



2025 Desert Bighorn Council Meeting  
Gold Canyon Golf Resort  
Gold Canyon, Arizona  
April 22-25, 2025



**Registration Information and Third Call for Abstracts**

***Theme: Management of Desert Bighorn Sheep in a Changing Landscape: Challenges and Opportunities***

On behalf of the Desert Bighorn Council (DBC) and the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), you are cordially invited to register and submit abstracts for the 58th Biennial DBC Meeting. The DBC was established in 1957 to advance desert bighorn sheep science and conservation. Membership is composed of wildlife biologists, scientists, managers, and others interested in the welfare of desert bighorn sheep. (<https://www.desertbighornCouncil.com/>)

This meeting will serve as a forum for leading innovators, researchers, and practitioners to discuss research results, management strategies, and emerging issues in the realm of desert bighorn sheep management. We look forward to a large turnout at this meeting, which will be hosted by the AZGFD at the Gold Canyon Resort in the scenic Superstition Mountains near Mesa, AZ. The meeting will begin Tuesday evening with a social hour/reception, followed by presentations and a poster session on Wednesday and Thursday, and the annual DBC business meeting and banquet on Thursday. The meeting will conclude Friday morning with a tour of Canyon Lake via the Dolly Steamboat to showcase one of the State's most iconic desert bighorn populations.

Registration

- Early registration: Through February 1, 2025
  - Student: \$200.00
  - Non-student: \$250.00
- Regular registration: February 2 - April 1, 2025
  - Student: \$250.00
  - Non-student: \$300.00

Registration includes entry to the social and meeting, all meals on Wednesday and Thursday, breakfast on Friday, a field trip (including transportation), and a 2-year DBC membership. Register at (<https://wafwa.org/workshops/desert-bighorn-workshop/>). Questions: contact Erin Butler at ([ebutler@azgfd.gov](mailto:ebutler@azgfd.gov)).

Venue Information: Gold Canyon Golf Resort and Spa, 6100 S Kings Ranch Rd, Gold Canyon, AZ 85118. Phone: (480) 982-9090 or (480) 671-5524. Website: <https://www.gcgr.com>

Lodging at Venue: \$157/night + tax for a standard room with either one king bed OR 2 queen beds; suites are also available for an additional \$100 per night (single bed). Fifty-nine rooms are being held at this rate for meeting attendees **until Feb 22**; availability will not be guaranteed after this date. Book via telephone using CODE "25K1D0".

Alternative Lodging: Best Western Gold Canyon Inn & Suites, 8333 E Sunrise Sky Dr, Gold Canyon, AZ 85218; Phone: (480) 671-6000. The discounted conference rate is \$167.39/night + tax for a Deluxe King room. Call the front desk and let them know the reservation is for the Arizona Game and Fish-Desert Bighorn Council (AZGFD DBC). AirBnB and VRBO rentals may also be available nearby via the internet.

Field Trip Overview: Tour of Canyon Lake via the Dolly Steamboat (<https://dollysteamboat.com/>) on Friday, April 25. The tour will last 2 hours. Drive time to the tour site is approximately 30 minutes, and transportation will be provided for those without alternative modes of transport. A breakfast burrito option will be provided, which may be eaten on site or enroute. Participants will be returned to the venue by approximately 2 pm. Shared luggage storage will be provided on Friday.

Airport Transportation: Gold Canyon is located on Hwy 60, approximately 35 minutes from Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport and 45 minutes from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. There is no shuttle service between Gold Canyon Resort and either of these airports. Most visitors arrange transportation through one of the following driving services: Sammy Sedan (480-593-1027; one-way trips typically range from \$120 to \$140), Trevor's Private Chauffeur (480-433-7118), Nier Transportation (480-529-1398), and Yellow cab (480-888-8888). Uber and Lyft drivers and car rental companies are readily available.

## Abstract Submission Information

### **Theme: "Management of Desert Bighorn Sheep in a Changing Landscape: Challenges and Opportunities."**

Landscapes occupied by wildlife can be directly and indirectly affected by many factors. The influence of human population growth, changing land use patterns, shifting species distributions, and changing environmental conditions are apparent across much of the desert bighorn sheep's range. Desert bighorn sheep experienced a dramatic decline in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Through harvest regulation, habitat improvement, disease monitoring and vector management, and active management including translocations, population augmentation, and predation management, desert bighorn sheep have recovered substantially, a reflection of the critical and ongoing role of active wildlife management. This recovery is highlighted in Arizona, where desert bighorn sheep populations have grown substantially and have been re-established in much of their native range in recent decades. Nevertheless, many factors, both new and familiar, continue to pose challenges to the sustainability of desert bighorn sheep populations throughout the West. We seek to work together to identify and make use of opportunities to address these challenges for the benefit of desert bighorn sheep.

- **Deadline for abstract submission: January 24, 2025**
- **Instructions:** Submit abstracts for oral or poster presentations to the Program Planning Committee, % Esther Rubin ([erubin@azgfd.gov](mailto:erubin@azgfd.gov)) electronically in Microsoft Word format with the title of your abstract in all capital letters and bold font. Please include the words "DBC Abstract" in the Subject line of the email. Abstracts should be no longer than 250 words in length. List all authors in capitals using first and last names, followed by their affiliation, mailing address, phone number and email address in standard letters. Please identify if the abstract will be an oral or poster presentation and the name of the presenter immediately after the abstract. Presentations for state reports and contributed papers will each be allotted 15 minutes.

Abstract example:

**MANAGEMENT CONCERNS FOR A RECOVERED BIGHORN SHEEP POPULATION OCCUPYING HABITAT ADJACENT TO A LARGE COPPER MINE.**

RANA MURPHY, Arizona Game and Fish Department, 555 N. Greasewood Rd, Tucson, AZ 85745. 520-388-4448  
[rmurphy@azgfd.gov](mailto:rmurphy@azgfd.gov)

*Abstract:* In 2014, the bighorn sheep population of the Silver Bell Mountains in Pima County, Arizona increased to a number not observed in the range since before historical lows in the late twentieth century...

Oral Presentation

Presenter: Rana Murphy

### **Would you like to support the DBC with donated items?**

We welcome the donation of items for a silent auction during the meeting. If you have items that you'd like to donate, please contact Rana Murphy via email at [rmurphy@azgfd.gov](mailto:rmurphy@azgfd.gov).