

THE ARKANSAS GAME AND FISH FOUNDATION

UNPLUGGED & ENGAGED

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



MEET THE STAFF



DEKE WHITBECK
President

Deke and his family have deep roots in Arkansas. Born and raised in Little Rock, Deke graduated from the University of Arkansas with a finance degree. He is an avid sportsman and has a passion for conservation and its impact on Arkansas. Deke stepped into the role of President of the Foundation in November 2016 and implemented various new programs and events across the state supporting the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Deke and his wife, Sarah, have two beautiful daughters, Cate and Charley, and love spending time with the girls exploring Arkansas's outdoors.

Deke@agff.org



RUTH-KATHRYN KELLY
Director of Operations

Ruth-Kathryn Kelly, a native of West Memphis, joined the Foundation in 2016. As Director of Operations, she helps oversee the organization's daily business activities, specializing in data management and bookkeeping. She holds a degree in public relations from the University of Alabama. Her passion is helping facilitate and assist in the mission of both the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission as well as the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation. She resides in Conway with her husband, Bobby M. Kelly III and her two daughters.

Rkkelly@agff.org



TYLER LAWRENCE
Director of Events

Tyler was born and raised in Arkansas, growing up on the banks of the Little Red River near Pangburn. He holds a business administration degree from the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. Prior to joining AGFF, Tyler served as Regional Director for the National Wild Turkey Federation and has been involved with nonprofit conservation organizations throughout his career. Under Tyler's leadership, the Foundation has expanded fundraising events across the state. Tyler is a lifelong hunter and angler, passing on those passions to his two sons, Pierce and Beau. Tyler and his wife, Jennifer, live in Greenbrier.

Tyler@agff.org



JIBBIE TUCKER
Business Development

If Jibbie has a choice to be inside or outside, she will always choose outside. She enjoys the beauty of the Natural State and finds an excuse to be in it as much as possible. She was born and raised in Little Rock. She joined the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation in May 2022 to launch the new corporate partnership program and leads business development for the Foundation. Jibbie has two children, Breck and Presley. She is extremely proud of her kids and loves to share the appreciation of Arkansas's gorgeous landscape with them.

Jibbie@agff.org



MATT BAKER
Special Projects Coordinator

Matt is an Arkansas native who can often be found outdoors enjoying all the state has to offer. Raised in Greenbrier, he developed a love for hunting and fishing early on. He earned two bachelor's degrees in accounting and psychology from the University of Central Arkansas. Previously a business development officer in the banking industry, Matt built new connections and supported business growth. In his role, Matt provides assistance on various special projects for the Foundation. He lives in Conway with his wife, Caroline, and their two dogs.

Matt@agff.org

OUR PURPOSE

Established in 1982, the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation is a non-profit organization **committed to supporting the mission of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission**. The Foundation works with AGFC to ensure the future of quality hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities across Arkansas.

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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| SUPPORT IN ACTION

IMPROVING PUBLIC ACCESS:

A Collaborative Effort on NWA Rivers

The Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation is proud to partner with the **Arkansas Game and Fish Commission on the Northwest Arkansas River Access Projects**, a transformative initiative made possible by a generous grant of up to \$783,000 from the **Walton Family Foundation**. This vital program focuses on achieving significant improvements in public access and restoring critical river ecosystems at four key sites across Northwest Arkansas.

At the War Eagle River, two important projects are underway. An existing AGFC walk-in access is being converted into a float-in camp with the design and construction of five camping platforms and a waterless

restroom facility. Additionally, at the new Lewis Access, a waterless restroom facility and cattle exclusion fencing are being designed and constructed to secure parking and access areas.

The Illinois River will see design for channel and streambank restoration, alongside sustainable access renovations and upgrades. These improvements will include enhancements to the entrance road, parking, bathrooms, and boat launch, making the site more inviting and accessible for all users.

On the White River, specifically at Magness Access, a significant construction piece has been completed. This involved building 160 feet of large, stacked rock streambank stabilization and erosion control, along with site drainage and fish habitat improvements, while making the riverbank accessible for people along the entire reach of the property

These projects are about more than just access; they are about equity in outdoor recreation. By improving bank fishing opportunities, we are ensuring that all Arkansans, regardless of whether they own a boat, can enjoy our state's exceptional fisheries. The amenity improvements, such as restrooms and enhanced parking, are also a major win, making these sites more attractive and enjoyable for the public to utilize for a full day of recreation. A critical aspect of all these initiatives, underlying the visible amenities and activities, is the essential work of restoring and stabilizing riverbanks, which is crucial for the long-term health of these vital waterways.



“Our partnership with the **Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation** is vital. It leverages funds to improve river access infrastructure and amenities with better conservation best management practices to restore habitats statewide. This ensures all Arkansans can experience our incredible rivers for years to come.”

DARRELL BOWMAN,
Recreation and Access
Coordinator for AGFC

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION:

A New Chapter for Wildlife Habitat at Fred Berry Nature Center

A pivotal initiative of the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Arkansas Wildlife Federation, Quail Forever, and adjoining landowners, is the comprehensive habitat restoration project at the Fred Berry Crooked Creek Nature Center in Marion County. This vital program is part of an 1,800-acre rehabilitation footprint, with a focused effort on the 421-acre Nature Center itself.

The Fred Berry Crooked Creek Nature Center has a rich history as a hub for conservation and environmental education. The Foundation owns the property, which was generously donated by retired Yellville-Summit schoolteacher and counselor, Fred Berry. Doors to the center opened in 2005, establishing it as a place to provide outdoor educational opportunities and showcase sustainable land management practices. This ongoing project builds upon that legacy, striving to restore native ecosystem function and create exceptional wildlife habitat.

Our collaborative efforts at the Fred Berry Crooked



**Fred Berry
Conservation Education
Center on Crooked Creek**

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation

Creek Nature Center are transforming non-native pasture grasses back into thriving native grasslands and enhancing woodland habitats through the strategic use of prescribed fire. Our \$10,000 contribution, matched by the adjacent landowner, was crucial in allowing us to extend our funding. This will significantly benefit the habitat by adding approximately 120 acres of Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) directly next to the property. TSI helps create healthier, more productive forests by improving tree vigor and species composition. This restoration also involves the careful application of herbicides to remove invasive species, followed by prescribed burns and the replanting of diverse native grass-forb seed mixtures. This holistic approach will yield significant benefits, including improved open woodland conditions critical for bat summer roosting, potential maternity sites, and increased foraging opportunities. Furthermore, the project will restore and enhance essential grassland and woodland habitats for various migratory bird species. Pollinators, including at-risk species, will flourish with the promotion of native flowering forbs, providing crucial host plants and enriched foraging resources. This partnership exemplifies our commitment to preserving and enhancing Arkansas's natural heritage for generations to come.



“ Foundation support allowed us to extend vital habitat work and funding directly to adjacent landowners. This significantly increased our impact, showcasing how partnerships are essential for dramatically expanding habitat efforts on the ground.”

GARRICK DUGGER,
Chief of Private Lands
Division at AGFC

ARKANSAS LAUNCHES NEW LEGACY LUNKER PROGRAM:

Celebrating Anglers, Boosting Fisheries

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission recently announced the launch of the Arkansas Legacy Lunker program, a new initiative designed to recognize the achievements of the state’s bass anglers while supporting critical research, education, angling, and tourism goals. **This exciting program also features an annual boat giveaway, with a brand new bass boat provided by Xpress Boats.**

The Legacy Lunker program draws inspiration from successful models like Texas’s ShareLunker and Florida’s TrophyCatch, adapting their best elements to Arkansas’s rich and diverse fisheries. It aims to certify and reward anglers who catch trophy-sized largemouth bass.

A unique and vital aspect of the program allows for the voluntary donation

of the largest trophy bass, fish over 10 pounds, caught between January 1st and March 30th, to the AGFC. These large female fish are transported to the Joe Hogan State Fish Hatchery, where they are carefully paired with males of select genetics and spawned. The resulting high-quality offspring, nicknamed “Razorbass”, are then stocked strategically throughout Arkansas waters, enhancing the state’s bass populations with fast-growing, catchable fish. This innovative approach modernizes the message of stocking, focusing on genetic improvement and growth rather than simply increasing abundance.

Every angler who certifies a fish in the Legacy Lunker program will receive a special Catch Kit and be entered into the Annual Boat Giveaway. The Catch Kit includes branded items and discounts from partners, while entries into the boat giveaway are earned through participation, certified catches, and especially by donating fish for spawning. The grand prize winner of the Xpress bass boat will be drawn at the annual Recognition Banquet, a red-carpet event held in the fall celebrating angler accomplishments and generosity.

The program also includes a “Waterbody Hall of Fame” to honor and showcase the first certified trophy fish from every fishery in Arkansas, creating an interactive online map to detail entries and highlight untapped waters. This information will help anglers that want to focus their fishing efforts on the lakes in Arkansas that have the best history for producing trophy bass.

Through these efforts, the Arkansas Legacy Lunker program seeks to celebrate anglers, collect valuable data, promote bass fishing and education, and ultimately improve angler satisfaction while boosting Arkansas’s standing as a premier bass fishing destination.

Sponsorship opportunities for this program are available by contacting the Foundation office.



2024 ARKANSAS GAME AND FISH FOUNDATION BY THE NUMBERS



\$7 RAISED
FOR EVERY
DOLLAR SPENT

44

YEARS

SUPPORTING AGFC

MORE THAN

\$1 Million
Raised at Foundation Events



MORE THAN

\$1.5 MILLION
generated for conservation and
education through the
IMPACT FUND



2024 AGFF CONDENSED FINANCIAL REPORT

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Cash	\$3,340,093
Endowments	\$5,893,030
Investments	\$1,671,289
Other Assets	\$694,058
Land	\$2,592,148
Other Fixed Assets	\$311,627
TOTAL ASSETS	\$14,500,000

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY

REVENUE

Support for Core Initiatives	\$848,158
Corporate Partnerships	\$317,756
General Donations	\$318,538
Capital Campaigns	\$603,500
Events	\$1,187,367
Sponsorships/Advertising	\$496,054

TOTAL SUPPORT	\$3,771,373
Investment/Other Income	\$834,890

TOTAL REVENUE **\$4,606,263**

EXPENSES

Support Services	\$681,282
Mission Program and Grants	\$1,368,242
Fundraising and Outreach	\$657,689
Other Expenditures	\$55,238

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$2,762,451**

REINVESTMENT TO MISSION **\$1,843,812**

GET IT FOR GAME WARDENS: AN OVERVIEW

Supporting Arkansas's Game Wardens with Essential Equipment and Resources

Get It For Game Wardens is committed to raising funds to enhance the capabilities of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Enforcement Division. Established in 2021, the program focuses on identifying and securing specialized equipment and tools to ensure AGFC Game Wardens can carry out their duties safely and effectively. **The program has garnered support from various organizations and individuals, raising more than \$500,000 since inception to purchase multiple E-bikes, medical backpacks, drones, thermal binoculars, boats, kayaks, K9 units and more!**

BECOME A BACKER

Established in 2024, the Backer Membership Program brings together community leaders and businesses from across every AGFC Enforcement District to support the mission of Get It For Game Wardens. Backers play a crucial role in providing the funding needed to enhance the capabilities of AGFC Game Wardens.

Join as a Backer today and receive exclusive items to proudly show your support for our Game Wardens!

Member Benefits

- Limited Edition Backer Decal
 - Backer Logo Ice Chest and Hat
 - Recognition in the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation Annual Report
- Annual dues: \$1,000**

Learn More: www.getitforgamewardens.com

BOOSTING TRAINING

Attorney General Tim Griffin donates \$250,000 to enhance law enforcement facilities and leadership

Thanks to a \$250,000 donation from Attorney General Tim Griffin's office, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's H.C. "Red" Morris Enforcement Training Center will receive critical upgrades to its dining and training facilities. The center houses cadets during their 18-week training and often accommodates 50 to 100 people at a time, highlighting the need for expanded space.

"These improvements will help us fully utilize the facility's potential," said Maj. Brian Aston.

A portion of the funds will also support leadership training for all AGFC game warden lieutenants through the FBI Supervisor Leadership Institute. The donation aligns with the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation's Get It for Game Wardens initiative, launched in 2021 to provide essential tools and training.

"This generous support strengthens law enforcement across Arkansas," said AGFC Director Doug Schoenrock. "It's an investment that benefits future generations."

Arkansas Attorney General Tim Griffin speaking at the AGFC Enforcement Training Center in Mayflower.



ARKANSAS OUTDOOR SOCIETY

Fostering Community and Conservation through Hunting, Fishing and Outdoor Activities

The Arkansas Outdoor Society (AOS), an initiative of the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation, is a growing network of outdoor enthusiasts united by a shared passion for conservation and Arkansas's wild places. Through member-driven programming, AOS offers exclusive access to guided hunts, fishing excursions, service projects, and educational events that deepen engagement with the outdoors.

With active chapters in Central and Northwest Arkansas, AOS connects individuals—whether lifelong outdoorsmen or newcomers—through experiences that inspire stewardship and community. Membership dues support conservation-focused programming while fostering a new generation of advocates for Arkansas's natural resources.

In 2025, AOS continued to expand its reach and impact, offering members unique opportunities to explore, learn, and give back—all while strengthening the Foundation's mission to preserve Arkansas's rich outdoor heritage for future generations. Join AOS today at agff.org.



EVENTS IN THE NATURAL STATE

Events held by the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation are attended by over 6,000 donors each year, raising more than \$1.27 million to support the AGFC. There's something for everyone across the state, including fundraising banquets, golf tournaments, trap tournaments and more.



CENTRAL ARKANSAS

JAN Big Buck Classic - Little Rock
Fishing, archery & more with the Foundation

MAR Night of Conservation - Mt. Ida
Support Game Wardens at Mtn. Harbor Resort

APR Mallards for Marion Trap Shoot
Sponsor a youth trap team in Jacksonville

APR Commissioners' Cup - Lake Hamilton
Arkansas's premier youth fishing tournament

JUN Tin Cup Golf Tournament - Pine Bluff
Tee off with the Foundation in Pine Bluff

AUG Outdoor Hall of Fame Banquet - Little Rock
Signature fundraiser recognizing champions of conservation across Arkansas

DEC Duck Season Social - Little Rock
Roundtable about duck hunting in Arkansas

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

MAY Into the Wild - Springdale
Fundraising banquet with wild game dinner

OCT Night of Conservation - Gravette
Exclusive dinner and discussion at Legacy Ranch

NORTH ARKANSAS

APR Night of Conservation - Mtn. Home
Celebrating conservation in North Arkansas

NORTHEAST ARKANSAS

SEP Jonesboro Golf Tournament
Tee off with the Foundation in Jonesboro

SOUTH ARKANSAS

SEP South AR Outdoor Social - Magnolia
Celebrating conservation in South Arkansas

DEC River Ranch Mentored Hunt - Nashville
Youth hunt with Arkansas Game Wardens

ONLINE EVENTS

JUL Independence Day Giveaway
Renew AGFF membership for a chance to win

DEC 12 Guns of Christmas Membership
Purchase a membership or become a sponsor

SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES

Interested in utilizing your annual budget to sponsor multiple events throughout the year? Contact us today to select a sponsorship level for the events of your choice - make one payment and secure your spots for the entire year!

- Sponsor tables at select events
- Traveling banner to select events
- Sponsor recognition at select events
- Recognition on AGFF website
- Team spot for golf tournaments

For more information contact Tyler Lawrence, Director of Events, tyler@agff.org



CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

The Foundation's Corporate Partnership Program is designed to showcase select companies that are dedicating resources to advance key conservation and education efforts throughout the state.

Each partner receives a tailored sponsorship package that aligns with their budget and marketing goals. From youth shooting sports to fishing education, the program offers a wide variety of AGFC conservation programs and projects for partners to support.

Corporate partners can collaborate with the AGFC on initiatives such as sponsorships, cause-marketing campaigns, and employee engagement projects. These partnerships connect corporations with their stakeholders in meaningful ways through conservation efforts. By leveraging AGFC's brand affinity and popularity, the long-term goal is to sustain outdoor activities for future generations of enthusiasts.

For more information, please contact the Foundation Office agff@agff.org.

FIND AN EVENT NEAR YOU

Check out agff.org/events or scan the QR code to find an event near you. Whether you're interested in attending a banquet with auctions and raffles, a golf or trap tournament, or want to support your local game wardens, we have something for you.

Visit AGFF.ORG/EVENTS for more information.



COMMITTED PARTNERS IN 2025



PLANNED GIVING

PLANNED GIFTS CAN ENCOMPASS:

- Gifts in living wills or trusts
- Legacy endowments
- Gifts of securities
- Beneficiary designations
- Gifts of personal or real estate property
- Retirement plan assets
- Annual fund membership program
- Capital gifts
- Memorials and honorariums
- Gifts in-kind
- Corporate matching gifts

IMPACT FUND

The Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation's Impact Fund is a pivotal initiative aimed at bolstering conservation programs and habitat projects throughout Arkansas. The Impact Fund empowers donors to direct their contributions to specific outdoor areas they are passionate about, including wildlife habitat restoration, enhancing public access and advancing fish and wildlife research projects.

One of the standout features of the Impact Fund is its ability to leverage donations through matching programs, often achieving ratios as high as 3:1. This amplification means each donation can be significantly increased, enabling more comprehensive and effective conservation efforts.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

For Lynne and Tony Reynolds, six decades on earth and nearly four decades of marriage have been made more enjoyable because of time spent in the Arkansas outdoors. So after building careers that allowed them to retire to Bull Shoals in 2022, the duo were inspired to do something to ensure others could also enjoy the states' wild spaces.

"I'd read about or heard about others who had donated money to the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation, and I thought, well, that's kind of cool," Tony said. "We're not rich but we still wanted to do something."

The couple decided to make the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation a beneficiary of their estate, designating money to benefit Greers Ferry fish habitat and the greentree reservoir infrastructure at Henry Gray Hurricane Lake WMA.

"We didn't know it was even an option that you could specify where you wanted the money to go," Lynne said. "That was a big plus, as we wanted the money to stay in Arkansas."

Tony said for anyone who was on the fence about making such a gift, the process could not be easier and can be scaled to any size estate.

"You don't have to be rich to do this," he said. "I always thought this had to be millions of dollars and all that, but that's not the case. Every little bit helps."



The Game and Fish Foundation proudly supports the staff of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Through our collaboration, we aim to enhance resources and recognize their dedication and contributions to conserving and managing our state's natural resources.

Join the
**AGFF Annual
Membership
Program**
Today!



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



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