



PRONGHORN

2nd Quarter 2013

Volume 19 Number 2



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AAF Mission Statement:

The Arizona Antelope Foundation is an organization dedicated to the welfare of pronghorn antelope. The Foundation's Mission is to actively seek to increase pronghorn populations in Arizona through habitat improvements, habitat acquisition, the translocation of animals to historic range, and public comment on activities affecting pronghorn and their habitat.



ON OUR COVER

Photo credits this issue go to John Millican. John is coordinating the project activities related to our National Fish & Wildlife Foundation grant in southeastern Arizona.

Pronghorn is a quarterly newsletter for the members of AAF. Letters, comments, news items, articles, pictures and stories are all welcome and will be considered for publication. Address all such items to: Tracy Unmacht, Pronghorn Editor, PO Box 12590, Glendale, AZ 85318, or by email at info@azantelope.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

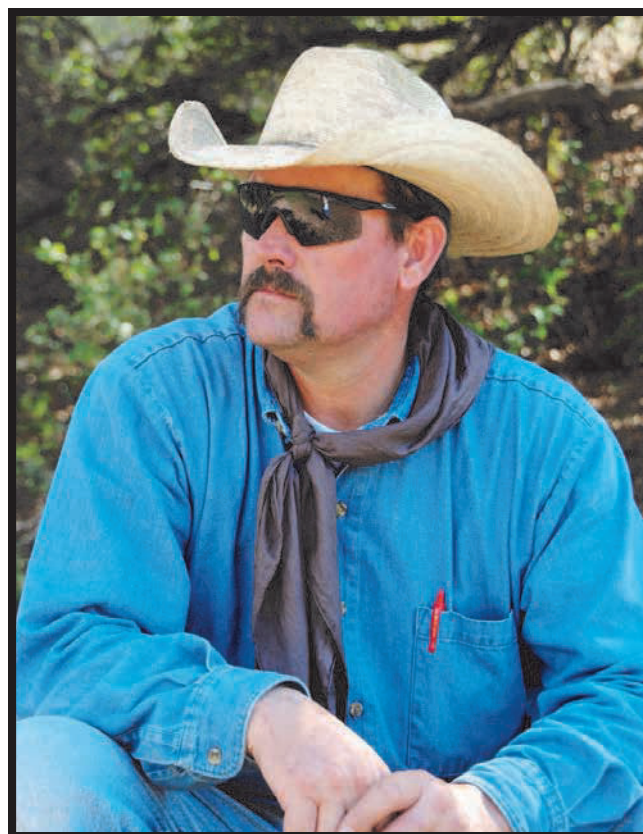
It has been said that an act of conservation can never be made too early for we never know when it is too late. It is with this principle and sense of urgency that Arizona Antelope Foundation bases its goals: to apply our resources and energies to the direct conservation and improvement of habitat. It does not stop there. We then vigilantly guard that habitat and prevent any unnatural disturbance of the land.

We cannot rely solely on the government to protect our natural heritage. Conservation-related government agencies are stretched too thin and remain susceptible to the shifting priorities of politics. Private organizations are stepping in to fill this void, and the majority of conservation in the future will be accomplished not by government entities but instead by private organizations, such as AAF.

A few simple facts illustrate the point. The United States Park Service currently encompasses approximately 84 million acres.¹ In the year 2012 the total acres protected in the United States by private land trusts was approximately 54 million, and by 2015 that figure is expected to jump to 67 million.² In terms of acreage, private organizations will in the foreseeable future eclipse government entities as the largest positive force for conservation.

AAF is proud to be a part of this great, private conservation effort. But we cannot do it alone. For those who are able to donate in terms of financial contributions or assistance on our work projects, I thank you.

Please help and support our mission by joining our Facebook page, and spreading the word of becoming a member. By doing so you will be connected to the latest news and you will immediately make a difference as the display of support advances awareness of our organization and its cause.



While the threats facing our planet may be great, it is important to not lose sight of the fact that all human-caused problems have human-based solutions. AAF is part of the solution and with your help we can ensure that future generations will enjoy the beauty and wonder of Arizona's Pronghorn herds.

Please contact us if you have any questions, need assistance donations, or would like to learn more about our organization. We would love to hear from you.

Shane Stewart
President & Proud Life member

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

August 12
September 9
October 13

OTHER EVENTS

August 17th Habitat Project Kendrick Park
September 16 - 19 Antelope Capture
September 21 Habitat Project Bonita

AAF RECEIVES 2ND GRANT

BY GLEN DICKENS

PHOTOS BY JOHN MILLICAN

On May 23, 2013 when newly appointed Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell issued the following press release the Arizona Antelope Foundation (AAF) found we were one of just 22 nation-wide recipients' funded to carry out our proposed *Youth & Wildlife Conservation at Las Cienegas Grasslands Project*. Using these grant funds the AAF will expand an existing youth education opportunity focused on black-tailed prairie dog (BTPD) reintroductions and the AAF's *Southeast Arizona Grasslands Pronghorn Initiative* in the summer season of 2013. The AAF will partner with the Southwestern Conservation Corps to hire and equip eight youth to accomplish the necessary pronghorn fence modifications on Las Cienegas and to support intensive observation and mark and recapture efforts on four newly BTPD established colonies. The youth will work for 12 weeks in the summer spending half of their time on the BTPD project and half on the pronghorn fence modification project. Grant funds in amount of \$79,400 will be matched by \$95,000 non-federal funds.

The crew has been in the field since June 10th and as of June 24th, has completed 15,750 feet or 3 miles of the highest priority 5-strand fence modifying to 4-strand with the new bottom wire being smooth and 18 inches above the ground to permit pronghorn crossing. In addition they have worked on the BTPD research project and installed 20 mesquite exclosures adjacent to the 4 colonies as well as 90 arthropod traps and read 24 vegetation quadrants. Please note some photos of their efforts. Look for an article in our next issue of the *Pronghorn* summarizing the results of their 12 week efforts.

Secretary Jewell Announces \$4.2 Million in Competitive Grants to Employ more than 600 Young Americans at 22 Projects as part of Youth Initiative

May 23, 2013

PORTLAND, Ore. – In response to President Obama's challenge to expand employment opportunities for youth, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell today announced \$4.2 million in grants to support conservation employment and mentoring opportunities for more than 600 young people ages 15-25 on public lands across the country.

(Continued on page 6)



Southwest Conservation Corps Group Photo: Back (L-R) Michael Giordano, Rafael Delara, Jorge Marin, Rachael More-Hla, Allison Rosengren
Front (L-R) Raquel Irigoyen-Au, James Pitts, Max Mazzella





(AAF Receives 2nd Grant continued from page 4)

The grants, which support the Obama Administration's efforts to develop a 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC), include \$1.27 million from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), which helped leverage \$2.65 million from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and \$275,000 from Wells Fargo.

"This initiative is a model of how public-private partnerships can both conserve our land and provide opportunities for our young people to obtain jobs skills and broaden their horizons by connecting with the great outdoors," said Secretary Jewell. "Through the 21CSC, we hope to expand these partnerships that foster economic opportunities and create a connection with nature for young people that lasts a lifetime."

The 21st Century Conservation Service Corps is a national collaborative effort to put America's youth and returning veterans to work protecting, restoring and enhancing America's great outdoors. This year, the Department plans to provide conservation employment opportunities to nearly 17,000 youth in national parks, wildlife refuges, and on other public lands.

Jewell and Portland Mayor Charlie Hales kicked off the summer work season at an event in Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge in Oregon where they were joined by Krystyna Wolniakowski, Pacific Northwest Regional Director of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

(NFWF), and members of the Northwest Youth Corps, one of this year's grant recipients.

"By providing more than 600 conservation jobs, this partnership will help introduce young people from diverse backgrounds to meaningful employment opportunities, mentorships and the joy of the great outdoors," said Jeff Trandahl, Executive Director and CEO of NFWF. "Our investment will be matched by more than twice that amount from the grantees, and helps to foster a new generation of conservationists."

In 2009, the Department established a Department-wide program and strong performance goals with participation of all of the bureaus and offices led by the Office of Youth in the Great Outdoors to engage, educate, and employ youth. Since then, the Department has built one of the largest and most visible youth programs at the national level, employing more than 84,000 youth through direct hires and partnerships on public lands.

The grants announced today, awarded through a competitive process, will support 22 projects on public lands throughout the West. They are funded through the ***America's Great Outdoors: Developing the Next Generation of Conservationists initiative.***

In addition to providing valuable conservation work experience, the grants will result in more than 1,000 volunteer opportunities to expose young people to the great outdoors.



Pronghorn near newly modified fence

Photos by John Millican

WOODS/ROSE TREE/ LAS CIENAGAS PROJECT REPORT

BY GLEN DICKENS, VICE PRESIDENT/LIFE MEMBER/PROJECTS COORDINATOR

Another successful AAF project was completed by 48 adult and Tombstone High School volunteers in southeastern Arizona on May 4, 2013. We modified 3 miles of existing fence on the Woods ranch on the north side of the upper Babacomari River drainage and an adjoining allotment boundary fence between Woods and Rose Tree Ranches. In addition a crew of 6 volunteers inspected and performed maintenance on two water catchments on the Las Cienegas Grassland north of highway 82. This included cleaning out the water troughs, clearing dead trees that had fallen on perimeter fencing, and weed whacking or removing high grass near the trough so Pronghorn would feel more comfortable while drinking. Another crew of 6 hooked up two wildlife drinkers and fixed them in place with rock and concrete at Davis Well on the south side of highway 82 to provide permanent pronghorn water in the western portion of the Davis pasture with the closest water being 3 miles east at the AZGFD Davis Pasture Wildlife Catchment.

This effort benefits the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant in that all labor hours, materials and mileage totaling \$14,849 from this project will be used to match the AAF's \$230K 3-year grant for our **"Southeastern Arizona Grasslands Pronghorn Initiative"**.

The grant has a goal of improving up to 100,000 acres of "Pronghorn habitat connectivity"; this final fence project combined with others in the immediate zone over the past 18 months have now improved pronghorn connectivity on 21,168 acres of occupied habitat. It plays a key part in completing the critical southeastern portion of the overall Santa Cruz Plains pronghorn corridor improvement project.

Six students and two adult volunteers from the Tombstone High School Agriculture Future Farmers of America also joined us. They will be conducting other valuable pronghorn habitat work including water quality analysis and fawning cover analysis on known fawning grounds over the next year.

Camp was located at the historic Rose Tree corrals and stone bunkhouse near Elgin and the weather was breezy. A delicious steak dinner was served on Saturday night with the sides provided by Mary and Bill Keebler and they surprised everyone by hosting a Sunday morning breakfast as well, thanks Mary and Bill!

Thanks go out to several groups of folks that contributed to this successful project.

-Representing the AAF Board: Shane & Jodi Stewart, Connie Taylor, Jim McCasland, Mark Boswell and yours truly.

-Other AAF members and volunteers: Bill & Mary Keebler, Joe Bill Pickrell, Richard Ockenfels, Betty Dickens, John Millican, Caroline Patrick, Ken & Kathy Cook, Bernice & Gene Isaacs, Dale Mass, Gary Boyer, Steve Bridges, Terry Schupp, Cade & Maci Stewart, Barry Sopher, Kyler & Samuel Boswell, John Lohse, Art & Lydia Mead, John & JJ Swift, Tom Richter, Sandra Wolf, Loren Krebs and Steve Bridges.

Sierra Vista Wild Turkey Federation volunteers: Tom & Joey Fuller, Rene Dube, David Johnson, Randy Keiller, Wayne Kaiser, and Chris & Toni Sterner

-Tombstone High: Kelly Lyda teacher, her father Keith Lyda and students, Alicia Allen, Emily Addington, Casey Harris Tyler Scarsbrought, Austin Parker and Madison Rae Clark

-Fort Huachuca: Sheridan Stone

-American Conservation Experience: Jordan Rolfe

-Game & Fish personnel: Troy Christensen, Matt Braun, Kristin Terpening and Aaron Miller

Thanks everyone for your efforts!



Davis Water Troughs



BANQUET 2013 WINDMILL INN



AAF Life Members



THANK YOU TO OUR 2013 FUNDRAISER DONORS

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Art & Susan Boswell	Kim Armstrong/Out West Jewelry
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Arizona Wildlife Federation	Merchandise Supply
Bass Pro Shops	Mike Tindle
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Dave & Sue Laird	Mount Carmel Safaris
Don Johnson	Outdoorsmans
Don Martin/Arizona Wildlife Outfitters	Palo Verde Animal Hospital
Donna Pitzlin	Pearson Taxidermy
Ed & Nina Gammons	Phoenix Coyotes
Eddy & Karen Corona	Richard Ockenfels
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Flagstaff Ranch Golf	Scott Ballor/Heritage Metalworks
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John Toner/Continental Divide Knives	Zulu Nyala

THANK YOU TO OUR 2013 FUNDRAISER VOLUNTEERS

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Glen & Betty Dickens	Connie & Rose Taylor
David Hussey	Jim & Tracy Unmacht
Dave Laird	Ron & Karen Yee



SONORAN PRONGHORN UPDATE



BY JILL BRIGHT AZ GAME & FISH
APRIL-MAY 2013

Captive Breeding:

Cabeza Prieta Captive Breeding Pen

Currently, there are 94 pronghorn in the Cabeza breeding pen, 43 in north herd and 51 in south herd. There are 17 fawns in the north, and 20 in south. All the does expected to give birth have, with the last fawns being confirmed on April 27. Fawns are beginning to feed on the alfalfa at the feeders, and are sometimes seen grouping up in small fawn herds.

There was no measurable precipitation in the last 2 months and forage in the pen and in Childs Valley is very dry. The pen crew has begun irrigation at the pen as well as repairing the irrigation system.

Illegal alien/smuggling activity near the pen and in Childs Valley remains high. Cabeza law enforcement has confirmed that several drug busts have occurred near the pen and further south in Childs Valley. Because of the increased activity, the pen crew is now working in pairs, and has clarified the radio and cell phone protocols to follow with both USFWS and AZGFD when illegal activity is encountered.

Cabeza pen crew are maintaining a feed and water station east of the pen, and several pronghorn including at least one fawn are being seen/photographed there.

We have hired two new technicians at the pen, and a summer intern, so we have a full crew working out there now.

Status of Pronghorn in Cabeza Pen

May 2013

NORTH HALF		SOUTH HALF	
Adult Females	10	Adult Females	11
Yearling Females (b 2012)	5	Yearling Females (b 2012)	9
Yearling Males (b2012)	9	Yearling Males (b2012)	9
Breeding Buck (b 2010, Purple 3)	1	Breeding Buck (b 2010, Yellow 3)	1
Back-up Buck (b 2011, Yel/Blk 3)	1	Back-up Buck (b 2011, Green 4)	1
Fawns (born 2013)	17	Fawns (born 2013)	20
TOTAL	43	TOTAL	51
Total Pen		94	

(Continued on page 11)

Kofa Captive Breeding Pen

There are currently 29 pronghorn in the Kofa pen, including 7 fawns. Some of the older fawns are beginning to mix with groups of the adult pronghorn. There are still 3 does we expect have or had fawns, but have not been able to confirm their fawns. Three other does, Yellow, Grey, and Orange have never appeared pregnant this year. Yellow doe continues to maintain a severe limp, but is observed foraging and moving with the heard on most days.

There has been no measurable precipitation in the last 2 months and forage conditions are drying out. Supplemental alfalfa feeding increased from 30 bales in March to 33.75 bales in April. We expect this trend to continue as conditions continue to dry out and the number of animals in the pen increases.

We have completed setting up the generator and electrical system to power the well and irrigation pump, so we can begin irrigation at the pen.

Status of Pronghorn in Kofa Pen

	May 2013
Adult Females	11
Yearling Females (b 2012)	4
Yearling Males (b2012)	5
Breeding Buck	1
Back-up Buck	1
Fawns (born 2013)	7
TOTAL	29

2012 Released Pronghorn - Cabeza

The pronghorn released on the BMGR-West have remained in the same general area, with the exception of one doe (Yellow). Yellow doe moved northeast from the release area towards the Mohawk dunes, and was seen on the south side of Interstate 8 near the dunes in April. We found her south in the Mohawks and further east almost on North Tac Range. The pronghorn on ORPI have been using the southern Valley of the Ajo; one buck crossed Highway 85 for awhile, but has come back to the vicinity of the other pronghorn on the west side.

2012 Released Pronghorn - Kofa

All the GPS collars have failed and fallen off the released pronghorn on Kofa. Two uncollared bucks have come back to the Kofa pen and we are providing alfalfa and water to them on the east side of the pen.

Three of the bucks that still had VHF collars were tracked wandering south on YPG, and east as far as the area north of Sentinel. Unfortunately, on May 16, a Wellton Mohawk Irrigation District employee found one of those collared bucks and an uncollared female pronghorn swimming in the canal north of Tacna. He was able to get the female out, who ran off to the north. By the time he was able to get the buck out, he had gone underwater. The District employee got him out alive, and the buck walked off about 5-6 minutes later. However, the stress or complications from being underwater were too much and he was found dead on the telemetry flight on May 19. On May 17, another of the collared bucks was found drowned in the same canal, about 8 miles east of where the other two went in. And on May 19, the last collared buck was found dead on the telemetry flight, just north of Interstate 8, east of Spot Road. Subsequent investigation found no signs of predation, and we suspect he died from poor environmental conditions and a lack of water. So now there are no radio collars on any of the 6 remaining pronghorn released on Kofa.

Water Projects: On 4/3/2013 personnel from the Arizona Game and Fish Department and USFWS hauled approximately 12,000 gallons of water to several water catchments on Kofa NWR. The water was divided amongst the Kofa pen drinker (1500 gallons), Dogleg (2500 gallons), and the new Chain Tank Rd water (8000 gallons) that was completed last

(Continued on page 12)

(Sonoran Pronghorn Update continued from page 11)

month.

With the help of the Yuma Valley Rod and Gun Club and USFWS, a new 17,000-gallon water in King Valley (Clancy Tank) was completed April 25-28.

On May 16-17, personnel from Game and Fish and FWS hauled a total of 24,700 gallons of water to Clancy Tank, Dogleg Tank, and the pen drinker. Both the pen drinker and Dogleg tank are at 100% capacity.

Approximately 6500 gallons of water was also pumped by AGFD and FWS personnel to fill Morgart Tank in Childs Valley. Cabeza pen crew is continuing to provide alfalfa at this site, and several pronghorn including at least 4 fawns have been using the feed and water.

Forage Enhancements: The Cabeza pen crew has begun irrigation at Charlie Bell forage plot. An unmarked buck uses that site on an almost daily basis. A doe released in December 2011 has also been photographed at the forage plot. Irrigation at Devils Hills forage plot has also begun. Devils Hills water/feed station is being maintained by AGFD personnel, and up to 14 pronghorn including 4 fawns have been photographed there. Point of the Pintas water/feed station is also being maintained, and up to 6 pronghorn with 1 fawn are being seen there. USFWS personnel are maintaining the feed station at Uken Tank.

Other Projects: Nothing new to report.

Wild Pronghorn Cabeza/ORPI/BMGR herd : Forage conditions are deteriorating rapidly over most of the range.



Doe and fawns in Cabeza pen.

Photo by John Kulberg

VOLUNTEERISM RUNS IN THE FAMILY: STUDENT PROJECT BENEFITS AAF

When Cade Stewart, son of Shane (AAF President) and Jodi (AAF Treasurer), was given an assignment for his Freshman Ag Mechanic project at Gilbert High School, he decided to create a tool he knew would be useful for the field work that is conducted by the AAF. Cade and his sister Maci have been tagging along with mom and dad for years and have spent many hours volunteering on AAF habitat projects. Cade knows all too well that often times, given the remote and sensitive locations we work, it is impossible to get a truck/trailer to the area to haul out the rolls of old wire, posts and stays. Carrying everything out by hand is difficult and time consuming,

so Cade set out to make this task a bit easier by designing a special trailer for that purpose. It has a changeable hitch system so it can be pulled behind any ATV, and will haul 8+rolls of wire, 50 t-posts and a large number of stays simultaneously. The camo was all hand painted, utilizing native plant species for outlines.

The trailer made its debut at our May 4th habitat project, and thanks to Cade's generosity, is now a permanent part of the AAF equipment inventory. Thanks Cade!



AZ GAME & FISH LICENSE SIMPLIFICATION UPDATE

SB 1223

SB 1223

was signed by Gov. Brewer on May 7th. This bill allows the Arizona Game and Fish Commission to set future hunting and fishing license structure and fees directly through a streamlined, customer-focused process as opposed to the former complex and time-consuming legislative and regular rulemaking process. (The commission already had the ability to raise fees up to the fee cap under its previous authority). It gives the Game and Fish Department the ability to operate more like a business and react to changing market conditions and customer needs in a timely manner. The bill and was supported by 24 sportsmen's organizations, including the AAF.

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission approved a draft hunting and fishing license structure and license/tag fees at its June 15 meeting in Payson. The proposal will now be taken to the public for a comment period from June 20 to Aug. 3, 2013.

In approving the draft, the commission took into consideration a variety of factors, including comments on the conceptual license structure and fees received during Phase 1 of the public input process in May and June. The Game and Fish Department received 658 comments from more than 200 people who attended 17 public meetings, and received more than 800 comments via e-mail. The department also conducted a science-based mail survey of hunters and anglers and received more than 1,480 responses.

One of the most discussed concepts was that of a "premium" hunt structure for certain deer and elk hunts. Based on the public comment received -- predominantly against the premium concept -- the commission did not include a premium hunt structure in the draft proposal.

Other factors the commission took into consideration in approving the draft were prior statutory fee caps, the opportunity to simplify the license structure and offer bundled privileges for more value, removal of barriers for the recruitment of new hunters and anglers, reduced cost for youth, and the need to maintain department revenue and services.

Some of the key features of the new proposal are:

- The proposed license structure is simplified to nine

license options and a migratory bird stamp, reduced from the current structure of more than 40 license and stamp options that often caused confusion among customers.

- The proposal would make a new hunting or fishing license valid for one year from the date of purchase. Currently, a license is valid only for the calendar year in which it was purchased, regardless of when it was purchased.
- Some licenses would have combined privileges (and eliminate the need for separate stamps) at a discount over what those privileges would cost if purchased separately. For example, the proposed price of a resident general fishing license would increase from the current \$23.50 to \$37, but the new license would include the privileges of a general license, trout stamp, two-pole stamp, a community (urban) fishing license, and Colorado River stamps for Arizona's shared waters with California and Nevada (dependent on agreements under negotiation with those states). This is a savings of \$32.75 over those licenses and stamps if purchased separately under the current structure, or a savings of \$16 over the current "Super Fishing" license.
- The proposal creates a new "youth license" at a significantly reduced price of \$5 each year for individuals from ages 10-17. The youth license includes hunting and migratory bird privileges (a tag for big game is still required) and fishing privileges (general, trout stamp, community license, two-pole stamp, and Colorado River CA/NV stamps, depending on agreements with those states).
- Most tag fees would be increased under the proposal. For example, a deer tag would cost \$45 for residents (up from the current \$34.75) and \$300 for nonresidents (up from \$225.25). An elk tag would cost \$135 for residents (up from the current \$114) and \$650 for nonresidents (up from \$587.50). In all cases, the tag increases do not exceed the former fee caps under which the commission previously had authorization prior to passage of SB 1223, and in most cases the proposed tag fees are still less than the old caps.

(Continued on page 15)

(License Simplification continued from page 14)

- This would be the first increase in license and tag fees since 2007. At that time the Game and Fish Commission made a commitment to sportsmen/sportswomen that it wouldn't raise fees again for at least five years. The commission and department have honored that commitment despite the challenges presented by the economy over the past several years. Any increases that may ultimately be approved through this proposal would not go into effect until 2014, or seven years since the last increase.
- Based on public input, the commission decided not to implement a "premium hunt structure" for certain deer and elk tags. The majority of the public comments were against the concept of a premium structure.

The commission directed the department to propose an increase in the hunt permit-tag application fee to \$13 for residents and \$15 for nonresidents (up from the current \$7.50), with \$3 of the resident fee and \$5 of the nonresident fee to be dedicated to hunter access and habitat enhancements.

The AAF will be weighing in as this progresses and we encourage you to as well.

To Submit Comment:

Comment on the draft license structure and draft license/ tag fees can be provided until **Aug. 3, 2013**.

E-mail at LicenseSimplification@azgfd.gov

U.S. mail to:

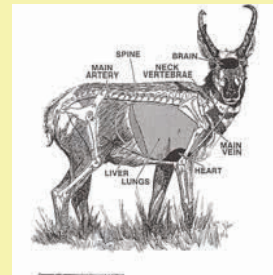
Arizona Game and Fish Department
License Simplification Comment
Attn: Ben Altender
5000 W. Carefree Highway
Phoenix, AZ 85086

Comment can also be made during the **Aug. 3** commission meeting via the Speaker Card (Blue Card) process for those attending the meeting in person or viewing it via video stream at department offices.

View more information at [www.azgfd.gov/
LicenseSimplification](http://www.azgfd.gov/LicenseSimplification).

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR BETTER ANTELOPE HUNTING

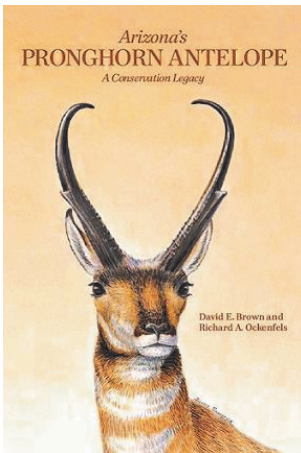
1. Be properly licensed and know the boundaries of the area in which you have a permit to hunt.
2. Be properly armed with a legal antelope hunting rifle or bow and know its capabilities.
3. Have your rifle sighted in and shoot at least one box of shells at targets at ranges from 100 to 500 yards.
4. Know what a legal antelope looks like: A buck has horns longer than its ears, a black stripe under its ear.
5. Know the vital parts, or the killing shots you have to make to make it a clean, sportsmanlike kill.
6. Be aware that you are a guest of Mother Nature and conduct yourself above the reproach of your own conscience.
7. Close all gates through which you pass, unless they are laid open back against the fence.
8. Respect the need of domestic stock and wildlife for water and make your camps well back from waterholes.
9. Remember, you are entitled to take one buck antelope if you are licensed, all others belong to fellow sportsmen.
10. Be a sportsman - remember you pass this way but once, leave a trail others will like to follow.



HAPPY & SAFE HUNTING!

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND THE PRONGHORN YEAR

EXCERPT FROM “ARIZONA’S PRONGHORN ANTELOPE: A CONSERVATION LEGACY”



This is part two of a continuing series, where we follow a hypothetical antelope herd through their yearly cycle. In our last issue we explored the Spring season. Here we look at Summer behavior.

No matter how generous the winter rains, little precipitation is likely to fall from late March through to July, and most fawns perish during these increasingly hot and

arid months. But such is the norm, and with May and June typically being the driest monthly of the year, soil moisture deficiencies take a toll on the vegetation. The spring bounty of annual forbs withers all too soon into brown skeletons, their life cycles complete. So too it is with the cool-season grasses, and without moisture, the cured grass blades are soon waving in the searing heat and relentless wind that characterizes grasslands everywhere. Only the woody perennials maintain some green growth, but even in these plants, the levels of protein, calcium, and phosphorus in the leaves are shrinking. To conserve moisture, some deciduous plants drop their leaves entirely, forcing the pronghorn to rely on Mormon-tea, bristle-bush, junipers, and other evergreens.

Parched octagons of cracked soil replace the water once held in the various *charcos* or dirt tanks that punctuate the landscape. Most water sources dry up completely. Even the streams no longer flow above ground. Only stock tanks and drinkers hold water, pumped there by



windmills tapping subterranean aquifers. Unfortunately, many such watering holes are surrounded by net wire fences that serve as temporary holding corrals for livestock. Although helpful for controlling cattle, such fencing bars pronghorn from water they now need so badly. The cattle either learn, or are driven to use narrow gateways leading to the water, but pronghorn are too leery to enter such contraptions. Most of these structures were built before the advent of wildlife fencing standards., so the passageways are too small and the bottom strands of barbed wire too near the ground to allow pronghorn to slip through. Still other windmill-supplied waters are surrounded by wooden corrals that obscure the pronghorn's view. Without access to water, does cannot produce sufficient milk for their fawns, thus lowering the herd's ever important fawn recruitment rate.

Fortunately, conservation organizations and land management agency personnel have been working with progressive-minded ranchers to supplement these wildlife. Thus, our "typical" pronghorn herd will be assured adequate water despite the ravages of the drought. Knowing the pronghorn's habits, the builders place these waters in open country, away from concealing vegetation that could harbor predators. To prevent cattle from drinking down the contents, each catchment is bordered by a barbed wire fence, the bottom strand of which is unbarbed and 20 to 22 inches above the ground. The cattle will continue to use the older tank in the corral, thereby allowing both species to drink their fill.

By midsummer the monsoon arrives, bringing instant relief. The rains fill shrinking water holes and supply the moisture needed for plant growth. Within days the landscape becomes a mosaic of shades of green. The flush of summer forbs and the new leaders of browse plants again satiate the pronghorn's persistent appetite. The remaining fawns are growing rapidly, and the new losses are few; most will survive to become yearlings. Meanwhile, wildlife managers conduct aerial surveys to record the herd's composition. By counting and identifying the number of bucks, does, and fawns along standardized survey routes, biologists can estimate the pronghorn's annual recruitment rate and determine if the population is rising or falling.

An abundant food supply ensures not only the continued growth of the young of the year, but the does, having

(Continued on page 17)

(Social Behavior and the Pronghorn Year continued from page 16)

recovered from the burden of pregnancy and lactation, are again in prime condition. Such would not be the case if the summer rains had failed. During such years, the extended drought becomes a crisis, a time when animals die. As it is, those animals that have survived the threat of drought are now possessed of increased vim and vigor. With the onset of breeding season, the bucks redouble the defense of their turf. Dominant individuals spend increasing amounts of time marking their territories with scrapes in a ritual called “spud’ing” (sniff, paw, urinate and defecate). Using secretions from their suborbicular glands, the bucks mark the boundaries of their territories by rubbing their cheeks against prominent clumps of vegetation. Lip-curling or “flemming” also becomes more frequent as the bucks approach the does to check their urine and determine which ones are coming into estrus. For her part, each doe selects the most vigorous buck - the one that keeps her from leaving his territory while driving off all rivals. And, when the doe comes into estrus, he had better be ready. She

will only copulate once, and will not come into estrus again until the following year.

Despite many pronghorn populations being subject to hunting during the breeding season, rarely does a doe go unbred. Satellite bucks are always nearby, and if the master of the territory is killed, chances are that one of these “secondary bucks” will take over his role. For although some prime bucks may have been removed from the population, effects on the herd are minimal. Arizona’s pronghorn hunt regulations are conservative by nature, and decades of experience have enabled wildlife managers to accurately predict the desired harvest. And, any unanticipated buck mortality is balanced by yearling bucks coming into the populations. As a result, all of the does will be bred, and bucks born the following year will replace those lost.

Continued to the next Pronghorn issue, or you can purchase the book on our website to keep on reading!.

BURN AND THEY SHALL COME! HAY CANYON GRASSLANDS

A recent 321 acre burn project took place on the Babacomari Ranch . Funding was provided by our NFWF pronghorn grant as well as matching funds by in-kind volunteer hours and mileage from our last AAF Day ranch project just 1 mile northwest of this burn zone.

A key action objective in our grant approved activities is “Burn plans and implementation.” The Hay Canyon Sacaton grasslands burn is doubly important because it not only improves the landscapes connectivity for pronghorn ranging north and south of the Babacomari River drainage, but offers resident pronghorn a key foraging area for the next 3-5 years, enhancing fawning productivity and the general health and vigor of the pronghorn choosing to forage in the burn zone.

The AAF would like to formally express our personal thanks for the ongoing commitment that the Babacomari Ranch Company is actively demonstrating to maintain and enhance pronghorn presence on the ranch’s private property grasslands in partnership with the AZ Game & Fish Department and the AAF. Over the years the Ranch has permitted multiple fence modification projects, removed invasive mesquite and offered to permit supplemental releases of pronghorn in the near future. These actions combined will go far in meeting our annual minimum population objective of 100+ adult pronghorn in the southern end of the Sonoita Plains.

And guess what? Burn it and they shall come! This photo from Glen Dickens shows 2 does, each with a fawn, utilizing the burn area.





SHORT SHOTS

GAME & FISH SEEKS INPUT ON PROPOSED HUNT REGULATIONS

The Department is currently seeking public input on the proposed revisions to the hunt regulations for the 2013-2014 and 2015-2101 seasons. Based on previous input, the Arizona Game and Fish Department developed a new draft of the hunt guidelines, which was shared with the Arizona Game and Fish Commission on June 15, 2013.

The hunt guidelines provide the biological and social parameters (or "the recipe") used by wildlife managers to formulate annual hunt recommendations (season structures, season lengths, season dates, permits allocated) and results in the hunts that we offer to hunters. While hunting opportunity is important, wildlife is held in the public trust, and using science-based principles in shaping the guideline process remains paramount to assure healthy, sustainable and diverse wildlife populations for future generations.

View the new draft of the hunt guidelines on the G&F website www.azgfd.gov

Submit comments on the draft hunt guidelines through July 31, 2013 by email to azgamebranch@azgfd.gov, or mail to Hunt Guidelines, Arizona Game and Fish Department, 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix, AZ 85086.

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission will take final action on the hunt guidelines at their meeting during September 6-7, 2013, which will be held in the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Region 1.

PRONGHORN CAPTURED PLANNED

AZ Game & Fish is planning a capture and collar activity between September 16-19th in the Big Lake area. They have allowed a 4-day window but hope to finish in the first 2 days. Volunteers will be needed to help spot antelope in the grass-lands. Stay tuned for more information.

MEMBERSHIP OFFER FROM AWF

The AAF is an Associate-Affiliate member of the Arizona Wildlife Federation (AWF). This entitles members of the AAF to become an Individual AWF member at the reduced rate of \$15. This is a reduction by 50% off

the normal membership dues. Membership in the AWF allows hunters, anglers, and other outdoor recreationists to stay abreast of natural resource current events and issues of concern in these fast changing and challenging times. Your membership lends physical, moral and financial support to the organization that represents your interest in hunting, fishing, and science based wildlife conservation and land use affairs.

If you'd like to take advantage of this special membership offer, contact the AAF administrator for a copy of the application at info@azantelope.org or 602-361-6478.

HB 2551 UPDATE

Governor Jan. Brewer on June 19 signed House Bill 2551, which clarifies state authority in how it will enforce federal Travel Management Rules regarding off-highway vehicle use on U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management lands.

The AZ Game & Fish Commission voted in March to support HB 2551, but made its support contingent on adoption of amended language that would address the commission's concerns about unintended limitations on officers' ability to enforce resource damage laws or road closures for public safety purposes, such as during forest fires. Subsequent amendments addressed the commission's concerns.

The bill permits Game and Fish officers to enforce laws related to habitat damage and other duties important to the department's mission, while giving officers discretion in enforcing federal travel management rules that are lower priority or that might impede achieving wildlife management objectives.

The Commission has expressed long-standing concerns that the new forest Travel Management Rules put undue constraints on reasonable public access, are inconsistent across the different forests and therefore confusing to outdoor recreationists, and could impede the commission's and department's ability to meet wildlife management objectives.

This legislation strengthens the department's legally recognized role to manage wildlife across all our public lands and ensures that role is more appropriately recognized and respected.

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Contributions to the Foundation are tax deductible, as the Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization.

Complete the form below and send with your payment to our mailing address. You can also join/renew online with your credit card. It's easy to do. Just visit the Membership page on our website, www.azantelope.org

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