



A RESOLUTION of the Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation, in support of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission position concerning the loss of multiple-use public lands due to special land-use designations

WHEREAS, Arizona's sportsmen understand and appreciate the value of its public lands, and the ability of the public to access and utilize those lands for a variety of recreational uses, and

WHEREAS, only 23 percent of Arizona's lands remain open for public use and free from special land use designations, or in other words, more than 77 percent of Arizona's lands are restricted from public access and recreation through ownership (private, state, and tribal) or through federal special land use designations, and although federal lands make up 42 percent of Arizona, more than 43 percent of those lands have special land use designations which prescribe significant restrictions to recreation and management, and

WHEREAS, the conservation of wildlife resources is the trust responsibility of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission (Commission) and this trust extends to all lands within Arizona, to ensure abundant wildlife resources for current and future generations, and

WHEREAS, with more than 4.5 million acres, Arizona has the fourth highest total designated wilderness acreage in the U.S. This, coupled with an additional 5.8 million acres of special land use designations, which include National Monuments, National Parks, National Wildlife Refuges, National Conservation Areas, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and Wilderness Characteristics Areas, has caused the systematic loss of sportsmen's recreational opportunities and the commensurate erosion of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's (Department) ability to proactively manage wildlife on more than 10.3 million acres, and

WHEREAS, while the Arizona Game and Fish Department has experienced restrictions resulting from special land use designations including project delays, increased costs, increased man-hours, and legal challenges, sportsmen have experienced road closures, blocked access, camping restrictions, shooting prohibitions, and game retrieval problems. This ultimately leads to not only a decreased efficiency in conserving and managing Arizona's wildlife resources, as well as the inability of sportsmen to enjoy historical pursuits, and

WHEREAS, public land managers have a responsibility to the people of Arizona to ensure continued opportunities for multiple-use recreational activities. For example, FLPMA (1976) is the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) "organic act" that establishes the agency's multiple-use mandate to serve present and future generations. Once federal lands are converted to special use lands such as Wilderness and National Monuments, the FLPMA mandate no longer applies and those lands permanently lose multiple-use provisions, and;

WHEREAS, in spite of organic legislation emphasizing multiple-use of public lands, neither the USFS or BLM have established any objectives for acreages of public lands to be maintained in full multiple-use,

free from restrictive designations in Arizona, and

WHEREAS, the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 and the Federal Land and Policy Management Act of 1976 both legally prohibit the federal land management agencies from affecting the state's jurisdiction and responsibilities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation does not support the continual conversion of public lands from multiple-use to land use designations that result in the net loss of wildlife resources, wildlife related recreational opportunities, and wildlife dependent economic benefit without expressed concurrence of the state of Arizona and the Commission, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any proposed special land use designation analyze the cumulative impacts of further loss of public lands that provide for multiple-use and wildlife related recreational and economic opportunities, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any proposed special land use designation on federal lands analyze the impact to the Arizona Game and Fish Department's ability to fulfill its trust responsibility to manage the state's wildlife resources.

Adopted on March 2, 2015

Jim Unmacht
President

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation, representing the following organizations:

AZ Deer Association
AZ Outdoor Sports
AZ Big Game Super Raffle
1.2.3.Go...
AZ Antelope Foundation
AZ Desert Bighorn Sheep Society
Outdoor Experience 4 All
Xtreme Predator Callers
AZ Houndsmen
AZ Flycasters Club
Coconino Sportsmen
AZ Bowhunters Association
South Eastern AZ Sportsmen's Club
Mohave Sportsman Club
AZ State Chapter of National Wild Turkey Federation
AZ Elk Society
AZ Chapter of Safari Club International
AZ BASS Nation
The BASS Federation
SRT Outdoors
Anglers United
AZ Council of Trout Unlimited