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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release [Feb. 26, 2007](#)

Endangered condors to be released into the wild

PHOENIX — Once every spring, people can gather in Arizona for a unique opportunity that very few other states offer: to witness the release into the wild of endangered California condors. The public is invited to attend this year's release on Saturday, March 3 at 11 a.m. when seven condors will be released at the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument.

"We are excited to kick off another year of the program by celebrating the 26th release of California condors with friends of the program," says Chris Parish, condor field project supervisor with The Peregrine Fund, the group releasing the birds. "The condor breeding season is underway, and the first breeding pair of condors this year has laid an egg in a remote area of the Kaibab Plateau."

The California condor has gone from only 22 birds left in the world in 1982 to nearly 300 today. The original 22 birds were captured in an effort to breed and save the species. Condors bred and raised in captivity are now periodically released at sites in California, Mexico and at the Vermilion Cliffs in Arizona.

"The California condor is one of the great endangered species successes in the country, and to be able to share that with the public is very rewarding," says Kathy Sullivan, a condor biologist with the Arizona Game and Fish Department. "It is exhilarating to watch the birds fly free and to share their story with others."

Condors were added to the federal endangered species list in 1967. The condor is the largest flying land bird in North America. The birds can weigh up to 26 pounds and have a wingspan of up to 9 1/2 feet. Condors were first reintroduced in Arizona in 1996, and they now number 57 in the state. Visitors at the Grand Canyon and Vermilion Cliffs may be able to observe the birds, especially during the spring and summer.

To view the condor release, drive north on Highway 89 out of Flagstaff. Turn left (west) onto Highway 89A toward Jacob Lake and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. Drive about 40 miles past Marble Canyon until you turn right onto House Rock Valley Road (BLM Road 1065). Travel about three miles to a shaded viewing area on the right. On top of the cliffs to your east will be the location where the condors are released. The release site is approximately one mile from the viewing point, so those interested in attending may want to bring binoculars or a spotting scope.

The condor reintroduction in Arizona is a joint project of many partners, including Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Peregrine Fund, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Kaibab National Forest and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.

For more information on California condors, visit azgfd.gov/condor

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Note to media: Photos and video of condors are available by calling Arizona Game and Fish Department Public Information Officer Lynda Lambert at (602) 789-3203. Interviews with a condor biologist are also available. Media representatives are welcome to attend the release.

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