

PRONGHORN

3rd Quarter 2022
Volume 28 Number 3

29TH BIENNIAL PRONGHORN WORKSHOP

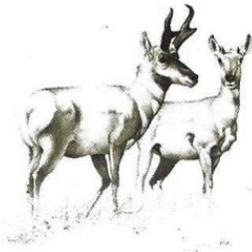
SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

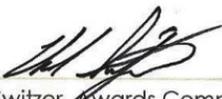
This certificate is awarded to

Arizona Antelope Foundation

for

Award-winning efforts with the Southeast Arizona Grasslands Pronghorn Initiative for on-the-ground improvements in habitat and connectivity to restore and enhance pronghorn populations across southeast Arizona.




Chad Switzer, Awards Committee Chair

8/24/22
Date



August 2022

Deadwood, South Dakota

Honored to Work for Pronghorn



ARIZONA ANTELOPE FOUNDATION, INC.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Page 3 President's Message
Page 4 Clayton's Buck
Pages 5-7 Highway 89 Fence Removal Project
Page 8 Project Photos
Pages 9-10 Science on the Sonoita Plain and AAF Award
Pages 11-12 29th Biennial Western States & Provinces Pronghorn Workshop and Special Recognition Award
Pages 13 AZGFD Commendation-Glen Dickens
Pages 14 Young Deana Watkins is Everything Pronghorn
Pages 15-17 Sonoran Pronghorn Update
Pages 18 Membership
Pages 19 Thank You—More Highway 89 Volunteers, and Our Supporters

AAF Mission Statement:

The Arizona Antelope Foundation is an organization dedicated to the welfare of pronghorn antelope. The Foundation's Mission is to actively seek to increase pronghorn populations in Arizona through habitat improvements, habitat acquisition, the translocation of animals to historic range, and public comment on activities affecting pronghorn and their habitat.

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Chad Switzer Awards Committee Chair
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ON OUR COVER

This special recognition awarded the AAF was years in the making. How did we achieve this? See page 10.

Photo credit Betty Dickens

Pronghorn is a quarterly magazine for the members of AAF. Letters, comments, news items, articles, pictures and stories are all welcome and will be considered for publication. Address all such items to: Lenée Landis, Pronghorn Editor, PO Box 1191, Mesa AZ 85211 or by email at info@azantelope.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome everyone to another addition of the Pronghorn. I would like to begin with congratulations to Marsha Sue for her selection to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission. She and husband Al are long time AAF members and Al is a former Board member of the AAF. This issue also outlines five different recognitions received by our membership and/or the AAF. Suffice to say we are very proud of those recognized and are pleased that our collective efforts on the Southeastern Pronghorn Grasslands Initiative has now received both local and regional recognition.

Well, we had a good Monsoon season this year... in fact so good we had to cancel our latest 18A project due to the wet roads and work area. Bad for project season but good for the landscape and wildlife. We did however get a project done on Hwy. 89 for some fence removal. This was done to complement the new wildlife standard fence installed earlier. You can read about the project inside this issue written by one of our board members, Gary Boyer. We recently set up the holding pen in Vekol Valley again in preparation for another Sonoran Pronghorn transplant. We should accomplish this in January as last year. There are a couple of fawns from last year's transplant that have been seen on a camera Game and Fish set up.

Upcoming, we have our annual Habitat Partnership Committee (HPC) meetings. Attending will be two of our board biologists Dave Cagle and Glen Dickens. I got a look at the projects and the ranking accomplished by Dave and Glen with help from Tice Supplee. It certainly looks like some good stuff will be done this year.

Speaking of good work, with some of our raffle income we set aside \$30,000.00 for Sonoran waters. We just sent out funding for materials and the Region IV folks will be starting work with the cool weather coming in. If one goes to our website at azantelope.org and checks the Volunteer page or follows us on the social media front, you will see the upcoming projects listed. Our board member Jamie worked with Zion Johnson to put together some training videos on how we conduct fence projects. If you know someone new who would like to come out and volunteer, have them take a look, excellent preview of what we do.



For everyone I would like to put out an ask. If you enjoy the projects for those who can attend. If you enjoy the Pronghorn and being a member, how about seeing if you can recruit one more member. We would like to get more people involved and let them enjoy all that we do for conservation. Besides fresh blood brings in fresh ideas, never a bad thing.

For our current members if you feel like doing something more there is the board of directors. Even if you're not on the board there is always something we can use some help with. Remember our board meetings are the second Monday of each month at 18:30 (OK so 6:30 PM) and there is a zoom option our administrator can send out to you. That's it for now— enjoy the issue. I hope everyone has a good fall and success if you drew a tag.

Ken

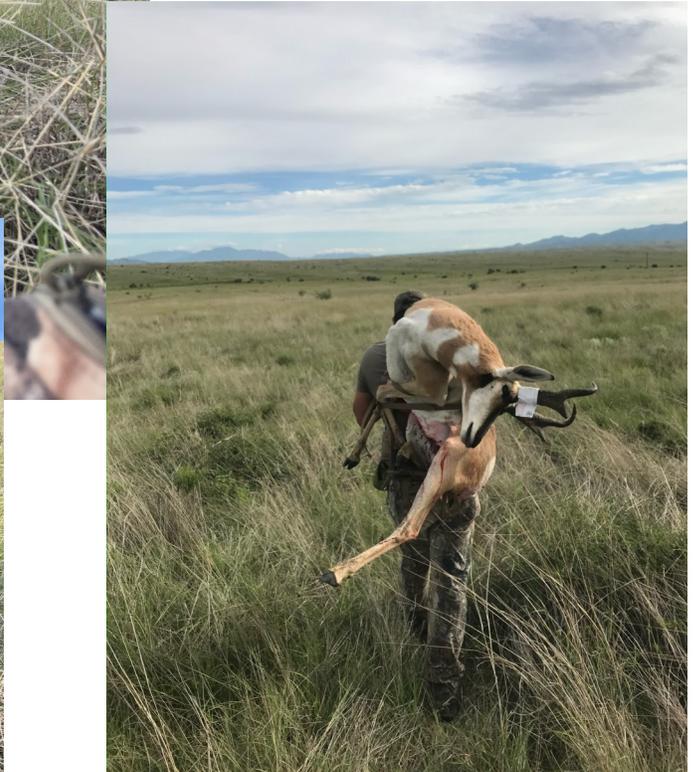
"LIBERTAS AD VAGOR"....

FREEDOM TO ROAM

Clayton's Buck

Andrew Young shared his son Clayton's success following the 2022 AAF Hunter Clinic. One proud Dad! Congratulations!

*Thank you for all the knowledge you shared with us. Between you and the foundation you helped make this a very successful and memorable hunt. Not the biggest we saw but definitely a classy buck. 14" mains and 6" in bases. Sorry, I forgot to measure the cutters.
Andrew Young*



HIGHWAY 89 FENCE REMOVAL

AUGUST 6, 2022

BY GARY BOYER, AAF BOARD MEMBER

On Friday August 5, 2022 AAF board members and volunteers began setting up camp northwest of I-40 and Williams, AZ in the Kaibab National Forest. Dinner was served and after the usual after dinner storytelling, everyone headed for the sack. Up at first light, folks drank coffee, and partook of the continental breakfast set out by our camp cooks.

By 8am all our volunteers had woken up, showed up, and/or chowed down. Jeff Gagnon and Scott Sprague of the AZGFD (Arizona Game and Fish Dept.) led the pre-work meeting of about 45 volunteers. Jeff and Scott's job titles are "Wildlife Specialists" however, that hardly covers the multiple duties they perform. Organizing work projects with critter groups such as AAF, overseeing projects throughout the state's Game Management units, and looking after Arizona's wildlife are only part of their responsibilities. Jeff and Scott are both integral parts of the AZGFD Highways and Wildlife Connectivity Group along with co-members Chad Loberger, Haley Nelson, and AZGFD and Mule Deer Foundation Cooperative Biologist Lucas Olson.

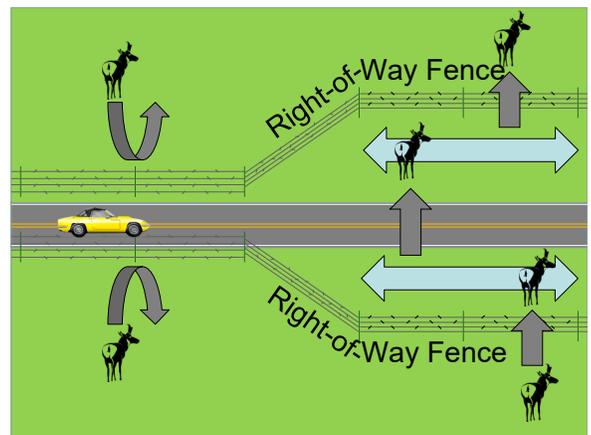
Jeff and Scott detailed where, what, and more importantly why we would be helping the pronghorn herds in the area. Using charts, diagrams and radio collar data gave everyone a good visual to understand the importance of the day's work.

Nature devises many ways to prevent pronghorn from attaining a ripe old age. Ranging from predation, disease, injuries, post-natal survival and starvation. So much for the sweet old lady image of Ma Nature.

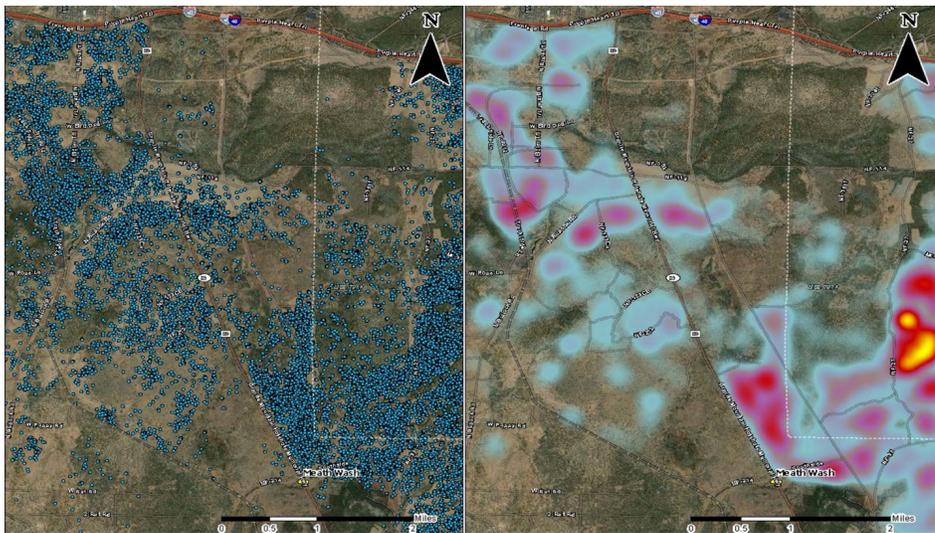
We humans also contribute to wildlife's battle for survival. Inbreeding, due to isolated, smaller herds, create a shallow gene pool. This is an issue that AAF has been working on for a long time. Fencing of open ranges began in the post-Civil War west, fragmenting the traditional ranges of the antelope that had been around for 10-15,000 years. Pronghorn rarely jump fences like other large game species of the west, depending only on speed and eyesight to defend against prey species looking for supper. The increase in fencing of the west, particularly in Arizona, created segmentation of rangeland into smaller areas creating smaller herds. Smaller herds result in less genetic mixing causing the typical problems associated with inbreeding, such as reduced herd fitness and higher susceptibility to local population loss due to diseases.

AAF work projects include removing outdated, obsolete fences and modifying existing fences to wildlife friendly standards. Other human created factors are highways and the vehicles that use them. Crossing safely across highways are a problem for the pronghorn due to the combined physical barrier of ROW (right of way) fences and traffic on the roadways themselves. Interstate highways such as I-40 are virtually impossible for antelope to cross. Plans for wildlife overpasses on interstates have worked for bighorn sheep on Hwy 93 in northwest Arizona and studies are ongoing regarding I-40 for construction of a pronghorn overpass.

A short-term cost-effective solution for antelope has the potential to be effective on Hwy 89 south of Ash Fork, similar to work completed by AAF and partners north of I-40 over the past several years. But first let's look at the problem. When antelope approach a roadway there are three obstacles to overcome. Five, if one includes the ROW fence. Generally, the animals must find a low spot or a washout to duck under the fence. Then it must cross a narrow strip of road shoulder, next the asphalt, then another shoulder and finally get under the fence again. There is no room for error and if vehicles are present... well, you get the idea. Remember, pronghorn are not jumpers like deer or elk and prefer ducking under fences. AZGFD uses several techniques for locating areas of high



crossing usage using radio collar data to track herd movements, observing adjoining grassland habitats and spotting game trails near roadways.



Data used to identify Meath Wash fence pull-back identified in prior HPC involved efforts.

Now the solution. AZGFD over the past months installed new wildlife friendly fences on both sides of Hwy 89. These fences are set back about approximately 200 feet from the sides of the road. They run parallel for 1½ miles south from Bullock Road to Meath Wash in areas identified through telemetry data. This provides safe staging areas on both sides of the highway before actually crossing the asphalt. To allow pronghorn to pass under the fence the bottom, smooth strand of wire is 18” above grade. Also, goat bars are utilized at several points along the fence line. Goat bars are sections where the two middle strands of barb wire are pinched together and a length of PVC pipe is slipped over the wires and secured in place. This creates a wide enough space so antelope can pass through the fence while keeping cattle inside the pasture.



Fence project locations completed May-August 2022, including August 6th AAF workday with 48 volunteers.

After the morning meeting, volunteers loaded up for a 20-minute drive west on I-40 to Ash Fork, then south on 89 a couple miles to Bullock Road. Our project was the removal of the old existing ROW fence and T-posts opening up the area between the new fence and the roadway. Crews were split up with half working on each side of 89 on the north section near Bullock Road and the other half on the south section near Meath Wash. Troy Christensen AZGFD, and his ATV mounted wire roller began on the north project and my crew and wire roller started on the east side of the highway on the longer south project along with Kaibab National Forest running a third roller on the west side of the southern project. The hand crews began detaching the old wire, laying it off the fence line ready to be rolled up. As the wires came down the younger, brawnier volunteers along with AZGFD personnel began pulling up T-posts. A lot of the posts had apparently grown roots and refused to come out. Another team, with a generator and an angle grinder fitted with a cut off blade made quick work of the stubborn posts at each location.

A note on wire rollers. Our ATV mounted roller spools can hold ¼ mile of single strand barbed wire. When taking down 4 strand fences we roll 2 wires at a time. So, rolling 2 wires together we can complete 1/8 mile with 2 pulls at each stop. The three roller teams rolled more than 3 miles of fence. Three miles doesn't sound like much. However, by the end of the day our tireless volunteers rolled the equivalent of 12 miles of wire. This includes picking the rolls up, transporting to a staging areas on Bullock Road and north of Meath Wash and loading onto the trailers for recycling.

A great effort by our AAF volunteers and AZGFD's personnel produced a clean, unobstructed product we can all be proud of. If you would like to join us for a busy, fun day just contact us at azantelope.org for upcoming events and projects. We also have produced a training video available at <https://azantelope.org/Volunteer> that details a typical AAF work project. Please check it out.

Now a shameless plug. We always welcome new members, membership is a mere \$40 a year and you will receive 4 issues of the Pronghorn a year plus you will be helping AAF continue our important mission to keep the antelope coming back. Membership renews on the anniversary of your start month, please renew if you haven't already done so.

Our regular chefs Bill and Mary Keebler, had a previous commitment and couldn't attend but, Mary sent along her delicious spuds along with Bill's pulled pork and his secret BBQ sauce, thanks Bill and Mary. Our president Ken Meadors and board members Dave Cagle and Darrell Tersey assumed KP duties for the weekend. They put out two dinners, pulled pork Friday night and on Saturday evening quesadilla appetizers, then fabulous grilled steaks with Mary's potatoes and green salad. Each morning Ken was up at zero dark thirty starting coffee and setting out all the continental breakfast goodies. Thanks to our substitute chefs, Well done guys.

We are so thankful for our volunteers and AZGFD's personnel whom without we couldn't accomplish our mission of doing all we can to ensure Arizona's pronghorn will be around for future generations to enjoy. We had an amazing turnout of 48 volunteers for this project and we thank them all for their efforts;

Lani Beach, Bo Nicole Boulier, David Breeden, Mike Ebright, Aidan Haugen, Jeff Hemphill, Louis Horvath, Johnny Johnson, Kevin Kelly, Michelle Kiffer-Boulier, Kent Krumm, Jay and Connie Leadabrand, Brad Lough, Dale Maas, Samantha Martin, James McCasland, Bill McClendon, Garth Young, John O'Brien, Jon Ochoa, Tiffany Rosler, Tania Peret, Steve Rusiecki, Al and Marsha Sue, Alexander Watkins, Deana Watkins, Darrel Wood, Sherry Christensen, Mauricio Gomez, Marsha Halcrow, Zachary Haugen, Solena Daniels, John Box, Joey Dahms, Olivia Macowski, Kirsten Fuller, Monica Wheeler, Kim Berrier, Jesse Puff-Woodruff, Cheryl Sorrento, and Mr or Ms. Wynsma (my apologies I could not read your name)

Representing AZGFD and AAF board members;

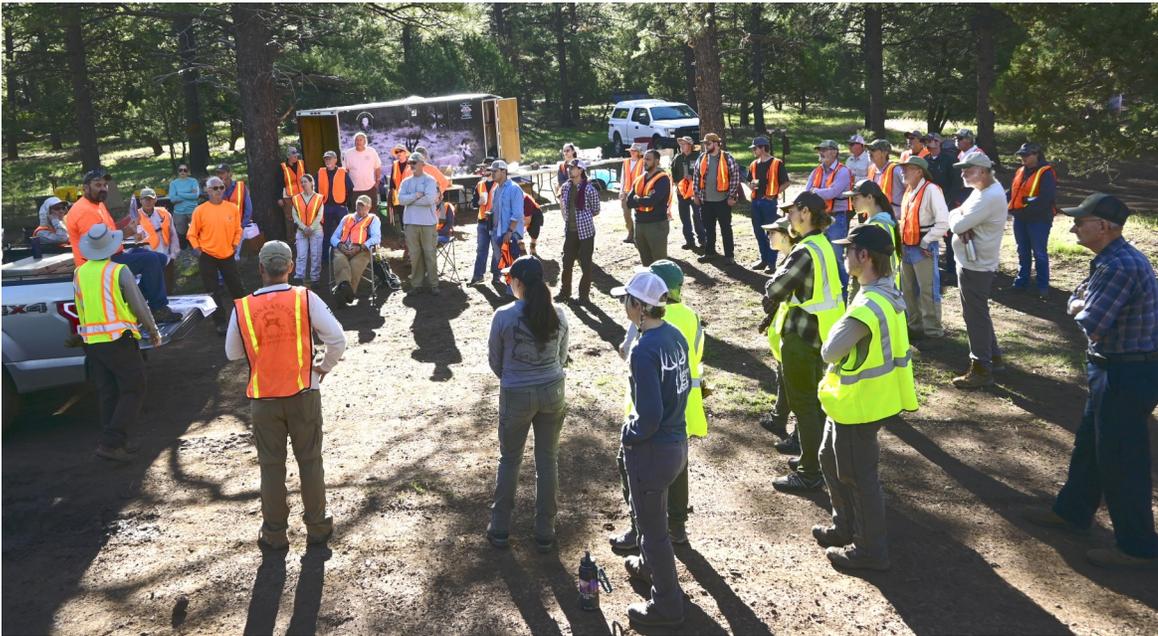
AZGFD: Jeff Gagnon, Scott Sprague, Roger Joos, Troy Christensen, Chad Loberger, Haley Nelson, and AZGFD and Mule Deer Foundation Cooperative Biologist Lucas Olson.

AAF: Ken Meadors, Dave Cagle, Betty Dickens; photographer, JoeBill Pickrell, Darrell Tersey,, Jamie Watkins, and yours in conservation, Gary Boyer. (My apologies for any mis-spellings or if anyone was not recognized.)

Photos courtesy of Betty Dickens and Dale Maas.

More photos on page 8 and 19.





AZGFD overview and federal team support



SCIENCE ON THE SONOITA PLAIN

DISCOVERING THE LAND: COMMUNITY, SCIENCE, AND PARTNERSHIP.

ORGANIZED BY CIENEGA WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP AND FRIENDS OF SONOITA CREEK

BY DARRELL TERSEY

The Arizona Antelope Foundation was invited to co-present with the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Cienega Watershed Partnership on the Community, Science and Partnerships involved with the improvement of wildlife populations on the Sonoita Plains on May 7, 2022. Board Member Darrell Tersey attended on behalf of the AAF to talk about the work the AAF has done to enhance the habitat for the pronghorn in the area, the success of the work and the collaborative partnerships that made it all possible. The presentation itself was a collaborative partnership involving Gerald Berthelette from the Landowner/ Sportsman's office in G&F region 5, Jennifer Pressler from G&F Nongame Branch talking about Prairie Dog reintroductions, and Dennis Caldwell from the Cienega Watershed Partnership talking about Leopard Frog reintroductions.

The AAF presentation covered the following points:

Work in the watershed and why does it matter?

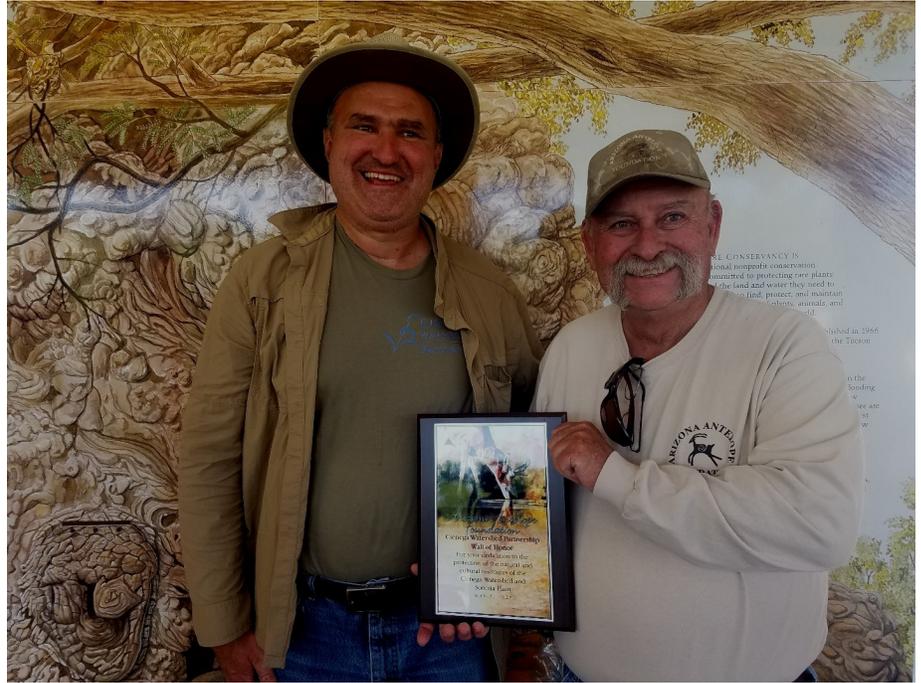
- ◆ Beginning in 2010 Connectivity of grassland habitats on the 103,000-acre Sonoita Plains for pronghorn was identified as a significant limiting factor due to existing highways 82/83 and pasture fences.
- ◆ 3-separate pronghorn subpopulations were recognized as north of HW82, south of HW82 Rose Tree Ranch and the Babocomari ranch, likely causing genetic bottlenecking.
- ◆ Population total was just 81 pronghorn, 31 south of HW 82 and 50 north of HW82.
- ◆ Mesquite invasion of grasslands was identified as an issue.
- ◆ Permanent waters were much less of a concern but fencing issues limited access for fawning does to many key waters.

What have we done about it and what outcomes have resulted?

- ◇ Between 2010-19 we acted on what was referred to as the Sonoita Plains Pronghorn Corridor Improvement Project and modified using volunteers/student labor and contract funding to pronghorn standards 64 miles of HW82/83 and pasture fences thus creating habitat permeability on the entire 103,000-acre Sonoita Plains pronghorn corridor improvement project.
- ◇ AGFD supplemented the subpopulation south of HW82 with 31 pronghorn in 2014.
- ◇ NFWF grant and Environmental License Plate funds were used to burn 321 acres of grassland, and grub or herbicide 1,964 acres of mesquite on the private property of the Babocomari and Vera Earl ranches respectively in key pronghorn use zones.
- ◇ 6 waters were added or upgraded in pronghorn high use and fawning zones.
- ◇ Since 2015 to 2021 annual July saturation volunteer/AGFD surveys have counted in excess of 250 pronghorn, equally distributed both north and south of HW82 and all 250 are now considered a single metapopulation sharing their genetics. Pronghorn are regularly observed by all persons traveling all of the local roadways.

Two of the results were visible to the visitors to the symposium with a young buck posing next to the road on the way into the Empire Ranch and a current grubbing operation along the road.

Later in the afternoon, the symposium moved to The Nature Conservancy's property in Patagonia where the AAF was presented with an award for the contributions the AAF has made to the protection of natural and cultural resources of the Cienega Watershed and the Sonoita Plain.

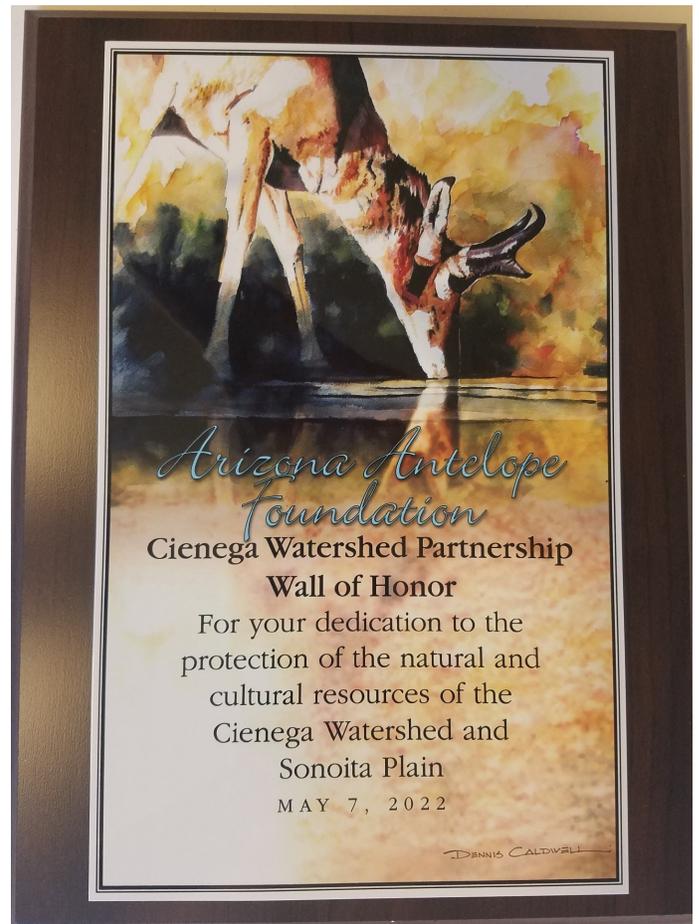


. Darrell Tersey receiving the award on behalf of the AAF.



L—Young buck along road into the symposium

R—Cienega Watershed Partnership Award



**29th Biennial Western States & Provinces
Pronghorn Workshop & *Special Recognition Award*
August 22-25, 2022
Deadwood, South Dakota
by AAF/VP Glen Dickens**

After a 4-year hiatus due to Covid The 29th Biennial Western States and Provinces Pronghorn Workshop was finally held from August 22-25, 2022, at Deadwood South Dakota and included over ninety participants. Glen Dickens attended and presented on behalf of the AAF, Game Specialist Brandon Foley of Kingman and Wildlife Statistician Callie Cavalcante of Phoenix represented the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

The workshop included thirty-three technical papers and posters on the status and management of pronghorn including reports from State, Provincial and other agencies, research findings and approaches to habitat and population challenges and management. This included our Arizona Antelope Foundation-Arizona Game and Fish Department and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Grant accomplishments paper and power-point entitled *Southeastern Arizona Grassland Pronghorn Initiative 2010-19*. It also included a closing night banquet and awards presentations. Suffice to say that if you participate in pronghorn management throughout their entire population distribution from Mexico to Canada and the U.S. this is a "must attend" workshop typically held every two years. The workshop is sponsored by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

The sessions were broken into the following six sections with our paper being the last one presented at the Symposium on Wednesday afternoon under the last category of History, Management and Conservation.

- ◆ Population Demographics and Evaluation I
- ◆ Movement/Migration I
- ◆ Populations Demographics and Evaluation II
- ◆ Movement/Migration II
- ◆ Movement/Migration III
- ◆ History, Management, and Conservation

Kudos go out to key moderator Andy Lindbloom and the staff of the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department for hosting an outstanding venue and workshop, Thank you!

Every two years range-wide pronghorn summary data is presented during each biennial western state and province pronghorn workshop. However due to Coronavirus it was delayed two years. For 2022, 23 states and provinces were surveyed spanning the pronghorns range from Canada, Mexico, and the United States. The 6-page questionnaire survey includes ninety-one questions and was designed to standardize information among jurisdictions. The 2021 pre-hunting season pronghorn population estimate was 929,016 occupying 801,007 square miles of habitat. It was no surprise that pronghorn in the southwest zone reported the lowest average fawn to doe ratios. Total pronghorn harvest in 2021 excluding Saskatchewan was 75,400 and accounted for 8% of the range wide estimated population.

Wednesday evening's banquet turned out to be incredibly special for the AAF, the Arizona Game and Fish Department and Dave Brown's daughter Elaine who made the trip up to Deadwood. Brian Wakeling, Callie Cavalcante, Brandon Foley, and I sat at the same table with Elaine and received separate recognitions. The AAF, AGFD and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation each received a Special Recognition Award for our "Award-winning efforts with the Southeast Arizona Grassland Pronghorn Initiative for on-the-ground improvement in habitat and connectivity to restore and enhance pronghorn populations across southeast Arizona." This award represents a pinnacle of accomplishment for the AAF by the nation's leading pronghorn biologists. **This recognition belongs to every member, donor and volunteer who regularly contribute your funds and time to our organizations mission. Be proud and thank you all!**

What followed our acceptance was Elaine Brown posthumously accepting the organizations highest lifetime achievement award entitled the *Berrendo Award* on behalf of her father David Brown. David was a founding member, past president of the AAF and coauthor of *The Pronghorn of Arizona*. [It was very well deserved!](#)



Vice President Glen Dickens Recognized by the Arizona Game & Fish Department

Glen Dickens, Arizona Antelope Foundation Vice President received a special "Commission Commendation of Achievement" on May 13, 2022 at the Sonoita Fairgrounds from the Arizona Game and Fish Department for his extraordinary conservation efforts with pronghorn in Southeastern Arizona.

For over a decade, Glen worked tirelessly overseeing this grant-funded project that included improving 7,874 acres of grasslands, modifying 105 miles of fencing, and translocating 95 pronghorn to supplement 6 subpopulations in the area. In addition to significantly increasing Southeastern Arizona's pronghorn population, connectivity was improved on 191,800 acres.



Congratulations, Glen!



*You continue
to inspire
us all!*

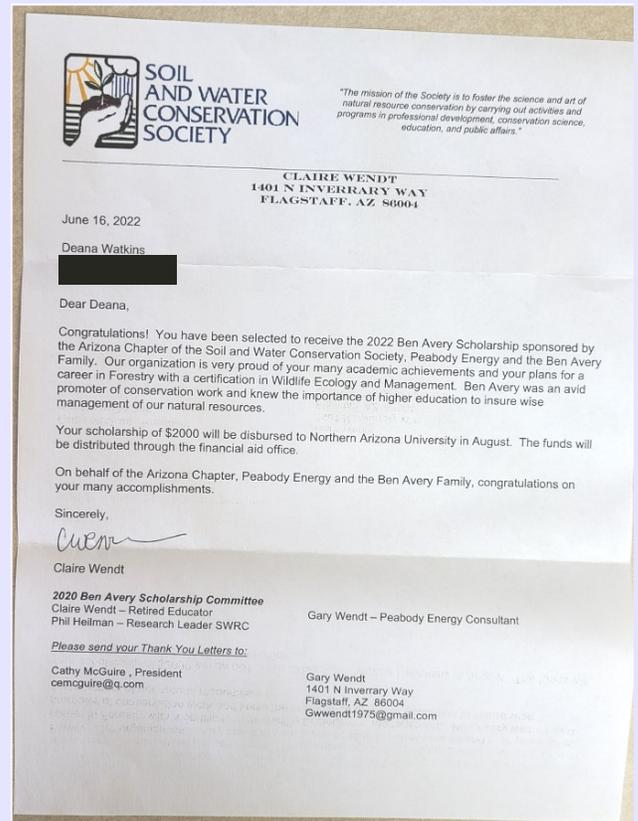
Young Deana Watkins is Everything Pronghorn



On June 16, 2022, Deana received well deserved confirmation of *the Ben Avery Scholarship* as outlined in the award letter below, to pursue her continued wildlife studies at Northern Arizona University. Unstated is her hiring by the Arizona Game and Fish Department as a summer 2022 Sonoran Pronghorn Wildlife Assistant stationed in Ajo.

Deana has been volunteering at our annual fence projects since she was age 8 and her mother Jamie Watkins currently serves on the Board of the AAF as our Director of Communications. Deana has a bright wild-life future to look forward to and we are amongst her ardent supporters. Congrats Deana!

Congratulations Deana!





SONORAN PRONGHORN UPDATE



FIGURES AND PHOTOS BY JILL BRIGHT, AZ GAME & FISH

JULY-AUGUST 2022

Captive Breeding Cabeza Pen

The pronghorn are doing well and enjoying increased native vegetation growth from recent rains. Due to the forage growth, the pronghorn are much less dependent on the alfalfa feed and have been spending time foraging in nearly every corner of their respective pens. In July and August, the pen received 3.3 inches of rain on the northeast side, and 2.75 inches on the southwest side.

Between August 19 – 25, the pen experienced five rain events totaling about 2 inches. After the first event multiple sections of outer and inner perimeter fences and electric fences were completely destroyed leaving large openings into the pen. Then a few days later, another storm tore out many of the newly repaired sections as well as other areas. Several people from Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge came to help us on two different days. They assisted in many ways, including bringing out a backhoe to repair roads as well as remove buried fencing and t-posts and also re-install new t-posts. They also came out with a UTV after we discovered sections of midline that were destroyed across three main washes totaling nearly 200 feet. The wench on the UTV worked pretty well removing buried fencing and t-posts as well as transporting tools, equipment, damaged fencing and unusable t-posts, and ourselves to the work areas and back out to our trucks at the end of the day. The pen crew is continually learning from these wash-out events and modifying and adapting the fence construction techniques to attempt to reduce the amount of damage the flooding and associated debris flow cause. Another rain event occurred after repairing the midline fence using some different techniques, which allowed more of the water and debris to wash through without destroying the main part of the fences.



No pronghorn have been observed getting into or out of the pen, nor has any evidence of predators getting in due to the damage sustained from the storm been observed. However, several bucks moved between the north and south halves while the midline fence was -2- down; north half gained one buck from south and south gained 4 bucks from north. The pen biologists believe some fawns (all unmarked) have switched pens as well, but they are having difficulty confirming who is where with all the thick forage growth.

A buck fawn was observed injured in south pen. His right front leg appeared to be swollen and in the beginning he kept shaking it and licking it, and seemed unsettled alternately laying down and standing back up frequently. He would either limp or hold his leg up while he walked, ran, or just stood in place. Over the next several days he continued to improve until we couldn't tell which fawn had been injured.

A buck fawn was found dead in the south half in mid-July. There was no predation and his cause of death is unknown. However, disease is likely due to an outbreak of midges that spread can spread disease emerging after late June rains. The fawns have not been vaccinated for diseases yet, and we also experienced the death of two fawns in the Kofa pen during the same time.

NORTH HALF		SOUTH HALF	
Adult Females	9	Adult Females	11
Yearling Females (<i>b</i> 2021)	5	Yearling Females (<i>b</i> 2021)	8
Adult Males	5	Adult Males	5
Yearling Males (<i>b</i> 2021)	4	Yearling Males (<i>b</i> 2021)	6
Fawns (<i>b</i> 2022, 4 M, 3 F)	7	Fawns (<i>b</i> 2022, 6 M, 7 F)	13
TOTAL	30	TOTAL	43
Total Pen	73		

Kofa Pen

The Kofa pen also received a good rain over several days in late August with over an inch between August 20 – 24 (a total of 2.37 for the months of July and August). Luckily, the pen did not sustain the major damage that the Cabeza pen did. Lots of debris needed to be cleared from the fences and wash gates and the electric fences repaired in several

Adult Females	10
Yearling Females (<i>b</i> 2021)	8
Adult Males	3
Yearling Males (<i>b</i> 2021)	4
Fawns (<i>b</i> 2022, 5 M, 3 F)	8
TOTAL	33

places. The Kofa pen is now green with abundant forage, reducing the pronghorn's need for as much alfalfa.

On July 5 a doe fawn was found dead, and a buck fawn was found dead on July 20. Disease is suspected due to the prevalence of midges from a late June rain that can spread disease to the unvaccinated fawns.

Wild Pronghorn Cabeza/ORPI/BMGR Herd: Most of the pronghorn in this sub-unit are in their normal areas. The buck on the Yuma golf course has moved south after the rains, but is still on the west side of the Gila Mountains. The buck from the Vekol release who was near Wellton, moved west of the Cabeza and Copper Mountains, but then found his way into the Mohawk Valley, and has likely found the Point of the Pintas water and other pronghorn. There were good rains, although very localized, over much of this range. Knucklehead in Child's Valley recorded 1.67 inches in late July, and another 3.3 inches in August. Charlie Bell received 1.37 in late July and 2.41 in August.

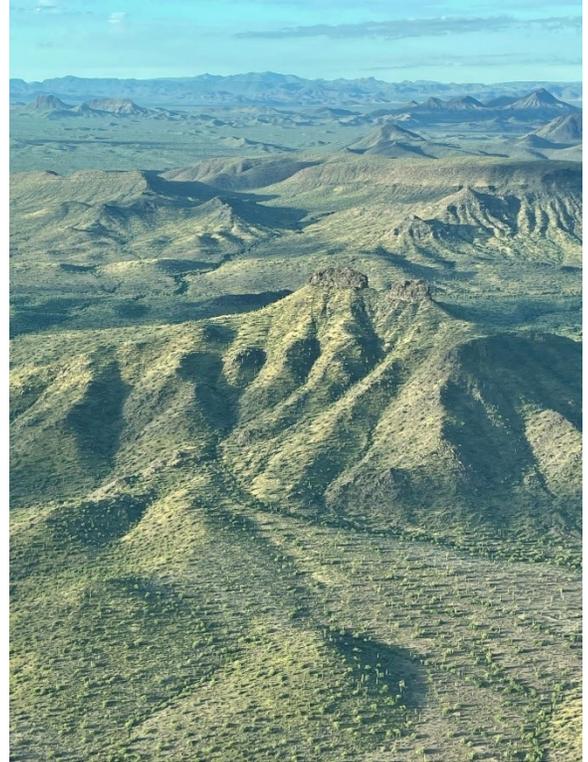
Wild Pronghorn Kofa Subunit: This area received frequent and widespread rains and is very green throughout all the areas pronghorn frequent. South of the Kofa pen, the rain gauge recorded 3.2 inches of rain, 2.78 at Clancy western King Valley, and 3.06 at Dog Leg in the eastern part of King Valley. The pronghorn have been moving around and exploring areas with the abundant forage. On July 10, a 7-year old buck, released from the Kofa pen in 2017, was found dead on the Kofa pen fence. It appears he tried to jump back into the pen, got caught in the fence and died. There was also a mortality of a 4-year old doe, released in January 2021, on the Palomas Plains, cause unknown.

Wild Pronghorn Saucedá Subunit: This area was the last to receive rain with only 0.21 inches in July, and then light rains until the end of August, when 1.17 inches fell. We have not done any telemetry flights in this area recently and the GPS collars are only working sporadically. A 7-year old buck was found dead near Hat Mountain water in early August, most likely from mountain lion predation.

Wild Pronghorn Vekol Valley Herd: These pronghorn seem to have coalesced into two groups, one near the holding pen and one northwest of the holding pen near Interstate 8 in an area with a nice cholla forest, with some movement between the two areas. The Vekol Valley also received rain in late August and is green with forage. There were three mortalities of three 2-year old bucks north of the holding pen area on July 12, 18 and August 4. All were from mountain lion predation. So far, we have lost six pronghorn (1 doe, 5 bucks) from lion predation in the Vekol Valley. Hopefully with the rain and corresponding green up of forage, the pronghorn can move about more and lion predation will become less prevalent. In good news, we have documented 4 fawns with the Vekol herd. There is also an unmarked older doe who has joined the northern group from somewhere, likely from the Saucedá herd.

Water Projects: Nearly all our waters have filled with the summer monsoons. Exceptions include Granite Mountains and some of the Tule Desert waters. Point of the Pintas collected water but did not quite fill. We are planning to build a new water on the Palomas Plains this upcoming spring.

Forage Enhancements: Pronghorn have moved off all our forage enhancements with the summer rains, and we are no longer feeding or irrigating at any of them. Yay!



Vekol Valley green-up

Other Projects: We are working on coordinating dates for our numerous fall/winter projects including the Kofa and Cabeza captures and releases, range-wide survey in Arizona, as well as surveys in the Saucedá and Kofa sub-units if we can get aircraft..



Written September 9, 2022

Pronghorn at a water full of monsoon rains

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