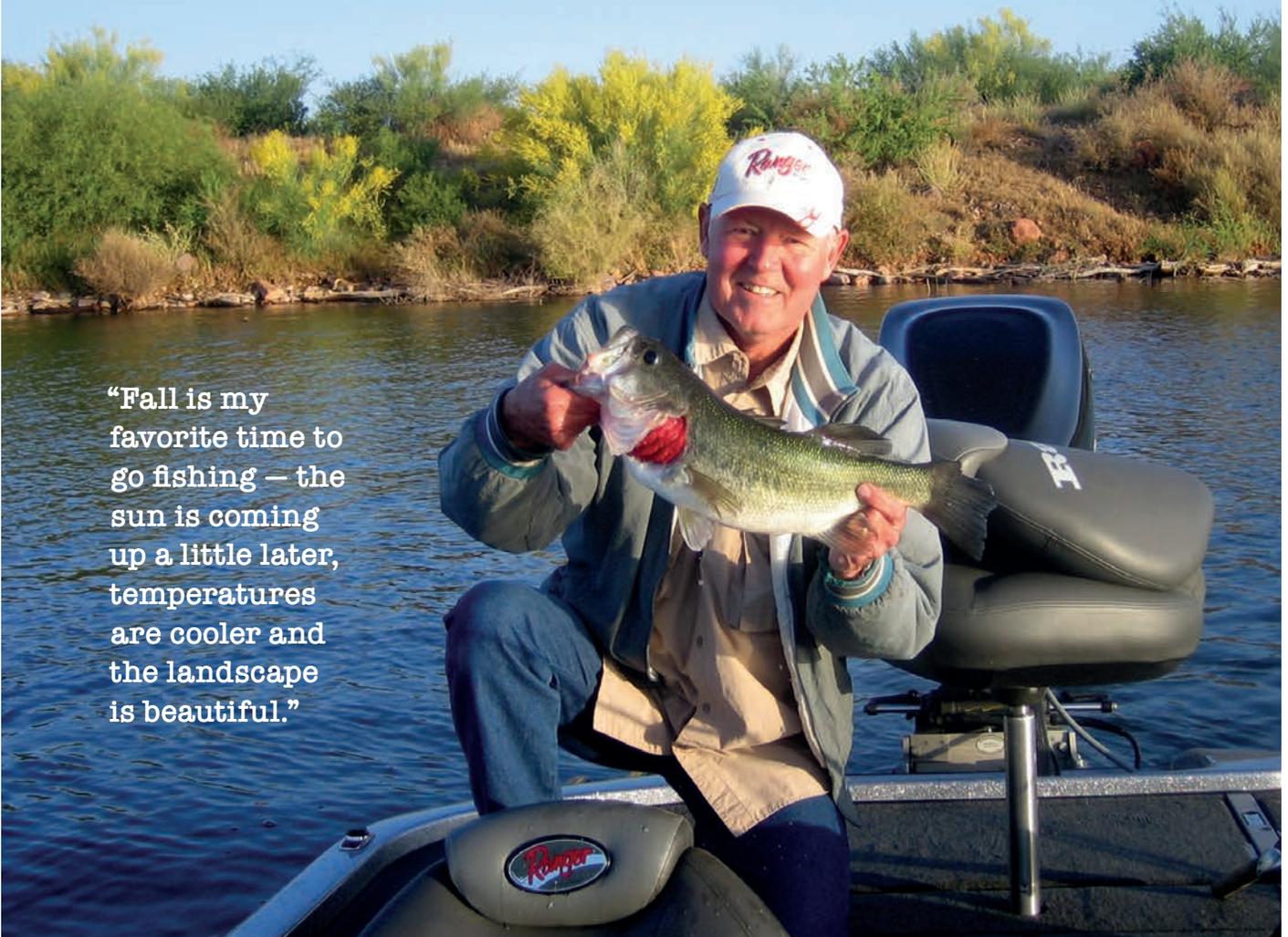


# MEET THE CHAIRMAN: **JAMES GOUGHNOUR**

James Goughnour has lived in Arizona for more than 40 years and is a driving force for wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation in the Payson area. He was confirmed as a member of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission by the Arizona Senate on Jan. 29, 2019, following his appointment by Gov. Doug Ducey.

Goughnour is active in the outdoor recreation community. He is the immediate past president of the Mogollon Sporting Association, a nonprofit volunteer organization that raises funds to benefit wildlife conservation and youth education programs throughout the Mogollon Rim area. He also has chaired the Payson Special Volunteer Committee, where he led a group of business owners, county and town representatives, and volunteers to develop a plan to attract national-level bass fishing tournaments to Roosevelt Lake and promote Payson as the host town.

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## What is your favorite fall fishing spot and what do you fish for?

Fall is my favorite time to go fishing — the sun is coming up a little later, temperatures are cooler and the landscape is beautiful. Leaves change and even in the desert the changes are noticeable. Fall is a good time to go fishing because the fish are changing patterns; they become more active or aggressive.

Freshwater fish, like bass, sense that the water temperatures are changing and know the lower temps are coming. For bass and crappie, their metabolism slows down, so they are adding as many pounds as possible to get ready for winter. And trout love this time of year; the colder the better.

I like fishing anywhere there is water. I fish for salmon in British Columbia, bass in Roosevelt Lake, which I think is one of the most underrated lakes for bass fishing in the

country, and for trout in any lake or stream in Rim Country. Some of the best fishing in the country is in northern Arizona.

## How did you get involved in efforts to support and promote outdoor recreation in Arizona?

I have been passionate about the outdoors since I was a youth and every day was spent outdoors. Today I enjoy turkey hunting in Arizona and am happy to report that I was drawn for a fall turkey hunt. When you are in the forest or on the water, there is a connection to nature, wildlife and the outdoors. There are few sights in the world better than when you are standing on a bass fishing boat in the middle of Roosevelt Lake watching the sun come up.

Several years ago, I started writing articles about hunting and fishing for the Payson newspaper and Arizona fishing magazines. Then I was asked to

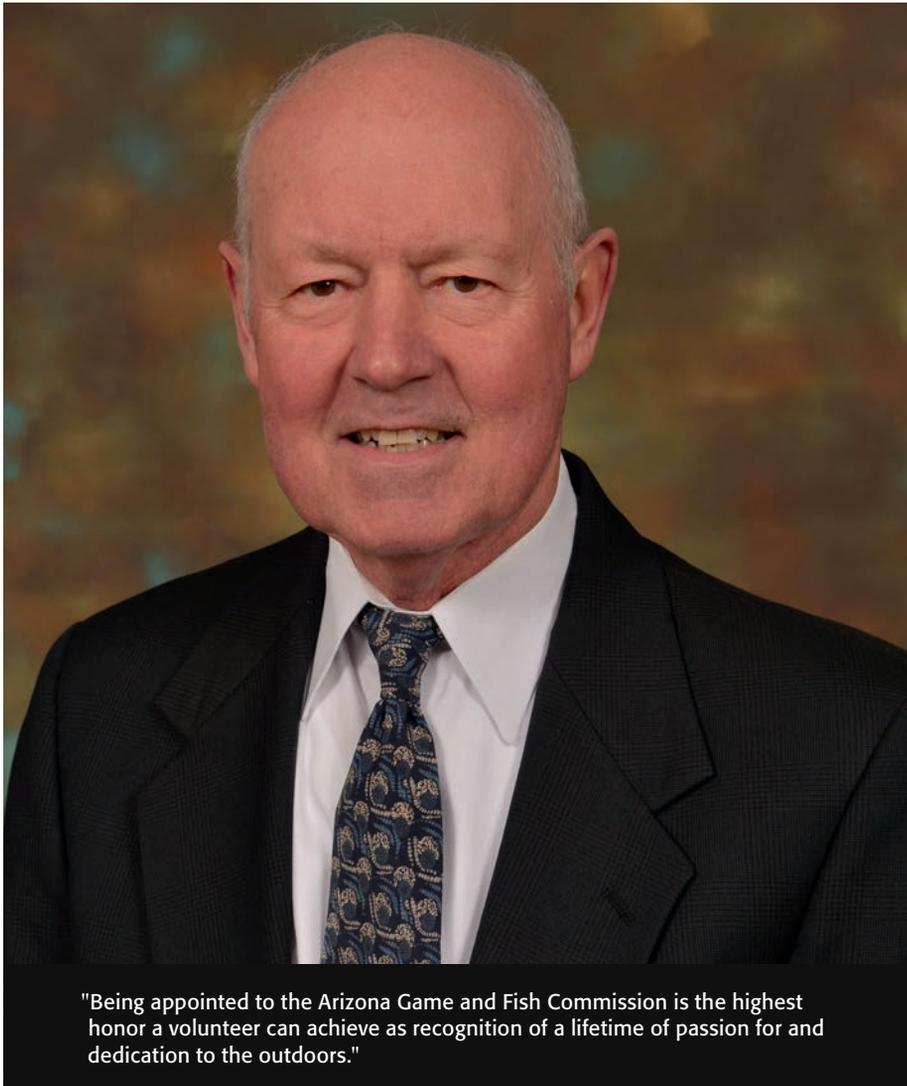
go on the radio show Go Outdoors, which I hosted for a little over a year and brought many specialists on as guests to talk about different subjects related to the outdoors.

Another result of the articles and radio show was the opportunity to promote bass fishing at Roosevelt Lake at the national level. We convinced the Forrest L. Wood national bass fishing circuit to come out to Roosevelt Lake for several years, and Payson was the host town to conduct those events. It provided great opportunities to highlight and promote Arizona as an angling destination.

## What motivates you to do this line of work?

I've always had motivation to work. I was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pa., and my family had some pretty humble beginnings. We were taught the value of hard work and commitment early in life. I also





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learned to help others and give back to the community. My parents and family routinely volunteered — it goes back as long as I can remember.

I have always been drawn to volunteer projects, whether it's a trash pick up or helping with habitat restoration. In recent years, I've been associated with the Mogollon Sporting Association in Payson, which is a highlight for me because it connects volunteerism with the outdoors while also focusing on youth and wildlife.

Being appointed to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission is the highest honor a volunteer can achieve as recognition of a lifetime of passion for and dedication to the outdoors.

### **What is your No. 1 goal as Chairman of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission?**

The brilliance of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission system is that it's structured to be an evolving process rather than a reflection of a new chairman. The Commission has a list of nine priorities that support the overall missions of the Commission and Arizona Game and Fish Department. The priorities reflect the Commission's overarching goals, set the focus for the year and cover topics like legislation, budget, wildlife management and enforcement.

My No. 1 goal is to improve those time-tested Commission priorities while I am chairman.

### **If you could tell Arizona residents one thing about wildlife conservation in this state, what would it be?**

As Commissioners, one of the things we get to do is attend conferences throughout the country. As we talk to leaders of other state wildlife agencies and other state employees across the country, one comment we hear routinely is that Arizona Game and Fish is, if not the best, one of the best game and fish departments in the U.S.

The men and women working for Arizona Game and Fish manage over 800 species of wildlife across the state — that's more species than any state that is not connected to an ocean. The Department manages those species without any funds from the state general fund. Many people do not know their tax dollars do not go to wildlife conservation in Arizona.

The Department consists of hundreds of biologists, scientists and Ph.D. holders who professionally manage wildlife across the state using the best available science, which requires on-the-ground, year-round research. And that's the only way to have successful management of wildlife.

Now is a critical time for all Arizonans who enjoy outdoor activities — whether it's hunting, fishing, hiking, biking or photographing — to show support for the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the professionals who conserve and protect wildlife and natural resources in the state. 🦋

*[Click here to contact Chairman Goughnour](#) or visit [www.azgfd.gov/commission](http://www.azgfd.gov/commission).*