

AZGFD, Trout Unlimited Establish First-Of-A-Kind Shared Position

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) and the nonprofit conservation organization Trout Unlimited (TU) have entered into an agreement for a co-shared position to focus on angler recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3).

This is the first such shared R3 arrangement in the U.S. between a state fish and wildlife agency and a non-governmental organization (NGO) for fishing. The model has been used successfully between some wildlife agencies (including AZGFD) and NGOs (such as the National Wild Turkey Federation) for hunting R3 efforts.

R3 efforts are critical to fish and wild-



life conservation. Anglers, hunters, recreational shooters and boaters fund a major portion of conservation through their license purchases and a federal excise tax on firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, and motor boat fuel.

“This partnership is very exciting and will provide much needed capacity to grow fishing participation,” said AZGFD Director Ty Gray, who is also Chair of the Angler/Boating Participation Committee of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). “Key elements to success in angler R3 are partnerships and dedicated R3 staff and resources. TU’s foresight in this venture will allow both organizations to increase our results in developing the next generation of anglers and aquatic conservationists.”

“Trout Unlimited is honored to create this shared R3 engagement position with the Arizona Game and Fish Department,” said Nate Rees, TU’s Arizona Field Co-

ordinator. “We have a strong working relationship with AZGFD, and this newly created position only reinforces that. The R3 model is integral to accomplishing TU’s mission of restoring and preserving native and wild trout streams so future generations can experience and connect with them. This position is one of a kind and we hope to replicate it across the country.”

To learn more about AZGFD’s fishing recruitment, retention and reactivation efforts and opportunities, visit www.azgfd.gov/FishAZ.

To learn more about Trout Unlimited and cold water fisheries and conservation, visit www.tu.org/. ■



AZGFD: Hunters, Please Report Any Harvest Anomalies

When in doubt, let AZGFD check it out.

Nature isn’t perfect. If a hunter spends enough time in the field, there’s a chance he or she, at some point, might harvest an animal that appears to be sick or deformed, or looks suspect during the field-dressing process.

While oddities are few and far between, and rarely present any cause for concern — especially when it comes to turning that harvest into delicious table fare — hunters are being encouraged to let a wildlife health specialist at the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) take a look.

That would require hunters to save the internal organs (and keep them cold in a sealable plastic bag), then call any of the department’s regional offices to schedule an analysis. Another option? Take several photos of the anomaly and email them to AZGFD veterinarian Anne Justice-Allen at ajusticeallen@azgfd.gov.

“Harvested wildlife can be the most ‘organic’ food out there, but occasionally they get sick and this sometimes results in a food safety issue,” Justice-Allen said. “The department has the resources to test animals with signs of disease for our customers.” ■

AZGFD Wildlife Managers Asks Hunters To Be Extra Eyes And Ears

Operation Game Thief received 1,081 calls in 2022

Arizona has almost 114 million square miles of harsh deserts, rugged canyons, sweeping plateaus, and thick forests that spread across 15 counties.

That’s a lot of territory to cover for the 67 wildlife managers, or game wardens, of the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD). It’s a monumental task, done daily by dedicated people who are charged with being part officer, part biologist, part educator, and all-the-time conduit to the public.

With the start of Arizona’s big game hunting seasons, AZGFD is asking hunters to help ensure one of the state’s most precious resources — its wildlife — is conserved and protected. At the heart of these law enforcement and conservation efforts is the department’s Operation Game Thief (OGT) program, a silent witness initiative that encourages the public to report information about the illegal take of wildlife and suspicious activity.

All calls to the OGT hotline (800-352-0700, or #HUNT on your cell phone) will be strictly confidential, and callers can remain anonymous if needed. The program offers rewards ranging from \$500 up to \$8,000, in some cases, for information that leads to an arrest.

“Poachers are thieves who pose a serious threat to wildlife,” said David Daniels, wildlife law enforcement supervisor. “Poachers are criminals. That’s why it’s important that hunters, who are committed to the time-honored tradition of hunting legally and ethically, continue to be vigilant by using their eyes and ears to



help AZGFD investigate poaching cases and prosecute the perpetrators.

“The hunting community does a great job of policing itself. If you see something, say something. Together, we can make a difference for Arizona’s wildlife.”

OGT received more than 1,000 calls in 2022, resulting in 65 citations being issued statewide for wildlife violations. In 2022, wildlife violators were assessed \$180,440 in civil fines, proceeds that ben-

efit the department’s Wildlife Theft Prevention Fund, which provides for rewards and promoting OGT. In addition, 35 individuals had their hunting and/or fishing licenses revoked by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission. AZGFD does not receive money from the state’s general fund.

Of course, wildlife managers realize that mistakes sometimes are made in the field by the most well-intentioned of sportsmen. Those who self-report violations often receive just a written warning (provided negligence isn’t found on the part of the hunter), and the meat from the wildlife taken is typically donated to local food banks.

For more information about OGT, including helpful tips on how to report a wildlife violation, visit <https://www.azgfd.com/operation-game-thief/>, or see page 83 in the “2023-2024 Arizona Hunting Regulations.” ■




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Note: There are no changes to the site itself, our Facebook Page, Twitter Account or Facebook Group “The Sportsman’s Advocate”, Newsletter or the SRT Radio Show.



HELP US CELEBRATE VETERANS DAY WITH A

Jammin’ Jubilant Jamboree

At VFW POST 720
4853 E THOMAS ROAD
PHOENIX, AZ 85018

SUNDAY NOV 5TH
3:30PM

COME OUT AND JOIN US FOR A FESTIVE CELEBRATION OF OUR VETERANS WHILE ENJOYING A B-B-Q WITH CASH BAR AND **LIVE MUSIC** FEATURING:

“THE DAY JOB BAND”


TICKETS ARE \$25 cash or check PAYABLE TO “VFW POST 720”
Children under 10 are free & tickets are also sold at the event.

This is a fundraiser sponsored by the friends of the VFW Post 720. The VFW provides needed services such as meals and social services to Veterans and their families.

RAISING FUNDS FOR:

- Meals
- Transportation to Medical Appts
- Counseling
- Emergency Housing

VFW POST RECEIVES NO GOVERNMENT MONEY...THEY OPERATE 100% ON YOUR DONATIONS!



PLEASE HELP!

FOR TICKETS OR INFORMATION CALL OR TEXT
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847-910-5778

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602-714-1249