Pronghorn is a quarterly newsletter 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 19420, Fountain Hills, AZ 85269 or by email at info@azantelope.org.
Welcome to our latest publication of the Pronghorn. If you’re in Arizona, I hope the draw results went well and you have a successful fall season. I’ve been assured we had another successful fundraiser, although I was unable to attend due to some family duties. Our annual clinic for the fortunate tag holders went well also. Thank you to all the volunteers who put forth the effort to make everything work and a special thanks to Kara Jensen, the Fundraiser Chair.

We had another great project, just South of Greer, modifying fence for the herd migration between Summer and Winter range. We were rewarded with a doe and her fawn giving us a show right out in front of the camp. You will find an article by our newest Board Member Dave Cagle who will be retiring from AZ Game and Fish service this coming December.

Remember last issue we told you about a capture in Prescott and release in southern Arizona, west of Willcox. Well, this past weekend we conducted a couple of surveys. In the Allen flat survey we were able to find a collared doe plus another ear tagged doe with a fawn between them. A collared buck was also observed. This survey was combined with another over in the Sonoita area. The fawn to doe ratios were running in the 40 percent area so we are very pleased with our past efforts.

Looks like we have a new adventure in the Kingman region with a long term project proposal similar to our work down South. You will see an article on the show and tell me trip by another of our board members. I don’t have numbers, but it will be exciting to see another landscape connected in the same way we did down South.

We will be attending the Summer meeting on the 26th for Habit Partnership / Landowner - Lessee / Sportsmen Relations.

Another project to the west of Williams is up on the website for volunteer registration. There will be info coming out for a September project also—please join us! Hope everyone had a good 4th of July and your summer continues on a positive note. Till the next time, email us at info@azantelope.org with any thoughts and comments about this Pronghorn issue.

Ken Meadors
President

“LIBERTAS AD VAGOR”— Freedom to Roam
Another successful AAF fence modification/removal project was completed by 26 volunteers in Southeastern Arizona on April 13, 2019 in the southwest end of game management unit 32, 8 miles southwest of Bonita.

We modified 3 miles of existing boundary fence on the Sierra Bonita Ranch. We removed the bottom barbed wire strand and replaced with smooth, along with installing replacement stays along the fence line. During the project weekend, multiple sightings of pronghorn occurred and a curious group came up from the north in the afternoon to stand nearby and inspect our work.

This effort is in direct proximity to ongoing mesquite removal for the Bonita Grasslands NRCS/G&F restoration project with a goal of improving an additional 10,000 acres in the next 4 years. Over the past 8 years, the areas adjacent to and within this project have been grubbed and new waters and boundary fence installed. These projects will help ensure that resident pronghorn and mule deer can safely utilize open grassland corridors without interference due to fence line obstructions. It assisted in accomplishing a key portion of the overall southern Bonita Plains pronghorn travel corridor improvement project.

This project effort benefits the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant in that all labor hours, materials, and mileage from this project were used to match the AAF’s $430K 8-year grant for our “Southeastern Arizona Grasslands Pronghorn Initiative.” The grant has a goal of improving up to 100,000 acres of “Pronghorn habitat connectivity.” This goal was met in April of 2018 at Elgin and we are continuing to add to that total through the end of the grant period in December 2019.
Dinners were served on Friday and Saturday nights with the sides provided by Mary and Bill Keebler who hosted Saturday and Sunday morning breakfasts as well. Thanks Mary and Bill!

Thanks go out to several folks who contributed to this successful project:
- Representing the AAF Board: Gary Boyer, Al Sue, Terry Schupp, Connie Taylor, Joe-Bill Pickrell and yours truly.
- Representing the AZ Game and Fish: Karen Kilma, John Bacorn and Troy Christensen
- Representing The Nature Conservancy: Ron Day
- Representing the Mule Deer Foundation: Jake Jaeger
- Other AAF members and volunteers: Betty Dickens, John Millican, Richard Ockenfels, Dave Cruce, David Breeden, Warren Adams, Franklin Armor, Johnny Johnson, Bill & Mary Keebler, Mike Morales, Darrel Wood, Steve Tritz, and Sherry Christensen

Thanks, everyone, for your efforts!
On Friday, June 28th, members of AAF and AGFD met with ranch manager Erik Swanson to discuss possible future projects on the Cross Mountain Ranch. At 10:30 a.m. we gathered at the Jolly Rd. / I-40 off ramp, midway between Seligman and Kingman where we had a tailgate meeting to outline our plan for the day.

Cross Mountain Ranch encompasses 36 sections and is used primarily for raising cattle. Erik laid out plans for the future of the ranch that includes Juniper removal to open up more grassland for grazing and wildlife habitat improvement. Also, for approximately 20+ miles of existing fence consisting of 36” wire mesh, aka Sheep fence, topped with two strands of barbed wire—the plan is to have AAF remove various sections of the fence to promote connectivity for Pronghorn and other wildlife. AAF will plan on doing two work projects a year for the next 5 years beginning in 2020 in the months of April/September removing or modifying fences.

After the roadside meeting we began our tour of the ranch. The first two stops were to locate and inspect camp sites for our basecamp. Both sites are north of I-40 and offer easy access among the Junipers. As we moved farther north into the ranch we checked out fence lines and the general landscape.

Next we stopped at two separate wells that are currently not being used. Erik explained that both wells had very good water production in the past with one at a depth of 900’. Next to the wells are large storage tanks connected to water troughs; the existing pump jacks were installed in the 1950s and although very interesting, they are no longer functioning. The discussion turned to the feasibility of reactivating the wells most likely with solar powered (Continued on page 7)
pumps. Pronghorn require a water source within one mile of fawning grounds thus the importance of reliable water nearby.

The ranch is checker boarded with some other land owners. We stopped at one spot where the land owners had built an enclosure fence around their property to create a preserve of some type. Apparently they don’t want terrestrial wildlife on their land. What was interesting to observe is the grazed land on the Cross Mountain Ranch side had a healthy grassland appearance, while the “preserve” side was reverting to a scrubby, woody type of flora.

The field trip was informative and successful in that AAF and AGFD gained a good perspective on what is needed to provide suitable habitat for pronghorn and other species in the area. As we left the ranch, just before reaching I-40, a group of eight pronghorn gracefully ran across our path as if to say either “get out of here” or more likely “thanks for looking out for us.”

AAF thanks the Cross Mountain Ranch, Erik Swanson, and AGFD for an outstanding field trip. Also in attendance were Kingman Region 3 AGFD personnel: Erin Butler, Terrestrial Wildlife Program Manager, Wade Zarlingo, Landowner Program Specialist, and Elizabeth Johnston, Habitat Evaluation and Lands Specialist. AAF representatives were Glen Dickens, VP/Grants/Projects Manager, past President and founding member Jim McCasland, AAF resident photographer Betty Dickens, and yours truly.
A third fence project was completed by 73 volunteers east and west of the Rudd Knoll campsite near Big Lake on June 8th in Game Management Unit 1. We modified 4 miles of existing four strand fence in three separate work parties by removing the bottom strand and replacing it with the smooth bottom strand set at 18 inches. Another work party also inspected and repaired three fences surrounding important high elevation shallow reservoirs which will protect quality wetland habitat by excluding cattle during the summer grazing season.

This third project was an integral part of what is known as the Big Lake Pronghorn Initiative lead by the Arizona Game and Fish Department’s Pinetop Region in partnership with the AAF. It began in 2013, with the collaring of eight pronghorn on the 9,000-foot elevation grasslands surrounding the Big Lake summer range. The collars permitted daily monitoring and two full years of pronghorn movement data from summer range, where they fawn and breed to winter range and back again through 2015. The 2 key objectives of the collar data were to determine seasonal habitat use and to identify potential bottlenecks on their 20-30 mile trek from summer range to winter range and back again. The collar data revealed a key corridor utilized by pronghorn to seasonally go from 9,000-foot elevation summer range near Big Lake to 7,000-foot elevation winter range to the north of HWY 260. In this narrow corridor area, pronghorn must traverse forested areas, cross the Little Colorado River, and cross a highway to continue to winter range to the north and again repeat the pattern in reverse in the spring.

This was the third of five planned annual prioritized volunteer summer fence modification projects that will be used to remove obstacles in the migration corridor and modify key fences on the Big Lake plains for summering pronghorn. All activities and coordination were supervised by District Wildlife Manager Jason Capps and yours truly.

Meals fit for a king and/or queen were provided on Friday and Saturday nights and Saturday and Sunday mornings by Bill and Mary Keebler. Mary’s secret brisket recipe topped off with Bill’s homemade sauce were a Saturday night highlight! Project photos were taken by Betty Dickens, thanks Betty!

Thanks also go out to several groups of folks and the many individuals who contributed to the success of this project;
-Representing the AAF Board: Ken Meadors, Brian George, Joe Bill Pickrell, Dave Laird, Connie Taylor, Al Sue, Gary Boyer, Robert Velasco and Dave Cagle.
-Representing the AGFD: Dave Cagle, Roger Thompson, Jason Capps, and Troy Christensen
-Representing Apache Sitgreaves Forest: Forest Supervisor Steve Best; Biologists Valerie Horncastle and Mandy Scott.
Project highlights: increasing the mobility of pronghorn by modifying four miles of fence AND witnessing the birth of a pronghorn fawn right outside our camp on Saturday evening! The little guy was up and running around mother within two minutes after birth. PLUS, the page 10 article continues with an AAF volunteer enlisting two new volunteers on this mission.

Thank you everyone!

Photos by Betty Dickens
I picked up my two younger grandkids, Wes 10 years old, and Ally 6 ½ years old in Tolleson, west of Phoenix on Wednesday June 5th and headed to the White Mountains. It takes about 5 hours to get to the White Mountains from Tolleson. That’s a long way for youngsters. Ally made the best of it.

We set up camp looking out on a huge meadow with forest just behind us. I’m old fashioned, I like a tent. My tent is a 12’ X 12’ Cabela’s Alanak tent that I’ve had for over 30 years. We sleep on cots with cushions under our sleeping bags. It’s warmer that way and no creepy/crawlers get in your sleeping bag. I have an oversize sleeping bag because I hate to feel trapped in my sleeping bag at night. Mine is rated for 15 degrees below zero. I’ve had it below 10 degrees and was plenty warm. The kids ended up sleeping in my sleeping bag and I slept in a spare I brought along. It did get cool at night, with the lows in the mid-30’s, but most nights we were snug as a bug in a rug.

Wednesday night after setting up camp, dinner at Molly Butler’s in Greer, it’s always good!

This was a combo trip. The kids and I camped out east of Big Lake, Wednesday to Sunday afternoon. This was Ally’s first camping trip and she did remarkably well. She did get half way out of her sleeping bag Thursday night and got cold and had to go to the bathroom at 2:00 AM, but we got past that and there were no more late night or early morning pee breaks. Thank God!

We fished Big Lake Thursday and Friday, but the fish weren’t biting for us. The kids never got bored, they kept fishing. Ally did say several times, “We haven’t caught a single fish.” She would ask Wes, “have you caught anything?” even though we were in the same boat. It was kind of funny.

We ate good! On Thursday night we had steak and baked beans. On Friday night Bill and Mary of the Antelope Foundation made pulled pork, salad, and potatoes. Saturday night, Bill and Mary made beef brisket, beans, salad, and dessert.

On Saturday, we assisted Game and Fish and the Arizona Antelope Foundation with an antelope habitat improvement project. We modified barbwire fences by removing the lowest strand of barbed wire and putting a strand of smooth wire as the lowest strand, making sure it was 18 inches above the ground. Antelope are funny animals, they will go under a fence, but very seldom will
jump over it. Raising the bottom wire to 18” and using a smooth wire allows the antelope to go under the fence without injury, thus allowing them to migrate and improve the gene pool.

There were about 75 volunteers helping with the project. It’s a good group! Nobody complains, everybody works and has a good time. The kids cut wire and held it in place as I fastened the new smooth wire to the posts. We put in a dead-man using large rocks with wire attached to the fence to hold the fence down in the low spots. The kids helped a lot for about three hours and 1 ¼ miles. About 1 ¼ miles in, the kids found a low area containing about a foot of water, it was too much too resist. They played in the water, throwing a hat filled with water at each other until lunch-time. After lunch, they of course were wet and the wind came up so we headed back to the truck and camp where they changed into dry clothes.

The Antelope Foundation is a good group of people from diverse backgrounds, everyone gets along. We sit around a big campfire in the evening, drink a beer or two, and tell hunting and fishing lies, I mean stories. In the several years I’ve been participating, I’ve never heard a cross word.

It was very interesting Saturday evening...it’s antelope birthing time. Our camp sits adjacent to a meadow that’s probably 2 miles across. An antelope doe was walking back and forth about ¾ mile away and suddenly stopped and dropped (birthed a fawn). One minute there was one antelope and the next two. The kids got a chance to see the doe and fawn within minutes of the fawn being born. It was neat!

Sunday morning on Crescent Lake, our luck changed. Ally caught her first fish! A few minutes later Wes caught one, then Ally caught another.

Wes had a good learning experience that morning. He routinely forgot his wallet, containing his hunting/fishing license. I had a copy in my wallet so I wasn’t worried if we were checked by Game and Fish Officers. Wes had repeatedly said we never get checked anyway, so why carry it. That morning I made sure he had it and sure enough, when we were loading the boat after fishing, a Game and Fish Officer checked our licenses. She was very personable and gave the kids coloring books. After that, Wes had his license.

We packed up and headed to Greer to meet Toni. I had to make a round-trip to Phoenix on Monday and take care of some Mom-care business, so no fishing on Monday. We fished the Greer lakes, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday morning, primarily River Reservoir and caught several more fish. Ally caught the most. We no longer call a brass colored Z-Ray a Z-Ray. It’s now called the Ally lure. That’s what she caught all of her fish with and I caught several Tuesday morning with it. I got up earlier than the kids wanted to, and fished by myself for a couple hours and caught four fish with the Ally lure.

We went to Molly Butler’s on Wednesday to celebrate Toni’s birthday. They still have the best prime rib in the State.

We left on Thursday morning. Toni for Sierra Vista, and me to Phoenix to drop the kids off and visit with Mom and her nurse on Friday morning. One thing about those kids; they’re not fussy about where they eat on the road as long as it’s Taco Bell.

It was a very good trip!
Captive Breeding
Cabeza Pen

The pronghorn are being observed on a regular basis during scoping and appear to be doing well. The injured buck in north herd whose condition was deteriorating was found dead on April 15. Observation time increased this month to keep track of fawning. There are 27 or 28 fawns in south herd, and 16 in north herd. We believe all the does have given birth. An approximately 1-week old fawn was found dead in south herd on April 14, cause unknown. The pronghorn have started eating more alfalfa as the pen is drying out. Several of the older fawns are starting to eat alfalfa. In addition to increased time spent observing, other tasks have included weed removal along the electric fences, checking predator camera cards frequently, stocking alfalfa, repairing the electric fences, investigating all vultures seen on the ground or flying low over the pen, and other normal daily tasks.

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Kofa Pen

As the fawns in Kofa pen are getting older, they are becoming more active and easier to observe. We have observed 18 fawns in Kofa pen, and believe all the does have given birth. The two fawns from the doe that died on April 4th, appear to have been “adopted” by other females and are now starting to eat alfalfa. The pen is drying out, and alfalfa consumption has increased.

One of our Kofa technicians left for 5 months of military training, and the other technician has been on restricted duty for part of the month. She was able to work at the Cabeza pen observing pronghorn since there are hills there as opposed to a tower for observation points. The technicians from Cabeza have taken turns helping out at Kofa, as has the USFWS intern.
Because we were unable to do a release from the pen this year, there were excess bucks in the Kofa pen. They were observed frequently chasing the does and causing potential problems in the pen. We lured them with alfalfa into the release section of the Kofa pen, and then passively release them to the wild. Although this meant we were unable to put collars or other markings on them, we felt it was better for the does and fawns in the pen to get them out of the pen. We were able to catch and release 5 adult bucks, and one yearling. Initially several of these bucks stayed near the pen, and appeared to be trying to get back into the pen, sometimes getting caught between the electric fences, and pacing around the pen. There are several wild bucks in the vicinity of the pen, and the newly released buck were observed with these bucks on several occasions. We put alfalfa out for them away from the pen in an attempt to lure them further away. One of these released buck was found dead near the pen 12 days after being released. Cause is unknown, but he was one of the ones repeatedly pacing the pen. The remaining 5 newly released ones have not been seen near the pen for the last few days.

**Wild Pronghorn Cabeza/ORPI/BMGR Herd:** The pronghorn continue to use the same general areas. A 10-year old doe, released in 2010, was heard on mortality on the last telemetry flight in the northern Childs Valley, but has not been investigated yet. Five fawns were seen on the last flight. We have been training a technician on aerial telemetry, and this takes more time, so not all the pronghorn were located.

**Wild Pronghorn Kofa Herd:** The pronghorn continue to use the same general areas. Eight fawns were seen on the last flight, but several animals were not located due to time constraints.

**Wild Pronghorn BMGR East of Highway 85 Herd:** Nearly all the pronghorn were located on the last telemetry flight. They continue to use the same general areas north and south of the Sauceda Mountains. Thirteen fawns were seen on the flight. The range is still in good condition. One 5-year old doe, released in 2015, was on mortality detected during the flight. It is likely she had been dead for several months, and nothing was found to indicate a cause when it was investigated.

**Water Projects:** Nothing new to report.

**Forage Enhancements:** Nothing new to report.

*Written April 30, 2019*
The fourth annual AAF Fundraising and Recognition Banquet was celebrated in Tempe, AZ on June 22nd.

We were packed with a full house, which generated an exciting buzz! This was the year with buckets of rifles and handguns and live auction of libations...attendees had 33 raffle items, 13 silent auction items, and 14 live auction items which included an autographed item from Ted Nugent to choose and enthusiastically bid on.

The Arizona Game and Fish Commissioners Pronghorn tag auction turned out to be a bargain this year with the successful bidder winning the tag for just $15,000. Back by popular demand was a weekend Southeast Arizona Wine Adventure and a Lake Mead Striper fishing trip, plus we added six sport fishing trips from Newport Beach and San Diego! To spice things up we auctioned off 5 bottles of liquor that included a beautiful decanter and 2 glass set with a pewter antelope emblem. The winners of those items were entered into a raffle for a Taurus 1911. Donors went all out on behalf of the antelope, and we thank them again:

**A Very Special Thank You to the Banquet Donors!**

We would like to acknowledge those who helped make this annual event a memorable gathering as well as something to look forward to and mark on the calendar for next year:


Your support makes moments like these a reality—above a table full of winners! To the right, AAF Life Member #79, Larry Thowe.
## HUNTER AWARDS

### 2018 Arizona Antelope Foundation Certificates

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### 2018 AWF TROPHY BOOK AWARDS

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## AZ BIG GAME AWARDS

### MARK SIPES

**ARIZONA TROPHY HEADS AND HОРNS**

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### STEVE HOPKINS

**ARIZONA TROPHY HUNTER**

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GEORGE GARCIA AND FAMILY — AWF AWARD WINNER

JEFFERY FLANDERS — AWF BLACK BEAR

ERIK SWANSON — AAF CERTIFICATE

BRADY THOMPSON — AAF CERTIFICATE

BETH ANN DAVIS
Membership

1. Art Pearce, Phoenix
2. Jim Mehen, Flagstaff
3. Larry D. Adams, Bullhead City
4. James K. McCasland,
5. Nina Gammons, Payette, ID
6. Nancy Lewis, Phoenix
7. Pete Cimellaro, Phoenix
8. Jerry Weiers, Phoenix
9. Harry Carlson, Phoenix
10. David Brown, Phoenix
11. Art Boswell, Tucson
12. Charlie Kelly, Scottsdale
13. Chrissy Weiers, Phoenix
14. Al Sue, Scottsdale
15. Mary Keebler, Happy Jack
16. Bill Keebler, Happy Jack
17. James Stewart, Phoenix
18. Terry Schupp, Tempe
19. Dale Hislop, Calgary Canada
20. Mick Rusing, Tucson
21. George Welsh, Kingman
22. Matthew Massey, Gilbert
23. Don Parks, Peoria
24. Bill & Kerrie Jacoby, Chandler
25. Adam Geottl, Cottonwood
26. Shane Stewart, Gilbert
27. Don Davidson, Mesa
28. Terry Petko, Mesa
29. Gary M. Johnson, Phoenix
30. Richard Guenzel, Laramie WY
31. Randy Cherington, Scottsdale
32. Joe Del Re, Chandler
33. Bob Walker, Phoenix
34. Cookie Nicolson, Williams
35. Tim Blank, Mesa
36. Jodi Stewart, Gilbert
37. Keith Joyner, Scottsdale
38. David Hussey, Cave Creek
39. Susan Pearce, Tucson
40. Glen Dickens, Tucson
41. Will Garrison, Peoria
42. Tom Waddell, Arizona
43. Josiah Austin, Pearce
44. Connie Taylor, Mesa
45. Mark Boswell, Mesa
46. Jessica R. Pearce, Scottsdale
47. Douglas Hartzler, Phoenix
48. Karen LaFrance, Phoenix
49. Kurt Schulz, Waddell
50. Walt Scrimgeour
51. Clifford Nystrom
52. Jon Coppa, Patagonia
53. Neal Brown, Phoenix
54. Tice Supplee, Phoenix
55. Richard Miller, Flagstaff
56. William Cullins, Chandler
57. Robert Neal Bushong, Yuma
58. Art & Rosanne Porter
59. Matt McNeil, Chandler
60. Susan Morse, Jericho VT
61. Gary Highy, Cottonwood
62. James Kavanaugh, Gilbert
63. Chad Elliott, Ehrenberg
64. Donald C. Slack, Tucson
65. Keith A. Heimes, Bellemont
66. Jon & Jan Hopkins, Mesa
67. Jim Lawrence, Phoenix
68. Larry Audsley, Tucson
69. Mike Morales, Tucson
70. Gary Boyer, Prescott
71. Charles Mackey, Cottonwood
72. Dave Laird, Buckeye
73. Alan Calvert, Buckeye
74. Lani Beach, Prescott
75. Terry Lane, Jasper Lehi, UT
76. Robin Bechtel, Show Low, Arizona
77. Billie Bechtel, Show Low, Arizona
78. Betty Dickens, Tucson
79. Larry Thowe, Page
80. Cam Smith, Prescott
81. Russell Lee Jacoby, Flagstaff
82. Andrew Smigielski, Phoenix

Welcome to new members

J. D. Greenberg, Prescott
Gerald Allen Keller, Chandler
James Scott Lewis, Mead
Steven McNamara, Chino Valley
Rodney Herman Mindrup, Mesa
Bill Orman, Tuba City

Korley Sears, Tucson
Dan Zellner, Camp Verde

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Help us reward the past and celebrate the present, plus invest in the future — you’re invited to support the pronghorn along with the AAF whose volunteers and groundwork make it possible for the species to begin to thrive in Arizona...there are so many people and organizations working together to accomplish this. For information about being a donor, contact info@azantelope.org.

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