

Mission:

AWF is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating, inspiring, and assisting individuals and organizations to value, conserve, enhance, manage, and protect wildlife and wildlife habitat.



Arizona Wildlife Federation

Wildlife and Habitat Post

Issue 3, March, 2004

Anderson Mesa Lawsuit Settles Coconino National Forest Agrees to Protect Ephemeral Wetlands

On March 22 at 10:00am, United States District Judge, the Honorable Robert C. Broomfield endorsed the settlement of the lawsuit between the Coconino National Forest and the Arizona Wildlife Federation.

Western Environmental Law Center filed the suit on behalf of the AWF when the CNF refused to follow Federal law and their forest plan. The lawsuit followed years of efforts to negotiate with the CNF. Those negotiations failed to find an acceptable solution to the continuous decline in wildlife numbers and habitat quality on Anderson Mesa.

Anderson Mesa is comprised of more than 200,000 acres of public forest lands. It begins south of Flagstaff and expands southeasterly for 45 miles. Anderson Mesa is renowned for its rich diversity in animal and plant species. At one time it supported Arizona's premier Pronghorn Antelope herd, and its ephemeral wetland complex was responsible for producing 35% of Arizona's water fowl.

In the settlement agreement, the CNF has agreed to abide by the timeframes set in the National Environmental Policy Act, and agreed to protect the Anderson Mesa ephemeral wetlands according to the Coconino National Forest Management Plan.

This settlement is a watershed victory for wildlife and wildlife habitat on Anderson Mesa, and it will play a role in how the Forest Service manages all of the public resources under its control.



AWF Annual Meeting
June 5, 2004 at the Fiesta Inn
in Tempe, Arizona.
See inside for details!

Message from the President

Dear members and interested parties,

As I mentioned last time, our annual meeting and convention will be here before we know it. This is your chance to get involved with the inner-workings of the AWF and participate in decision-making. All members in good standing are invited and encouraged to attend. The date is June 5th at the Fiesta Inn in Tempe. The program includes our annual meeting, elections, trophy book awards, a breakout session and banquet. The details are provided on Pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter.

The AWF board and staff have been very busy and everyone is getting busier. The AWF website has been revamped and is up and running. Thanks to Felix Gorodishter for completing the transformation. The new site will be updated regularly and I encourage you to visit it often to see what's new at the

AWF. We are also beginning to expand our email capabilities and urge those of you who have email to send us your address and include a list of issues or topics that you want to be informed about. When we receive enough names and topics we will develop issue-specific lists and offer you a chance to opt into those lists that interest you.

I also want to thank Jack Simon and Mary Jo Miller for attending the National Wildlife Federation national meeting.

We are also working hard on Affiliate relations. We have been working on ways to support our Affiliates at work projects and in improving the way we communicate with members. Those of you who are members

of clubs thinking about affiliating with the AWF are invited to send us your event calendars so we can list your events in this newsletter. In addition, if you have an article or story about your club we want to print it as well. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns about Affiliate relations.

The April BOW event has filled up. If you missed the April date, you can reserve a spot now for the August camp.

I would like to close by announcing that Jeff Augustine has become our newest life member and thank him for a generous contribution. We are looking forward to working with him on habitat issues.

Mike Perkinson
President

Rescued Eagle Egg Hatches

A new eaglet has hatched from one of two eggs rescued by the Arizona Game & Fish Department in February. A bald eagle rescue team took the eggs to Liberty Wildlife Rehabilitation for incubation last month after the male parent was found severely injured near a recreation area along the lower Salt River. The adult eagle had to be euthanized.

"Liberty Wildlife did a great job of nurturing these eggs," says James Driscoll, a biologist with AG&F. "The hatching process takes a lot of energy. A female eagle cannot go through it alone."

The incubation period for a bald eagle egg is about a month. The young eagles will be raised at Liberty Wildlife Rehabilitation in Scottsdale for another four to five weeks. Then they will be placed into existing bald eagle nests to be reared by foster parents.

"It's really important for us to get these eagles back into the nest as soon as possible," Driscoll says. "This timeframe is vital in helping the young eagles learn to fly, hunt, and fish from adult eagles. It also plays a role in making sure that other birds will accept them."



Arizona currently has 41 breeding pairs of bald eagles. This type of eagle can live up to 25 years in the wild and can grow to have a six- to seven-foot wingspan.

AWF Action Update

The following are issues and projects the AWF has worked on in the last two months

AWF Endorses Plan to Reduce Grazing on Public Lands

The National Public Lands Grazing Campaign calls for Congress to pass legislation creating a buyout program that would provide financial compensation to ranchers who choose to voluntarily relinquish their federal grazing leases. The plan actually saves taxpayer money since American taxpayers spend about \$500 million annually to administer cattle grazing on public lands. The voluntary buyout program would save a significant portion of that money while also restoring natural landscapes. The bill, HR 3324, the Voluntary Grazing Permit Buyout Act, was introduced by Representatives Raul Grijalva (D-Ariz) and Christopher Shays (R-Conn). It is supported by nearly 200 ranchers and numerous conservation organizations.

AWF Board Provides Comments on Scarborough Grazing Lease Allotment

The comments focused on the "abysmal condition of the forage and land resource" of the subject allotment. The current management of the allotment

does not result in an acceptable balance between livestock capacity and wildlife needs, and it is therefore out of compliance with Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines, "not only for forage utilization levels, but also soils' health and riparian condition." The comments called for the discontinuation of year-long grazing to be replaced by rest-rotation in the pastures in the allotment, removal of the cattle from the allotment for an inventory and prescriptive rest of the land, and drastically reducing or excluding grazing in riparian areas.

Comments Provided on Verde Wild & Scenic River Environmental Assessment

Matt Bishop, an attorney with the Western Environmental Law Center representing AWF and other conservation organizations in a lawsuit related to the river, provided detailed comments on the VWSR EA in February. The Forest Service's preferred management plan would allow livestock grazing in the upland areas of the river corridor, livestock watering at three locations on the river, and limited motorized access to the river. However, the EA does not adequately assess the direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts of these actions.

The EA did not include any alternative that would protect and restore the VWSR's values--for example, returning the wild segment of the river to its natural state. Bishop's comments also called for the Forest Service to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement related to the preparation of the Comprehensive River Management Plan due to the significance of the impact on an extremely unique ecological setting and controversy around allowing grazing in the river corridor.

The Forest Service also needs to quantify and file a claim for reserved stream flow to protect the water in this portion of the river.

AWF Helps Fund Forest Fire Research by AG&F

The Research Branch of Arizona Game & Fish is going to conduct fieldwork within the perimeter of the 2002 Rodeo-Chedeski Fire to help them better manage mule deer populations in cases of fire suppression and controlled burns.

The research will determine how mule deer habitat use differs among different levels of burn severity. The study will be completed in February, 2008.

AWF 81st Annual Meeting

The AWF Annual Meeting will be held on June 5, 2004 at the Fiesta Inn, 2100 S. Priest Drive, Tempe, Arizona 85282.

We hope that you will come! The convention will be a one-day event, with business in the morning (elections and resolutions), lunch and trophy awards at noon, an educational workshop on grassland health with an expert panel in the afternoon, and an evening banquet (with raffles throughout the day, of course!).

Resolutions: Proposed resolutions must be to the AWF office no later than April 21, 2004. Late resolutions may also be submitted by a two-thirds vote of the AWF Board, or by a two-thirds vote of the delegation at the convention. Please see enclosed flyer for more information.

Registration: A registration form for the meeting is on the next page. Please feel free to make copies if you need them. In addition, the registration form is available on our website at www.azwildlife.org.

Reservations: We have reserved a block of rooms at the discounted rate of \$69 a night at the Fiesta Inn. They will be held until May 14, 2004, so make your reservations soon by contacting the hotel directly at (480) 967-1441. Be sure to tell them you are registering for the AWF meeting so you will get the special rate.

Conservation Awards: Nominations for the Thomas E. McCullough Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award are also being accepted. For more information about criteria, please contact the AWF office.

Nominations & Elections: The positions listed below will be elected during the Annual Meeting. If you would like to bring forward nominees for these positions, and we encourage you to do so, please write, call or email our office.

Officers: (all 1-year terms)
President
Vice President, Operations
Vice President, Conservation
NWF Representative
NWF Alternate Rep
Federal Agency Liaison
Legislative Liaison
State Agency Liaison

Regional Directors (2-year terms)
Director Region 2
(Flagstaff area)
Director Region 4
(Yuma area)
Director Region 6
(Central Arizona)
Six Directors-at-Large
Two Trophy Book Committee
positions(3-year term)

Open appointed positions:
Two Directors-at-Large
Secretary
Treasurer

Thank you very much for your past and continued support of the Arizona Wildlife Federation.
We look forward to seeing you at what promises to be a productive, informative, and fun Annual Meeting.



Arizona Wildlife Federation

81st Annual Meeting

June 5, 2004

Fiesta Inn

2100 South Priest Drive

Tempe, Arizona 85282

(480) 967-1441

Registration Form

Name: _____

Guests: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Affiliate Club if applicable: _____

Saturday Luncheon \$25.00 per person = \$ _____

Saturday Night Banquet \$40.00 per person = \$ _____

Luncheon & Banquet Package \$60.00 per person = \$ _____

Raffle Tickets \$1 each = \$ _____

Complete Package* \$75.00 per person = \$ _____

*Includes luncheon, banquet and 20 raffle tickets

Please mail your registration form to the address above, or fax it to (480) 644-0078.

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$ _____ for registration. Please make checks payable to Arizona Wildlife Federation.

Please bill my credit card for \$ _____.

MasterCard Visa Expiration date: _____

Card number: _____

Your email address: _____ Phone: _____

Habitat Linkage Workshop

This workshop will provide a forum to gather local and regional expertise about wildlife movement patterns across Arizona. Those attending should be familiar with the state and its wildlife. Participants will work in small groups to map core habitat areas and the most important linkage areas for various wildlife species. The habitat linkage map will be used for mitigation activities such as wildlife crossings, land protection measures and community planning.

The workshop will be held April 13th and 14th at the Phoenix Zoo. Registration is \$100. Call Siobhan Nordhaugen with ADOT (602-712-6166) or visit www.dot.state.as.us/ABOUT/natres/index.htm for more informa-

Want to Volunteer?

April 17, 2004 - Rodeo-Chediski Fire Fence Removal Project near Clay Springs; call Al Kreutz 928-367-2057.

April 18, 2004 - Horseshoe Lake Noxious Weeds Removal Project near Carefree; call Don Farmer 480-946-0617.

You may also call the AWF office, or email us at awf@azwildlife.org.

AWF Board Meeting

The March board meeting will be on the 31st at 5:30 pm at the AWF office. Members are welcome and encouraged to attend these monthly meetings.

Mike Perkinson
Board President

Mary Jo Miller
Vice President-Operations

Don Farmer
Vice President-Conservation

Jack Simon
Secretary

Jerry Thorson
Treasurer

Regional Directors:

Al Kreutz

William Homan

Randy Lamb

Jim Slingluff

Lee Kohlhasse

Directors at Large:

Rick Erman

Steve Gallizioli

Jason Liechty

NWF Regional Organizer:

Myra Wilensky



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