



## Camo at the Capitol Issues Brief

### *Selected State and Federal Legislation impacting Arizona Public Lands and Wildlife*

#### **Proposed State Legislation:**

##### **1. HCR2024—Anti-30x30 Legislation**

HCR2024 specifically opposes public lands projects that would fall under the federal 30x30 or America the Beautiful program or any other similar program.

**AWF Position: OPPOSE.** AWF has joined many other sportsman's and conservation organizations in the support of 30x30/America the Beautiful ([HuntFish3030 link](#)). We are working to ensure the 30x30 initiative focus is on conservation and that priorities are driven at the local level as is currently reflected the 30x30 core principles ([DOI link here](#)). We believe that individual public lands projects should be judged on their own merits and not simply rejected in total. Arizona hunters, anglers and outdoor recreationists have benefited from many projects that would fall under 30x30 in recent years (See list).

#### **What you can do:**

- 1) Have your organization sign on to the HUNTFISH3030 letter at [www.huntfish3030.com](http://www.huntfish3030.com).
- 2) Contact your state legislator ask them to **OPPOSE HCR2024**.
- 3) Sign on to the RTS system at [azleg.gov](http://azleg.gov) and **OPPOSE HCR2024**.

##### **2. SCR1010/HCR2019—Recognition of the importance of Outdoor Recreation to Arizona and Arizonans**

Resolutions SCR1010 and companion HCR2019 establish a common understanding by state legislators that all different types of outdoor recreation are important to Arizona's economy and quality of life and that all Arizonans should have the opportunity to enjoy and participate in those activities.

**AWF Position: SUPPORT.** Although these resolutions have no direct impact on the state budget, policy, or law, they do set a precedent for other pro-hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation legislation and appropriations. This is particularly true when they have broad bi-partisan support.

**What you can do:**

- 1) *Contact your state legislator ask them to SUPPORT SCR1010 and HCR2019.*
- 2) *Sign on to the RTS system at azleg.gov and SUPPORT SCR1010 and HCR2019.*

**3. HB2408—Arizona Game and Fish Continuation**

With HB2408, the state legislature gives the authority to manage wildlife in Arizona to the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and specifically to the Game and Fish Commission and Department Director. The continuation is for 8 years.

**AWF Position: SUPPORT.** A non-political game and fish commission and an independent AZGFD making game management decisions based on science is fundamental to the future of hunting, fishing, the North American Model, and outdoor recreation in Arizona.

**What you can do:**

*No action is required at this time.*

**4. SB1170—Tag benefits for Veterans, 1<sup>st</sup> Responders, and children of those lost in the line of duty**

SB1170 provides an opportunity for the transfer of tags to the children of veterans and first responders who were killed in the line of duty. It also allows refunds for veterans and first responders who were not able to hunt due to assignment out of state or to special duty. This bill does NOT increase the number of tags issued by AZGFD.

**AWF Position: SUPPORT.** This bill has been drafted in full collaboration with AZGFD.

**What you can do:**

*No action is required at this time.*

**5. SB1270—State Parks Heritage Fund appropriation**

Senator Shope and Representative Osborne will be introducing legislation again this year that appropriates \$10M of State Lottery proceeds to go to the State Parks Heritage Fund. This money may be used for local parks, heritage sites, and trails. The direct benefit to sportsmen and women is maintenance and development of trails and trailheads that provide access to public lands. The appropriation was approved by Arizona voters in 2007 and then rescinded by the legislature in 2012. This bill restores that budget.

**AWF Position: SUPPORT.**

**What you can do:**

- 1) *Contact your state legislator ask them to SUPPORT the State Parks Heritage Fund.*
- 2) *Sign on to the RTS system at azleg.gov and SUPPORT State Parks Heritage Fund.*

## **Proposed Federal Legislation:**

### **1. Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R.2773/S.2372) –**

Recovering America's Wildlife Act redirects \$1.3 billion of existing revenue annually to state-led wildlife conservation efforts, enabling the states to more fully implement their State Wildlife Action Plans. Arizona is one of the leading beneficiaries of this bill and it would add \$31M/year to the AZGFD budget. The Senate version of the bill takes money from environmental fines and has the most bipartisan support. Benefits of the bill include:

- **Preventive and saves money** – A major tenet of the bill is to invest in habitat and management solutions BEFORE species decline to the point of being listed and managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.
- **Better for hunters and anglers** - Currently 80 percent of the funding for our state wildlife agencies comes from sportsmen's fees such as hunting and fishing licenses and taxes on outdoor gear. Wildlife that are not hunted or fished do not currently have a similar dedicated funding stream.
- **Local control and a history of success** - The funds from this bill will be controlled by state fish and wildlife agencies in the same way funds are allocated via the Pittman-Robertson Act. State agencies have had great successes in restoring species once on the brink—bald eagles, white-tailed deer, elk, turkey, striped bass, and more.
- **Helping wildlife at risk** - The money will largely be spent on efforts such as restoring habitats, reintroducing native wildlife, fighting invasive species, and monitoring emerging diseases.
- **Connecting people with nature** - States can use some of the funds for wildlife viewing, nature photography, educational programs, and trail improvements.

**AWF Position: Support** – Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) benefits all Arizona plant and wildlife species, addresses the issue of overall species decline, and helps keep hunting and fishing revenues directed toward the protection and management of consumptive species.

#### **What you can do:**

- 1) *Contact Arizona Senators Sinema and Kelly and ask them to support S.2372 Recovering America's Wildlife Act.*
- 2) *Contact your Congressional Representative and ask them to SUPPORT H.R.2773 Recovering America's Wildlife Act.*

### **2. Chronic Wasting Disease (H.R. 5608)**

Fortunately, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has not yet been found in Arizona deer and elk herds, but given that it's already in Utah, New Mexico, and Colorado, it's likely we will be facing this same threat soon. This bill designates \$50M/year split evenly between the essential tasks of research and management of CWD.

**AWF Position: SUPPORT.**

#### **What you can do:**

- 1) *Contact Arizona Senators Sinema and Kelly and ask them to support H.R. 5608 Chronic Wasting Disease Research and Management Act*
- 2) *Contact your Congressional Representative and ask them to SUPPORT H.R. 5608 Chronic Wasting Disease Research and Management Act.*

### **3. Grand Canyon Protection Act (H.R.1052/S.387):**

In 2012, sportsmen and sportswomen joined many Arizonans in overwhelming support of a 20-year moratorium on new uranium mining on 1 million acres around the Grand Canyon. This moratorium, called a “mineral withdrawal”, is authorized by the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) and is still in effect. These bills would make that withdrawal permanent.

**AWF Position: Support**, -- AWF supports multi-use of our public lands, including appropriately managed mining and grazing, but does not support all uses in all places. The area around the Grand Canyon is just not the appropriate place for uranium mining and the economic benefits do not outweigh the risks. The hydrology of the area is complex (think of the dozen or so different layers of rock as you hike the canyon) and not well understood, and current monitoring requirements do not assure that springs, seeps and even groundwater sources are safe from contamination. Mining here poses significant risk to the Havasupai Tribe, wildlife, water, and the outdoor recreation driven economy of the region.

#### **What you can do:**

- 1) *Contact Arizona Senators Sinema and Kelly and ask them to prioritize S.387 Grand Canyon Protection Act, get it moving in the Senate, and get it passed.*