



Year in Review 2015

"The mission of the Arizona Elk Society is to benefit elk and other wildlife by generating resources for habitat conservation and restoration, and to preserve our hunting heritage for present and future generations."

HABITAT PROJECTS

**funded 350K
in elk habitat
projects improving
250K+ acres**

- In early 2015, the Arizona Elk Society, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), US Forest Service (USFS), area ranchers and other organizations came together to fund habitat projects for elk in Arizona. The focus this year included wildlife water projects, large-scale grassland restoration, juniper and forest thinning, controlled burns and riparian fencing.
- In total, we funded \$350,000 in elk habitat projects. Money for this program was raised through the AES Annual Banquet, auction and raffle of the Commissioners Big Game Elk Tags and coordinated through the AZGFD Habitat Partnership Committee.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

**hosted 650+
Arizona youth at
outdoor skills &
hunt camps**

- Throughout the year the AES holds many youth Outdoor Skills camps to educate the kids. These camps teach them about archery, survival, wildlife identification, fishing, and much more. The Arizona Elk Society continues to educate youth about wildlife conservation and strive to instill a sense of responsibility in them to continue to care for our forests and wildlife habitat which is vital for Arizona's elk's future.
- We have actively recruited young hunters at our various elk, turkey, javelina, small game and predator camps. Camps included hunting seminars, expert mentors and volunteers assisting in the field and with camp logistics. The AES is assisted with partnerships from many of Arizona's wildlife organizations, sponsors and volunteers.

WATER FOR WILDLIFE PROGRAM

**hauled 50K gallons
of water • restored/
maintained 50+
water catchments**

- Rains all year long in have helped with water in most dirt tanks and water catchments. The AES only needed to haul 50,000 gallons of water.
- With money from the AES Banquet and the AZGFD Habitat Partnership Program, we continued our Water for Wildlife Program. The AES Catchment Repair Squad, led by Dan Bradford, restored and maintained over 50 wildlife water catchments in Northern Arizona.
- Started a large restoration project of 72 water catchments in Units 22 & 23 in the Tonto National Forest. In August the Repair Squad finished phase I with 25 of the 72 catchments restored to working condition.
- In Unit 7, the Arizona Elk Society hired a contractor to continue cleaning silt out of dirt tanks. To date we have completed 7 tanks and have added over 5 million gallons of new water capacity to the area.

REPRESENTING MEMBERS AND SPORTSMEN OF ARIZONA

- Throughout the year, the AES represents sportsmen and our members on many issues related to wildlife habitat, forest health, access issues, threats to hunting, elk management, wolf reintroductions, USFS travel management, forest use planning, natural resource uses and much more.
- AES representatives serve on committees for many of the issues that we are involved in to keep wildlife, habitat and our hunting heritage protected for future generations.

VOLUNTEER PROJECTS

AES coordinates large-scale projects with USFS, AZGFD and 250+ volunteers



- AES volunteers continued our riparian meadow restoration in Coconino National Forest: creek channel restoration, removing encroaching pine trees in meadows, fence removal and enclosure maintenance. Volunteers removed 4 miles of barbed wire, built log fences to protect critical wildlife habitat, maintained important enclosures and stacked logs from thousands of trees cut by the AES Sawyer Crew.
- In Kaibab National forest, volunteers cleared 200+ acres of invasive juniper & jack pines, by hand, for grassland restorations.
- In Tonto National Forest volunteers restored many water catchments, plumbing, installed new troughs, thinned back brush and fixed fences.
- 250+ volunteers spent thousands of hours performing the labor to accomplish these projects. The value of these volunteer hours is not only the benefit to the wildlife and their habitat, but our hours are used as match for federal dollars that come back to the state for habitat improvements. This year's value of the AES volunteers will be over \$100,000 to Arizona.

ARIZONA ELK SOCIETY ANNUAL BANQUETS

- The 14th Annual Banquet at the Mesa Convention Center was another sellout. We welcomed many new Corporate tables and attendees. Banquet Chairwoman Jen Godbehere led over 70 volunteers who helped make the night a great success. We raised over \$401,000 for elk and elk habitat. The 2016 banquet is scheduled for March 19. Mark Your Calendars!
- Jim and Chris Warren of the White Mountain Chapter, along with a great committee, held their 2nd Annual Banquet in Show Low, Arizona. They raised over \$15,000 for Arizona's Elk. The money will be used in the immediate area to help improve elk habitat and fund youth hunting camps along with conservation education. The 2016 Banquet is scheduled for June 25. You don't want to miss it!

ARIZONA ELK SOCIETY HUNTS FOR HEROES

In August, the AES started a wounded warrior Arizona hunt program. With help from outfitters, guides and volunteers we've taken many Arizona Disabled Veterans on elk hunts to fulfill their dreams and allow them to "Heal through Hunting". The comments we've received from the warriors are very rewarding – the changes we see in these men after they spend time with the guides and volunteers is priceless. Many of the pictures and letters are on our website, www.arizonaelksociety.org/2016/hunts-for-heroes. Dave Holbrook, longtime volunteer and donor to the AES is the Hunts for Heroes Program Director and has been a godsend in helping us get this program off the ground. Helping wounded warriors has been a passion of Dave's for many years.



Visit www.arizonaelksociety.org to learn more, volunteer, donate.

"Like" us at www.facebook.com/arizonaelksociety

Arizona Elk Society's Vision

"Arizona Elk Society is the premier organization for supporting habitat restoration for elk and wildlife."

GET INVOLVED - The Arizona Elk Society is looking for new volunteers to get involved in our projects and programs for wildlife and to help at youth camps and events. Go to www.arizonaelksociety.org/get-involved.

JOIN THE AES – Membership is the life blood of the Arizona Elk Society, if you like what we do for Arizona's Elk and Youth please JOIN. Visit www.arizonaelksociety.org.

DONATE – The Arizona Elk Society is a 501c3. If you would like to donate to the AES or any of our programs please visit our website. Go to www.arizonaelksociety.org/donate.