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## The Heritage Fund: What its loss will mean to Arizona

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### Public invited to Game and Fish presentation and webcast on Feb. 2

The Arizona Game and Fish Department will host a public presentation and live webcast tomorrow evening (Tuesday, Feb. 2) to discuss the potential ramifications to Arizona from a proposed elimination of the Heritage Fund.

In mid-January the Governor's office released a budget plan that proposes to permanently eliminate the department's voter-approved Heritage Fund and redirect all Arizona State Lottery revenue to the state's general fund. That proposal has been sent for consideration by the Legislature.

"Adoption of this proposal could have significant impacts on Arizona's land use and growth that will be vital for the state's economic recovery, as well as affecting outdoor recreationists and the future well being of the state's wildlife," said Deputy Director Bob Broscheid. "We acknowledge the difficulties the state faces in addressing the budget situation, but we owe it to the public to inform and educate on what this could mean to them."

Arizona Game and Fish is a "business-model" agency reliant wholly on non-tax dollars. It is critical that the customers who pay the bills in this "user pay, user benefit" model understand the potential statewide economic effects that could result from a permanent elimination of Heritage funding. Those effects potentially include constraints on land use that could affect our state's economic recovery.

The approximately 30-minute presentation will start at 6 p.m. at the department's Phoenix office at 5000 W. Carefree Highway (1.5 miles west of I-17). The public is invited to attend the presentation or view it live over the Internet at [www.azgfd.gov/webcast](http://www.azgfd.gov/webcast).

The seminar, presented by Broscheid, will cover the history of the Heritage Fund, what it's used for, how it benefits wildlife, its many success stories, and the impacts to wildlife, land access and Arizona citizens if the fund is lost.

After the presentation, an interactive question-and-answer session with the public will take place. Online viewers can submit questions for consideration via an e-mail link at [www.azgfd.gov/webcast](http://www.azgfd.gov/webcast).

Passed as an initiative in 1990 by an overwhelming 2-1 bipartisan ratio of Arizona voters, the Heritage Fund provides up to \$10 million each year from lottery ticket sales for the conservation and protection of the state's wildlife and natural areas. The Arizona Game and Fish Department receives no general tax revenue and the Heritage Fund is one of the department's primary funding sources. The Heritage Fund makes a difference in communities across Arizona and benefits all citizens.