

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ARIZONA GAME AND FISH COMMISSION
CONCERNING THE LOSS OF MULTIPLE-USE PUBLIC LANDS DUE TO SPECIAL
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

WHEREAS, Arizona's great strength lies in the value of its public lands, and the ability for the public to access and utilize those lands for a variety of recreational uses, and

WHEREAS, although federal lands make up 42% of Arizona, more than 43% of those lands have special land use designations which prescribe significant restrictions to recreation and management. Only 23% of Arizona's lands remain open for public use and free from special land use designations, OR More than 77% 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

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

WHEREAS, with 4.5 million acres, Arizona has the 3rd 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 recreational opportunities and erosion of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's (Department) ability to proactively manage wildlife on over 10.3 million acres, and

WHEREAS, 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. This ultimately leads to decreased efficiency in conserving and managing Arizona's wildlife resources, 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.

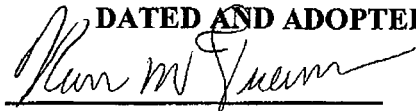
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission supports public land use that provides Arizona's public and resources with a net benefit, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission 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.

DATED AND ADOPTED this 11th day of May, 2012.



Norman W. Freeman

Chairman

Arizona Game and Fish Commission