director.** The Department will provide an update on the Commission Priorities and Metrics. Dennis Fogle will provide an expanded report on Commission Priority: Promote Fair Chase
- 10) **Shooting Range Development Grant Requests for FY 2027. Presenter: Matthew Schwartzkopf, Statewide Shooting Range Administrator.** The Department's Shooting Range Development Grant Program received nine grant applications for fiscal year 2027. The Department will ask the Commission to approve six applications, totaling the full \$100,000 allocated. The Commission may vote to take action on, or provide the Department direction on this item.

- 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. Burgum*, 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) **Contract Negotiations.** The Commission may vote to meet in executive session in accordance with A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(4) for the purpose of discussion, consultation and to consider its position regarding negotiations with the Hopi Tribe for renewal of a hunt access agreement.
 - 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 Heber Wild Horse Territory Management Plan issued by the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest.
 - e) **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.

- 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 Commission's authority to lock gates and close roads providing access to State Trust lands where there is reasonable alternative public access.
- 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 for legal advice on the scope of the Commission's authority to issue special big game tags.
- h) **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.
- i) **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.
- 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 Commission practices related to communication, agendas and public records.
- 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”