



Honorable Jan Brewer
Governor of Arizona
1700 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

January 28, 2010

Dear Governor Brewer:

The Arizona Wildlife Federation (AWF) and its club affiliates, over 2500 members from across the state, are deeply concerned about recent proposals for sweeping funds from both voter approved Heritage Funds, and the Wildlife Conservation Funds received by the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) from the Indian Gaming revenues. These sweeps are proposed to be recurring and permanent, a very serious matter for the citizens and voters of Arizona to consider. These outright diversions of revenue will have serious and profoundly negative impacts on Arizona's wildlife and wild lands for decades to come. Totalling approximately \$15,000,000 annually these revenues represent nearly 12% of the AZGFD's annual budget. The AZGFD receives no general fund monies and should not be subject to its annually earmarked revenues being swept for non-wildlife purposes. Our concern is multi-faceted and this letter will address our highest priority concerns based on how these revenue diversions will affect our state:

- Recent statistics indicate that about 2,000,000 people enjoy wildlife related activities in Arizona, generating \$2.1 billion in revenues and supporting more than 21,000 jobs.
- Diverting these funds will further delay Arizona's economic recovery as these funds will no longer be infused into economically distressed rural communities and local businesses.
- AZGFD would reduce or eliminate programs that generate \$2.3 billion in total expenditures on wildlife related recreation.
- The AZGFD would be unable to offer urban planners and developers vital scientific inventory data that is critical for guiding sustainable development.
- Arizona will suffer a loss of state representation and rights through loss of representation of the AZGFD for the state's interests in wildlife, land use, and water policy decisions thereby increasing the influence of federal agencies and groups that pursue litigation on all these matters.
- AZGFD will be less able to gather biological data critical to preventing misuse of the Endangered Species Act to gain control over Arizonan's land, water, and wildlife resources.
- The federal government will assume a greater role in managing Arizona's wildlife resulting in more restrictions on renewable energy, home, and business development options.
- The only voters to provide pro-lottery arguments in the voter information pamphlet when the lottery was reauthorized were Heritage Fund advocates. If these voters are alienated, it could lead to the loss of the entire lottery.
- Arizona's wildlife is managed and conserved through a very efficient business model; Heritage is an excellent investment.

As Arizona's oldest conservation organization, it is imperative we speak about the legacy we must provide future generations of Arizonans. Our youth, identified through science-based study as having a serious "disconnect" with the outdoors and nature, may never have the opportunity to embrace the outdoor values that many of Arizona's current residents enjoy if we fail to provide the means to protect our natural heritage. Nearly 77% of the state's population lives in our two largest metropolitan areas; the traffic leaving those

urban centers each weekend and holiday, heading for the less populated, wildlife rich areas of the Colorado Plateau or the White Mountains, speaks loudly for the importance of these assets.

While recognizing the current budget crisis is an event that will have an impact for years to come on all the state's residents, we would welcome a respect for the wishes, desires and hopes of the majority of Arizona's population that holds the outdoors and wildlife as a critical "quality of life value" and wishes to see that value not only upheld, but improved upon even above many other considerations. In the context of Arizona's future, our diverse fish and wildlife, and wild lands are the most important heritage it is our duty to sustain and protect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ryna P. Rock". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Ryna Rock, President,
Tom Mackin, Vice President,
Brad Powell, Vice President,
Arizona Wildlife Federation