



PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

Revision #1

September 2, 2026

A public meeting of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission will be held on **September 4, 2026 at City of Show Low Council Chambers 181 N. 9th Street, Show Low, AZ 85901**. 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, from the Department headquarters 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, September 4, 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

ARIZONA
azgfd.gov | 602.942.3000

5000 W. CAREFREE HIGHWAY, PHOENIX AZ 85086

GOVERNOR: KATIE HOBBS **COMMISSIONERS:** CHAIRMAN JAMES E. GOUGHNOUR, PAYSON | KURT KERR, PINETOP
JESSICA MANUELL, PARKS | MARSHA PETRIE SUE, SCOTTSDALE **DIRECTOR:** TOM P. FINLEY **DEPUTY DIRECTOR:** JOSHUA W. HURST

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) **An amendment to License Agreement HAB-26-0120(CMY) with Arizona Public Service Company for the Purpose of Providing Utility Service to the Commission's Silver Creek Hatchery, Navajo County, Arizona. Presenter: Chip Young, Senior Land Resources Manager.** The Commission may approve an Amendment to the current License Agreement with Arizona Public Service Company for the Purpose of Providing Utility Service to the Commission's Silver Creek Hatchery.
 - b) **A License Agreement with Qwest Corporation d/b/a CenturyLink QC to operate and maintain a buried fiber optic line through a portion of the Ben Avery Shooting Facility. Presenter: Chip Young, Senior Land Resources Manager.** The Commission may approve a License Agreement with Qwest Corporation d/b/a CenturyLink QC for the continued operation and maintenance of an existing fiber optic cable along the south side of Correctional Institution Road, west of Pioneer Road across 710-feet of the Ben Avery Shooting Facility.
 - c) **A License Agreement with Vero Fiber Networks to install and maintain a buried fiber optic line through a portion of the Becker Lake Wildlife Area. Presenter: Austin Madsen, Water Resources Manager.** The Commission may approve a License Agreement with Vero Fiber Networks for the installation, operation, and maintenance of a fiber optic cable along the south side of US Highway 60 northwest of the Town of Springerville, AZ.
- 3) **Human-Bear Interactions in the White Mountains in Region 1, Pinetop. Presenter: Eric Podoll, Wildlife Manager.** The Commission will be provided a briefing on human-bear interactions and outreach efforts throughout the Pinetop Region.
 - 4) **Species of Greatest Conservation Need Wildlife Briefing. Presenter: Holly Hicks, Small Mammals Projects Coordinator.** The Commission will be provided a briefing on the status and distribution of the New Mexico Jumping Mouse and the Department's efforts to survey and monitor the species in the White Mountains of Arizona.
 - 5) **Proposed changes to the civil penalty wildlife values for calendar year 2027. Presenter: Gene Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief.** The Commission will consider the proposed changes to the civil penalty wildlife values for calendar year 2027.

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 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>
Timothy Miller	2026-0016	Take Black Bear From a Vehicle
Christopher Garcia	2026-0026	Take Elk Within ¼ Mile of an Occupied Structure
Larry Lucero III	2026-0027	Take Wrong Sex (Bull Elk)
Cameron Tarango	2026-0030	Take Deer With Unlawful Device (Trail Camera)
Adam Le Blanc	2026-0031	Take Bear by Unlawful Method (Bait)
Jacob Valverde	2026-0032	Possess Unlawfully Taken Mule Deer
Nathen Thomas	2026-0033	Possess Unlawfully Taken Mule Deer
Andrew Goodnough	2026-0037	Take Wildlife Within ¼ Mile of an Occupied Structure.
Adam Le Blanc	2026-0039	Take Deer With Unlawful Device (Trail Camera)

- 7) **Rehearing Request Regarding Previous License Revocation/Civil Assessment. Presenter: Gene Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief.** Brian Nicholson has requested a rehearing regarding the revocation of his license privileges.

Agenda item 8 is a first read item. 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.

- 8) **License Agreements with licensees to Operate, Maintain, and Develop the Statewide Shooting Ranges. Presenter: Chris DeChant, Shooting Sports Branch Chief.** The Commission may approve a 10-year renewal of the License Agreements with the licensees for the purpose of operating, maintaining, and developing the eight Commission-owned Statewide Shooting Ranges.
- 9) **Ben Avery Shooting Facility Master Plan, Range Protection Zone Update. Presenter: Chris DeChant, 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.

10) State and Federal Legislation. Presenter: Jess Raty, 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.

11) State and Federal Lands Planning Update. Presenter: Tiffany Sprague, Heritage Data Program Manager.

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.

12) Commission Priorities Update. Presenter: Luke Thompson, Special Assistant to the Director.

The Department will provide an update on the Commission Priorities and Metrics. Ruth Passernig and April Howard will provide reports on current mountain lion and bobcat demographic projects.

13) 2026 Annual Commission Awards Selection. Presenter: Luke Thompson, Special Assistant to the Director.

The Department will present the 2026 Commission award nominees and will ask the Commission to select the award recipients.

14) 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.

15) Future Agenda Items and Action Items.

16) 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.

17) 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; *Center for Biological Diversity et al. v. Arizona Game and Fish Commission et al.*, CV 2026-032948; CBD's Notice of Intent to Sue over the Department's sportfish stocking program.

- 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 Heber Wild Horse Territory Management Plan issued by the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest.
- 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 on the scope of the Commission's authority to issue special big game tags.
- 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) **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. 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 Ombudsman, 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 as a public trust resource. 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”