



# Wildlife 20/20

## Arizona Game and Fish Department's Strategic Plan



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**Recommended Citation**

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**Vision:** To be a national conservation leader supporting the continuation of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation and Arizona's most trusted, respected and credible source for wildlife conservation products, services and information.

Goals	Issues	<b>Mission:</b> To conserve Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and manage for safe, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities for current and future generations.							
<p><b>Wildlife:</b> <i>Be resourceful</i> Maintain State authority to manage wildlife in the public trust, and enhance the <a href="#">Commission</a> System.</p> <p><b>Public Support:</b> <i>Be relevant</i> Generate and maintain public interest in and support for the Department's Mission.</p> <p><b>Revenue:</b> <i>Be agile</i> Be fiscally responsible and seek adequate <a href="#">funding</a> to fulfill the Department's Mission.</p> <p><b>Effective Workforce:</b> <i>Be competent</i> Maintain a highly trained and motivated <a href="#">workforce</a>.</p> <p><b>Prudence:</b> <i>Be smart</i> Use <a href="#">science</a> to inform decisions</p> <p><b>Conscientious:</b> <i>Be Stewards</i> Use transparent public processes</p> <p><b>Bigger Tent:</b> <i>Be inclusive</i> Appeal to a wide range of stakeholders sharing Department objectives.</p> <p><b>Partners:</b> <i>Be collaborative</i> Actively seek partners and <a href="#">volunteers</a> to further the Department's Mission.</p>	<p><b>Wildlife Conservation:</b> The Commission's authority to manage wildlife in the public trust has been challenged in the past and likely will in the future.</p> <p><b>People:</b> Established customers are aging. Fewer people are connecting with nature. There is decreased understanding of the role of hunting and fishing in the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. <a href="#">People</a> are interested in other wildlife recreation, and have increasing interest in shooting sports, boating and off-highway vehicles.</p> <p><b>Funding:</b> Current <a href="#">revenue</a> does not meet conservation and management needs. Most revenue is from discretionary purchases, a large part, albeit declining, is tied to hunting and fishing. There is no mechanism for other wildlife recreationists to directly fund wildlife conservation efforts.</p> <p><b>Habitat:</b> <a href="#">Habitat</a> functionality has decreased due to a variety of impacts: fragmentation, invasive species, wildfires, development, drought, etc.</p> <p><b>Workforce:</b> Many <a href="#">experienced leaders</a> are expected to retire in the next several years.</p>	<p><b>Core Competencies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement conservation actions</li> <li>• Conduct biological and social inventories and research</li> <li>• Develop regulations in support of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation</li> <li>• Enforce laws and regulations beyond the pavement</li> <li>• Deploy products and services to diverse customers</li> <li>• Partner across jurisdictions and other interests</li> <li>• Inform and educate public regarding wildlife and recreation</li> <li>• Understand and communicate with the public</li> </ul>	<b>Wildlife Conservation Line of Business</b>			<b>Recreation Line of Business</b>		
<a href="#">Game</a>	<a href="#">Sport Fish</a>			<a href="#">Nongame</a>	<a href="#">Wildlife</a>	<a href="#">Shooting Sports</a>	<a href="#">Watercraft</a>	<a href="#">Off-Highway Vehicles</a>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire and manage land and water for conservation and recreation</li> <li>• Expand partnerships with business and industry to support conservation and recreation</li> <li>• Develop and maintain technology and enterprise business systems</li> <li>• Communicate the <a href="#">value</a> of hunting, fishing, wildlife and other outdoor related recreation to state and local economies</li> <li>• Provide <a href="#">information</a> and <a href="#">education</a> regarding wildlife and recreation</li> <li>• Make <a href="#">science</a>-informed decisions</li> <li>• Provide <a href="#">law enforcement</a> to enhance resource conservation and public safety.</li> </ul>			<p>Ensure reasonable <a href="#">public access</a></p> <p>Facilitate safe, ethical and responsible <a href="#">diverse recreation</a></p> <p>Increase <a href="#">public awareness</a> of social, physical and <a href="#">economic benefits</a> of wildlife and outdoor related recreation</p> <p>Ensure broad-based <a href="#">public input</a> in developing and managing wildlife and outdoor-related recreation opportunities</p>						
<p>Manage populations to provide diverse hunting, fishing, and other wildlife recreation and appreciation</p> <p>Ensure wildlife is abundant</p> <p>Conserve <a href="#">native wildlife diversity</a></p> <p>Manage <a href="#">human-wildlife conflicts</a></p> <p>Conserve <a href="#">habitat</a> and water</p> <p>Retain the Department's wildlife management authority</p>			<p>Increase participation in hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing</p> <p>Maintain equitable <a href="#">hunt</a> and <a href="#">fish</a> opportunities</p> <p>Expand <a href="#">wildlife viewing</a> opportunities</p> <p>Increase the public's understanding of hunting and fishing as wildlife management tools that support the <a href="#">North American Model of Wildlife Conservation</a></p>	<p>Demonstrate returns on investments</p> <p>Meet customer needs and expectations</p> <p>Generate support for <a href="#">shooting sports</a></p>	<p>Meet future customer's <a href="#">registration</a> and recreation needs</p> <p>Demonstrate returns on investments</p>	<p><a href="#">Minimize</a> impacts to wildlife resources from OHV use</p> <p>Collaborate to enhance OHV recreation and access statewide</p>			
<p>Implement <a href="#">comprehensive game management</a> through landscape level planning</p>	<p>Integrate <a href="#">multi-species watershed management</a> plans</p> <p>Balance <a href="#">sport fish</a> recreation with maintaining native aquatic resources</p>	<p>Increase support for wildlife diversity</p> <p><a href="#">Manage rare species</a> to maintain biological diversity and reduce unnecessary regulatory burden</p>							

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## Preface

### AUTHORITY

Under the direction of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission the Department has statutory authorities related to wildlife, watercraft and off-highway vehicles.

**Wildlife:** Arizona Revised Statutes Title 17 directs the responsibility for maintaining and managing the state's wildlife resources to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and Department.

A.R.S. 17-102: Wildlife in Arizona is property of the state.

A.R.S. 17-231: Allows the Commission, among other things, to:

- Establish programs for the management of wildlife.
- Establish hunting, trapping and fishing rules.
- Be responsible for enforcement of laws for the protection of wildlife.
- Share information about wildlife and activities of the Department.
- Adopt rules relating to Commission controlled shooting ranges.

A.R.S. 17-241: Allows the Commission to acquire and dispose of lands and water rights.

**Watercraft:** Arizona Revised Statutes Title 5 directs the responsibility for watercraft recreation, safety and enforcement to the Commission.

A.R.S. 5-311: Through the Commission, the Department may administer the law enforcement and boating safety program on the state level.

**Off-highway Vehicles:** Arizona Revised Statutes Title 28-1176 established the Off-highway Vehicle Recreation Fund, which is apportioned between the Department and Arizona State Parks Department.

A.R.S. 28-1176, The Department shall use the OHV recreation fund for programs related to safety, the environment and responsible use, and law enforcement activities for off-highway vehicle law enforcement.

A.R.S. 17-456, The Department shall provide an informational and educational program on off-highway vehicle recreation and law enforcement of off-highway vehicle laws and enforcement to protect wildlife habitat.

*Wildlife 20/20* is the Arizona Game and Fish Department's strategic plan and describes the Department's guiding principles and defines the Department's diverse roles and functions. It is intended to be a living document that conveys policy direction that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission has provided to the Department to guide our work into the future.

All Arizonans have a stake in the continued health and diversity of wildlife populations and are encouraged to participate in ensuring wildlife for tomorrow. In developing the Wildlife 20/20 plan, the Department welcomed public involvement. At the same time, the Department uses this plan to

convey the short- and long-term nature of its mission to the public, including the conflicts inherent in managing resources for a public that is diverse in its needs and desires. The Department considers this plan to be an important communication tool for sharing the Department’s goals and perspectives with the public, partnering agencies, organizations and employees.

**WHAT IS THIS PLAN?**

Wildlife 20/20 is built around two “Lines of Business;” Wildlife Conservation and Recreation. The lines of business are central to this plan, and are the driving force behind the Department’s operational plans and implementation plans. Wildlife 20/20 gives broad strategic guidance for all Department programs; though it does emphasize wildlife management, which is the Department’s primary focus. However, the Department does have other plans, such as operational, implementation, wildlife areas, species, and other statewide plans including the Department’s Statewide Action Plan, which has a focus on species of greatest conservation need.

The Department’s operational plans translate strategies and objectives from the strategic plan into short-term plans that are linked to the biennial budget process, and the implementation plans further refine operational plans and link operational strategies and objectives into annual activities tied to the Department’s annual budget.

Strategic Plan	Provides a high-level perspective, but does not identify operational detail. This plan provides a broad overview of the Department’s varied responsibilities. Public participation is invited. This is a living plan that will be reviewed no less than every three years.
Operational Plan	These plans are more specific and focus on a shorter time-frame than the strategic plan. Operational plans can provide budget direction needed to implement planned activities. Examples of operational plans include: Hunt Guidelines, Sport Fish Management, Law Enforcement, Shooting Ranges, Wildlife Area Plans, etc. Other plans (such as Arizona’s Statewide Wildlife Action Plan and species recovery plans) are incorporated into operational plans.
Implementation Plan	Provides guidance to all work units on the activities to be implemented by that work unit. These plans include planned budget and resources required to implement the activities. They are developed internally.

## ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES

To understand the environment within which Wildlife 20/20 will be implemented, it is important to understand the Department's mission and vision, as well as the principles that guide the Department's work.

### **The Arizona Game and Fish Department's Vision:**

To be a national conservation leader supporting the continuation of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation and Arizona's most trusted, respected and credible source for wildlife conservation products, services and information.

### **The Arizona Game and Fish Department's Mission:**

To conserve Arizona's diverse wildlife resources and manage for safe, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities for current and future generations.

### **Critical Pillars of the Department's Credibility:**

1. The quality of our workforce.
2. The quality of our knowledge and the competency of our processes.
3. The public's passion for wildlife.
4. The Commission system.

### **Guiding Principles:**

**Leadership:** Having the courage to shape a better future.

**Collaboration:** Leveraging partnerships to achieve mutual goals.

**Integrity:** Behaving in an ethical manner.

**Accountability:** Recognizing that individuals are responsible for their actions and inactions.

**Fiscal Sustainability:** Ensuring agile, long-term funding, while being mindful of our customers and Mission.

**Passion:** Being committed to our Mission in heart and mind.

**Diversity:** Ensuring our programs and workforce reflect Arizona's diverse demographics, both culturally and the way they interact with wildlife.

**Quality:** Using credible biological and social science to inform decisions.

**Productivity:** Being a highly effective, lean and adaptive agency.

**Community:** Recognizing the positive impact our programs have on local economies and way of life.

**Staff:** Being a world class agency where people are inspired to be the best they can be.

**Customer Service:** Anticipating and exceeding customer expectations.

**Stewardship:** Managing wildlife using the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation; wildlife belongs to all Arizonans, and we take that public trust seriously.

## CORE COMPETENCIES THAT ALLOW US TO ACHIEVE OUR MISSION:

- Implement conservation actions (propagate, enhance habitat, reintroduce, translocate, stock)
- Conduct biological and social inventories and research
- Develop regulations in support of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation
- Enforce laws and regulations beyond the pavement
- Deploy products and services to diverse customers
- Partner across jurisdictions and other interests
- Inform and educate public regarding wildlife and recreation
- Understand and communicate with customers

## DEPARTMENT PROFILE

### **Arizona Game and Fish Commission**

The Department carries out its mandates under policy direction of the five-member Arizona Game and Fish Commission (Commission). Commissioners are typically appointed to serve a 5-year term. Applicants interested in becoming a member of the Commission must be well informed on the subject of wildlife and the requirements for its conservation. Additionally, in accordance with state statute the commission is required to maintain political balance, so no more than 3 members can be from any one political party. To spread representation throughout Arizona, no two members may be from the same county.

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission Appointment Recommendation Board (Board) interviews and recommends candidates for appointment to the Commission. The governor nominates a commissioner from the list submitted by the Board and with the consent of the senate appoints the selected member. The Department's Director is appointed by and reports to the Commission. During Commission meetings, public dialogue is encouraged.

### **Arizona Game and Fish Department**

The Department is part of the executive branch of Arizona state government. State law mandates that the Department manage Arizona's wildlife resources, regulate watercraft use and enforce off-highway vehicle laws. The Department implements rules and policies; taking actions to conserve, preserve, and manage wildlife; enforcing laws that protect wildlife, public health and safety; providing information and safety education programs, and developing partnerships. Wildlife and habitat cross many boundaries and political subdivisions. The Department works in cooperation with sovereign tribes, local government, private land owners, other states and nations. The Department's structure is as follows:

**Director's Office** supports the Commission, works with the legislature, and oversees legal counsel and personnel matters. Additionally, the Office approves budget recommendations, and agreements; and administers planning. It also coordinates development of rules, policies and procedures, and conducts risk management, loss prevention and internal audits.

**Field Operations Division** comprises of six regional offices, the Law Enforcement Branch, Wildlife Contracts Branch and aviation support. The regional offices are in Pinetop, Flagstaff, Kingman, Yuma, Tucson and Mesa. The division implements program objectives that pertain to wildlife management, watercraft/off-highway vehicle outreach and education, and law enforcement. Each regional office provides a full service Department facility to serve local communities. The

Law Enforcement Branch provides program direction, assistance and administrative support. The Wildlife Contracts Branch secures and implements contract work to build upon the Department's wildlife information base and to provide Department based wildlife expertise to outside entities.

**Wildlife Management Division** comprises the Fisheries, Game, Habitat, Nongame and Research branches. The division considers the management history of the state's wildlife resources, the current and future needs of the resources and public, the effects of a rapidly expanding human population on wildlife and wildlife habitat, and the necessity of sound scientific techniques to obtain the data needed to manage the variety of wildlife found in Arizona.

**Information, Education and Recreation Division** comprises four branches. The Information Branch is responsible for public communication including website, social media, Arizona Wildlife Views TV and magazine, and media relations. The Education Branch is responsible for the Department's public education programs, including the coordination of classes in hunter safety, aquatic education, boating and OHV safety. The Education Branch also produces environmental education curriculum and resources for school children and adults and manages the Adobe Mountain Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. The Shooting Sports Branch develops, operates and supports shooting ranges and recreational shooting programs statewide. The Wildlife Recreation Branch coordinates the Department's hunter, angler and shooter recruitment and retention efforts, promotes watchable wildlife recreation and is responsible for the Department's marketing efforts.

**Special Services Division** comprises two branches: Development and Information Systems. The Development Branch is primarily responsible for water development, engineering, habitat improvement and maintenance, boating access and improved recreational access to state, federal and private lands. The Information Systems Branch provides data-processing capabilities, systems analysis and design. It also supports the Department's computers, phone systems and network connections.

**Business and Finance Division** comprises Support Services, Licensing and Permitting, Budget and Accounting. This division procures goods and services, maintains vehicles, provides warehousing and mail services. The division also oversees customer service operations at the Phoenix headquarters and is responsible for administration of licensing, hunt/draw and watercraft registration. The division also provides all accounting and budget services for the department.

## The Planning Environment

*This strategic plan was developed in the context of current and anticipated conditions and trends in the natural and social environments that are expected to shape the Department's management actions into the future.*

### ARIZONA'S WILDLIFE:

Arizona is rich in biological diversity, ranking among the top five states in the nation for the number of native bird, reptile and mammal species, and in the top ten for overall diversity of vertebrates. Many species have been present for a long time, while others have appeared only in recent years. Some non-native species were established intentionally, as is the case with rainbow trout, while others have arrived as unwelcome or invasive species, such as quagga mussels and yet others appeared as they expanded their range. A few species, like the Mexican gray wolf and California condor, were extirpated in Arizona but have been re-established through reintroduction programs.

The numbers below reflect the total number of species that potentially can be found in Arizona, including transient, casual and rare species that occur unpredictably. Non-native species that are not established and do not regularly breed in the state, such as Barbary sheep, are not included. With the exception of mollusks and crustaceans, invertebrates are excluded.

#### NUMBERS OF WILDLIFE SPECIES FOUND IN ARIZONA

Amphibians	29
Birds	534
Fish	69
Mammals	140
Mollusks/Crustaceans	184
Reptiles	<u>112</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,068</b>

More information on Arizona's wildlife resources can be found on the Department's Web site, [azgfd.gov](http://azgfd.gov), and in the Department's "Arizona Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) 2005–2020." The CWCS provides a vision for managing Arizona's wildlife and natural habitats. Its primary focus is identifying and managing the "wildlife and biotic communities of greatest conservation need." It offers input into both the operational and implementation tiers of the Department's planning process.

### ARIZONA'S HABITATS:

The State of Arizona contains approximately 73 million acres. The state is diverse topographically, vegetatively and geologically. Elevations range from about 75 feet above sea level (near Yuma) to 12,643 feet (San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff). Precipitation ranges from less than 3 inches to more than 30 inches per year, depending on elevation and location. Environments range from the hot, dry deserts of southern Arizona; through grasslands and woodlands in mid-elevations; continuing to cold, moist forests at higher elevations, and up to alpine tundra at the highest elevations.

The Commission and Department have management authority for all wildlife in the state, but share the management responsibility for habitat with many partners. A multitude of state, federal, tribal and local agencies and private landowners manage Arizona's land areas. Arizona shares its borders with California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Colorado and Mexico. The Department therefore partners with these entities on wildlife, land and water management projects to further our Mission.

### **HUMAN TRENDS AFFECTING WILDLIFE:**

The ability of the Department to adequately represent current public interests is being tested by an ongoing societal shift in the way people value and interact with wildlife. The Department conserves game, sport fish and nongame wildlife species, primarily using revenues from discretionary spending of customers relating to hunting and fishing license sales. Increasingly, fewer people are interested in hunting and fishing, yet there has been growth in other forms of wildlife-related recreation, such as wildlife viewing. Although valuable and contributory to local economies, these activities provide little direct revenue for the Department. Tied to these trends is the increasing interest in providing input in how wildlife is managed. People have many different preferences for wildlife-related programs and services. Greater diversity in viewpoints has contributed to increased conflict, as well as contradictory social values among stakeholders. Because of these challenges, the Department will continue to endure challenges to its authority through mechanisms such as legislation, ballot initiatives and public referenda.

Adding to the challenges are demographic changes that have led to greater ethnic diversity and a more urbanized society. Historically, wildlife conservation agencies have not been responsive to diverse ethnic groups which tend to be underrepresented in outdoor activities including wildlife-related recreation pursuits. Given the growing influence of minorities ([United States Census, 2010](#)), engaging those communities in the Department's management is important to the Department's future. The long-term success of the Department is contingent upon its ability to reach and provide services for audiences that are diverse, both in terms of their cultural heritage as well as their wildlife-related interests.

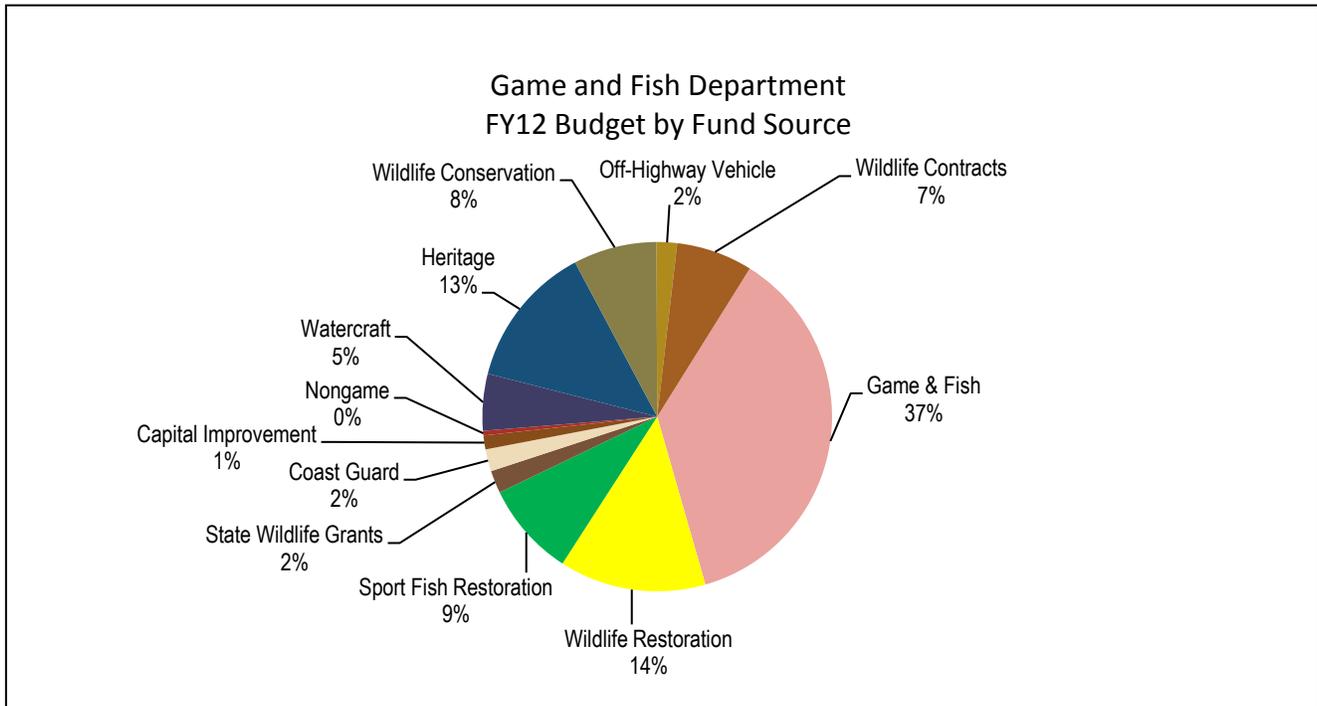
### **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

The Department receives no Arizona general tax funds. Funding received by the Department to support wildlife management and recreation, and shooting sports, watercraft and OHV management is linked to expenditures of the public's discretionary funds. Revenues, whether from the purchase of licenses, tags or stamps, lottery tickets, gaming, watercraft registrations or off-highway vehicle decals are a result of discretionary purchases by the public. The Department must manage operations consistent with revenue.

Wildlife and other outdoor recreation contribute significantly to Arizona's economy. Hunting and fishing are significant contributors to Arizona's economy. In 2007, using data from the 2006 USFWS National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (2006 Survey), the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation\* found that annual spending by hunters and anglers produced \$1.3 billion of economic benefits to Arizona, which equates to more than \$3.5 million a day being pumped into the State's economy, and that hunting and fishing annually contributed \$58 million to the state tax fund. Fishing and hunting have a positive economic impact on rural communities throughout Arizona. Fishing directly supported 14,500 jobs and anglers; hunting supported 6,700 jobs. According to the preliminary 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation., Arizona anglers spent \$755 million and hunters spent \$338 million annually. According to the 2006 Survey, the economic effect of wildlife watching participants spent

\$838 million, supporting more than 15,250 jobs and generating over \$118 million in state and local tax revenue in Arizona. OHV recreation had an economic impact of \$4.25 billion, supported nearly 37,000 jobs, and contributed \$187 million to annual state tax revenues.

\* *“Hunting and Fishing: Bright Stars of the American Economy ~ A force as big as all outdoors”* (2007). Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation.



**STRATEGIC ISSUES AFFECTING THE DEPARTMENT:**

The Department must be responsive to sometimes conflicting constituent desires, and must balance those desires with science-based management decisions and available financial resources. Arizona has the highest wildlife diversity of any inland state (over 800 are native). Conserving and restoring wildlife diversity, on a landscape shared with humans, is fraught with controversy, legal implications and social barriers. Some Department wildlife management programs focus on identifying threats and stressors and reducing their effects. Ultimately, the Department aims to keep common species common and to conserve and restore imperiled species in the public trust.

To be successful, wildlife populations and their terrestrial and aquatic communities need to be managed in concert with the environment, watersheds, and available water resources. As a community game, sport fish and nongame wildlife are all dependent upon the quality and integrity of habitat; as such they must be managed in concert with each other as interrelated public trust resources.

Arizona’s human population continues to grow at a rate greater than the national average, which creates challenges for wildlife management and conservation including: loss, degradation, and fragmentation of habitat; land and water rights and use conflicts, introduction and expansion of

invasive species; increased frequency and intensity of wildland fires; and increased recreation demands on the landscape. Other challenges include long-term drought, wildlife diseases, predator-prey interactions, climate changes, and invasive species. All of these factors may place further pressures on Arizona's wildlife.

Although Arizona's population is growing, revenue used for wildlife management is not keeping pace with management needs. Fewer people are purchasing fishing and hunting licenses, which provides a significant amount of funding for managing all wildlife, both game and nongame. There is a growing need to develop better mechanisms for those that don't hunt or fish to directly support wildlife management.

Along with the significant population growth, Arizona's demographics are changing; the population is getting younger, more urban, and less connected to outdoors. However, many people still enjoy wildlife and other outdoor recreation. Shooting sports, both firearms and archery, are becoming more popular. Firearm ownership and the demand for recreational shooting opportunities has increased, , exceeding the current availability of shooting ranges in some areas of Arizona. Securing lands for new shooting ranges, or maintaining existing ranges presents many challenges.

Although the numbers of watercraft registered in Arizona has been declining, recreational paddlesports have increased. Non-motorized paddlesport craft do not require registration, whereas, registration fees support nearly all of the Department's watercraft enforcement, administration and education efforts. The long-term drought has affected boating recreation, lake levels fluctuate with precipitation, available run-off, and municipal and agricultural water demands. The fluctuating water levels result in challenges accessing the water from launch facilities, changes in navigational hazards (submerged boulders for example), and fewer acres of surface water to accommodate boaters on popular lakes.

Off-highway vehicles (OHVs) are used by hunters and some anglers, and by people who simply enjoy driving them. Although a requirement to purchase a decal to display on OHVs being used on public lands was enacted a few years prior to this plan, funding to manage OHVs and ensure protection of wildlife habitat and enforce public safety laws is not adequate. Arizona's many land management agencies have different rules and policies governing OHV use, and finding areas for OHVs recreation can be difficult.

While the Commission supports multiple-use on public lands, certain land and water uses conflict with wildlife and other outdoor recreation. Some types of recreation may reduce the quality of habitat available for wildlife. Additionally, some private landowners deny access across their privately owned land which has resulted in challenges for the public to access public lands.

The Department's mission and values demand a professional and well-trained work force that reflects the diversity of Arizona. The Department has traditionally had a low turnover rate, however many of the Department's leaders are expected to retire in the next several years. The anticipated loss of tenured leaders highlights the Department's need for a robust leadership succession plan.

The Department is primarily funded through discretionary purchases. During the recent economic downturn, discretionary spending decreased which reduced Department revenue. Additionally, the downturn may have led to increased demand for wildlife and outdoor recreation close to home.

## **Department-wide Goals and Strategies**

- Secure adequate funding to support conservation and manage recreation.
- Acquire and manage land and water for conservation and recreation.
- Expand alliance with business and industry to support conservation and recreation.
- Leverage partnerships with business, industry and non-profit organizations to increase conservation capacity, funding and recreation.
- Encourage the stewardship of public lands for conservation of wildlife, habitat and responsible recreation.
- Communicate the value of hunting, fishing, wildlife and other outdoor related recreation to state and local economies.
- Provide information and education regarding wildlife and recreation.
- Make science-informed decisions.
- Provide law enforcement to enhance wildlife conservation and public safety.

## **Wildlife Conservation Line of Business**

The Wildlife Line of Business is subdivided into three programmatic areas: Game Wildlife, Sport Fish, and Nongame. These programmatic areas share some common issues and goals.

### **WILDLIFE CONSERVATION LINE OF BUSINESS**

#### **Goals and Strategies**

- Manage populations using science-based techniques and technology.
- Ensure broad-based public input into hunt guidelines and recommendations, and Commission Orders.
- Manage populations to provide diverse hunting, fishing, and wildlife recreation.
- Ensure wildlife is abundant in balance with competing societal expectations.
- Conserve native wildlife diversity, and manage to reduce impacts of invasive species.
- Manage human-wildlife conflicts.
- Conserve habitat and water.
- Enhance the capacity of habitat to support wildlife.
- Implement habitat and population enhancements.
- Retain the Department's wildlife management authority.
- Explore additional mechanisms to increase and diversify funding for wildlife conservation.
- Develop wildlife and fishery disease surveillance and response processes.
- Actively respond to detected wildlife and fishery disease or extensive die-off cases.
- Enhance understanding of wildlife recreation as an economic driver in many Arizona communities.

### **GAME WILDLIFE PROGRAM**

#### **Game Wildlife Goals:**

- Implement comprehensive game management through landscape level planning.
- Integrate multi-species plans that consider public expectations, competition with other species, predator – prey relations, habitat characteristics and quality, genetic effects of habitat and population fragmentation, population viability and carrying capacities.
- Provide the public with a variety of hunting opportunities.

- Manage for thriving game populations to provide recreational opportunities while securing fiscal stability for the Department and local economies.

#### **Game Wildlife Objectives:**

- Enhance big game and small game wildlife habitat, including securing habitat connectivity.
- Increase the abundance of pronghorn, mule deer, white-tailed deer, bighorn sheep, and turkey.
- Expand the current distribution of pronghorn, bighorn sheep, turkey, and blue grouse to occupy suitable habitat.
- Manage game populations to meet the objectives established within hunt guidelines.

#### **Game Wildlife Strategies:**

- Translocate, transplant or stock game wildlife.
- Incorporate spatial analysis into traditional survey methods.
- Implement game population and habitat enhancements.
- Integrate Comprehensive Game Management Planning and Statewide Wildlife Action Planning efforts.
- Implement Management Focus Area Plans completed under the guidelines of the Comprehensive Game Management Plan.
- Mitigate habitat fragmentation and its effects on big game populations using over or underpasses, land purchases, translocations, etc.
- Explore endowments to address population genetic fragmentation and to support habitat mitigation and wildlife corridor protection.

### **SPORT FISH PROGRAM**

#### **Sport Fish Goals:**

- Integrate multi-species watershed management plans.
- Balance public demand for sport fish recreation with conservation of native aquatic resources.
- Manage, and enhance the quality, abundance, availability, and diversity of sport fishing opportunities.

#### **Sport Fish Objectives:**

- Develop watershed-based management approaches for all Arizona watersheds.
- Enhance anglers' satisfaction.
- Increase public awareness of Arizona's sport fishing resources and opportunities.
- Develop diverse urban constituents and stakeholders.

#### **Sport Fish Strategies:**

- Implement aquatic habitat, sport fish population, and angler access management activities.
- Provide diverse sport fish recreation.
- Complete development of at least two integrated, watershed-based fisheries management plans, and identify reaches for management of sport fish and native fish.
- Integrate sport fish and nongame management to balance conservation and recreation needs..
- Maintain spatially explicit comprehensive databases.

- Inform stakeholders and decision makers of the benefits derived from the public's passion for sport fishing recreation.
- Provide high quality fish stockings statewide to support sport fishing recreation.
- Expand urban fishing opportunities.

## Nongame Wildlife Program

### **Nongame Wildlife Goals:**

- Increase public recognition and support of the Department's role as the leader in management of wildlife diversity.
- Manage rare species to maintain biological diversity and reduce federal regulatory burden.
- Maintain and restore native species diversity, population numbers, and habitats.
- Conserve Arizona's wildlife to ensure State authority and maximum management flexibility in accordance with the public trust doctrine.

### **Nongame Wildlife Objectives:**

- Develop a process to prioritize nongame species conservation management actions.
- Determine the population baseline and trends for species of greatest conservation need.
- Implement actions to maintain or improve the population for species of greatest conservation need.
- Maintain public satisfaction with and support for the nongame program.
- Find ways to conserve species of greatest conservation need and mitigate the level of federal regulatory impacts to Arizona.

### **Nongame Wildlife Strategies:**

- Use the State Wildlife Action Plan to inform and engage partners in the conservation of Arizona's biodiversity.
- Implement population and habitat enhancements to benefit nongame wildlife.
- Proactively manage species of greatest conservation to avert the need for federal protections.
- Ensure seamless integration of sport and native fish programs.
- Provide recommendations on projects that have the potential to impact nongame wildlife populations.
- Inform decision-makers of the importance of nongame management to Arizona.
- Provide science-based information to guide the decisions of partners regarding the status of species of greatest conservation need.
- Distribute guidance and protocols for nongame management techniques.
- Implement priority actions in species recovery plans, conservation agreements, management plans, and statewide wildlife action plan strategies.
- Deploy voluntary, innovative and incentive-based tools to engage the public in conservation of species of greatest conservation need.
- Maintain staff expertise in all federal laws and acts related to nongame wildlife.
- Explore endowments to address population genetic fragmentation and to support habitat mitigation and wildlife corridor protection.

## **Recreation Line of Business**

The Recreation Line of Business is subdivided into four programmatic areas: Wildlife Recreation, Shooting Sports, Watercraft Recreation and Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation. These programmatic areas share some common issues and goals.

### **RECREATION LINE OF BUSINESS**

#### **Goals and Strategies:**

- Manage recreation using science-informed decisions considering biological sciences, social sciences and state and local economies.
- Ensure reasonable public access.
- Provide safe, ethical, responsible and diverse outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Diversify and broaden the Department's customer base.
- Increase public awareness of the social, human health and economic benefits of wildlife and outdoor related recreation.
- Ensure broad-based public input in developing and managing wildlife and outdoor-related recreation opportunities.

### **WILDLIFE RECREATION PROGRAM**

#### **Wildlife Recreation Goals**

- Increase participation in hunting, fishing, and other wildlife recreation.
- Increase the public's understanding and acceptance of hunting and fishing as wildlife management tools that support the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.
- Promote the user-pay, user-benefit strategy to expand support for wildlife conservation and recreation.
- Provide diverse hunting and fishing opportunities to meet customer demand.
- Expand wildlife viewing opportunities.

#### **Wildlife Recreation Objectives**

- Maintain public support for hunting and fishing.
- Increase participation in wildlife viewing.
- Manage a financially self-sustaining wildlife viewing program.
- Increase the number of licensed hunters and anglers.
- Establish a recognizable Department wildlife related recreational opportunity within reasonable proximity of each Arizonan.

#### **Wildlife Recreation Strategies**

- Encourage partner-hosted wildlife recreation events.
- Pursue funding to enhance wildlife viewing opportunities.
- Evaluate, and refine hunter, angler and wildlife viewer recruitment and retention practices.
- Cross-promote other wildlife recreation opportunities to customers who participate in Department programs.
- Encourage independent participation by youth and families after participating in Department sport fish, hunting and wildlife recreation introductory camps or programs.
- Identify and reduce the barriers to participation in wildlife-related recreation
- Increase programs designed to facilitate public participation in low-cost wildlife-related recreation.

- Improve communication with the public through emergent technology.
- Increase the number of waters open to public fishing.
- Simplify license structure and regulations to reduce obstacles to participation.

## **SHOOTING SPORTS PROGRAM**

### **Shooting Sports Goals**

- Administer a shooting sports line of business that demonstrates returns on investments.
- Meet customer needs and expectations.
- Build public and political support for shooting programs and ranges.
- Build mutually-beneficial partnerships with shooting sports industry and communities.

### **Shooting Sports Objectives**

- Manage or support all Commission-owned shooting ranges.
- Provide ADA compliant range facilities at all Commission-owned shooting ranges.
- Maintain, develop, or support public shooting ranges within reasonable proximity of urban centers.
- Operate the Ben Avery Shooting Facility (BASF) as a financially self-sustaining range.
- Increase the percentage of Arizonans who participate in recreational shooting.

### **Shooting Sports Strategies**

- Provide introductory through advanced shooting opportunities at Commissioned-owned ranges.
- Enhance range facilities to accommodate growth in various shooting disciplines.
- Recruit new customers to the shooting sports through introductory events.
- Build partnerships with industry, communities and organized shooting groups to enhance the long-term viability of shooting sports.
- Offer grants for the management and development of shooting ranges.
- Incorporate ADA standards at Commissioned-owned ranges.
- Employ best management practices for environmental stewardship and compliance at Commission-owned ranges.
- Work with partners to develop and implement a plan for responsible dispersed recreational shooting on public lands.

## **WATERCRAFT RECREATION PROGRAM**

### **Watercraft Goals**

- Meet future customer's registration and recreation needs.
- Administer a watercraft program that demonstrates returns on investments and meets future customer needs.
- Encourage safe and responsible watercraft recreation.

### **Watercraft Objectives**

- Increase annual boating safety education course attendance.
- Decrease the number of reported accidents.
- Decrease the number of lapsed boat registrations.

### **Watercraft Strategies**

- Manage watercraft recreation based on public safety, biological, social, and economic sciences.
- Increase public awareness of safe, responsible and ethical use of watercraft.
- Expand watercraft safety education to include paddlesports and other emerging types of watercraft recreation.
- Use technology to streamline the watercraft registration processes.
- Cross promote boating opportunities with fishing opportunities.

### **OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE (OHV) RECREATION PROGRAM**

#### **Off-highway Vehicle Goals**

- Minimize impacts to wildlife resources from OHV use.
- Promote safe, ethical and responsible use of OHVs.
- Collaborate to enhance OHV recreation and access statewide.

#### **Off-highway Vehicle Objectives**

- Conduct outreach events to promote ethical OHV use.
- Develop mechanism to track the number of OHV accidents.
- Maintain public satisfaction with Department's management of OHVs.
- Increase compliance with OHV decal requirements.

#### **Off-highway Vehicle Strategies**

- Pursue funding to manage OHV recreation.
- Increase public application of safe, responsible and ethical OHV use.
- Build partnerships to achieve OHV objectives.
- Collaborate with land management agencies to standardize OHV rules and use.

## **Essential Functions:**

Essential functions are required to sustain and support the lines of business. The essential functions span the entire Department and all of its management decisions and actions. Essential functions include: Law Enforcement, Landowner Relations and Access, Habitat Conservation, Governance and Finance, Customer Relations, Education, Information, Resources and Logistics, Human Resources, and Research and Science.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

#### **Issues Affecting Law Enforcement:**

The Department's law enforcement officers are being pulled in many directions. Community presence needs to remain a priority. This essential function also must seek additional resources to expand and better support our customers. Some of the biggest issues affecting the law enforcement essential function are: the operation of watercraft and OHVs while under the influence; the introduction of invasive and restricted species; lost or restricted hunter access; subsistence poaching; law and rule modifications by external entities; officer safety and employee security along the border and maintaining relevance with and meeting the needs of an expanding user base.

#### **Law Enforcement – Goals:**

- Protect Arizona's wildlife resources through proactive and responsive law enforcement efforts.
- Safeguard the public through effective law enforcement practices.
- Provide leadership as the nation's premier wildlife, watercraft and OHV law enforcement authority.

#### **Law Enforcement – Objectives:**

- Maintain an effective statewide communications system.
- Deploy law enforcement resources statewide.
- Increase the number of law enforcement reserves and volunteers.
- Enhance officer awareness and safety along the border.
- Seek alternative funding sources to enhance law enforcement.
- Increase officer field presence.

#### **Law Enforcement – Strategies:**

- Upgrade communications network.
- Purchase and install vehicle locating technology into all Department law enforcement vehicles and other Department vehicles that are deployed near the Arizona/Mexico border.
- Conduct special operations projects directed at overt and repeat offenders.
- Recruit volunteers to enhance field capacity.
- Use targeted enforcement to reduce the number of operating under the influence, "reckless operation", and other boating violations.
- Use targeted enforcement to improve compliance with OHV safety and decal requirements.
- Expand the capabilities of the Special Operations Unit.

## **LANDOWNER RELATIONS AND ACCESS**

### **Issues Affecting Landowner Relations and Access:**

Activities provided by the Department require access to land and water. However, mosaic land ownership, conflicts with landowners, and the laws regulating access to those lands, make managing wildlife resources, and securing access a challenge.

### **Landowner Relations and Access Goals:**

- Enhance recreational access to lands throughout Arizona in balance with wildlife conservation.

### **Landowner Relations and Access Objectives:**

- Improve access opportunities.
- Promote responsible recreational use of lands.
- Promote and improve habitat and wildlife conservation on private lands.

### **Landowner Relations and Access Strategies:**

- Manage recreational access in partnership with private and government landowners.
- Provide resources to maintain or enhance access.
- Promote responsible recreational use of lands through a variety of methods.
- Inventory access routes and locked gates, to complete a model to set access priorities geospatially.
- Develop the Commission directed Private Lands Access Strategy.
- Identify critical areas of access, and use diverse techniques to maintain or enhance access to these areas.
- Enhance relationships and partnerships with landowners to maintain and improve access.
- Enhance relationships and partnerships with landowners to improve and enhance wildlife habitat on private land.

## **HABITAT CONSERVATION**

### **Issues Affecting Habitat Conservation:**

Aggressive conservation of quality habitat is essential in maintaining abundant and thriving wildlife populations. Human activities impact wildlife resources through introduction of invasive species, habitat fragmentation, competition for resources, and habitat manipulation. The Department works to inform and facilitate conservation of wildlife habitats to ensure the long-term well being of the State's resources, while providing reasonable access for the public to enjoy Arizona's wildlife and diversity of habitats.

### **Habitat Conservation Goals:**

- Conserve habitats to promote abundant and thriving wildlife populations.
- Maintain expertise in all applicable state and federal environmental laws and regulations.
- Secure habitat connectivity to enhance wildlife conservation.

### **Habitat Conservation Objectives:**

- Ensure active conservation of wildlife, and maintain the Department's jurisdiction and relevance to the public.
- Develop and maintain the nation's best data systems to communicate wildlife resource information and needs.

### **Habitat Conservation Strategies:**

- Maintain an enhanced statewide Geospatial representation of crucial habitats and wildlife resources.
- Seek to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts to wildlife resources.
- Comply with environmental laws on all Department projects.
- Actively conserve statewide wildlife corridors and habitats through partnerships, policy, and direct conservation actions.
- Collaborate with private, federal, state, municipal, and other land and water management interests to ensure that the needs of wildlife and wildlife habitats are considered during long and short range planning processes.
- Develop plans, recommendations, and guidelines for mitigating losses or for enhancement of fish and wildlife populations and their habitats.

### **GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE:**

#### **Issues Affecting Governance and Finance:**

The Department Governance and Finance function must meet the needs of employees and external partners. Legislation, laws, and regulations can impact the Commission's authority to manage wildlife and outdoor recreation. The Department is fiscally responsible with a wide variety of funding sources, each with its own restrictions on use.

#### **Governance and Finance Goals:**

- Enhance the Department's viability and relevance for wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation.
- Be fiscally responsible.
- Seek adequate and diverse funding to fulfill the Department's Mission.
- Enhance and protect the Department's ability to conserve and manage wildlife resources and outdoor recreation.

#### **Governance and Finance Objectives:**

- Promote practices, policies, legislation, laws, regulations and legal strategies that enhance and protect the Department's ability to conserve and manage wildlife resources and outdoor recreation.
- Ensure fund balances are adequate to address long- and short-term contingencies.
- Ensure budgets are responsive to public and agency needs.
- Seek additional sources of funding that involve the Department's diverse constituencies and beneficiaries.
- Maximize financial agility

#### **Governance and Finance Strategies:**

- Draft direction, policies, legislation, laws, regulations and legal strategies to enhance and protect the Department's ability to conserve and manage wildlife resources and outdoor recreation.
- Ensure compliance with eligibility of expenditures by fund.
- Foster a culture of individual fiscal responsibility and accountability.
- Use knowledge of fund eligibilities to enhance financial agility.
- Research potential new sources of funding.

- Improve systems to enhance monitoring of budget and expenditures, and to ensure transparency.

## **CUSTOMER RELATIONS**

### **Issues Affecting Customer Relations:**

Customers expect to conduct business through a variety of means, and to be satisfied with their contact. Customer relationships are often built on limited interactions; however it is imperative that customer expectations are consistently met or exceeded as the Department relies on the public to achieve its mission.

### **Customer Relations Goals:**

- Provide world-class customer service to achieve lasting customer relationships.

### **Customer Relations Objectives:**

- Enhance a culture of individual responsibility to provide world-class customer service.
- Anticipate needs and exceed customer expectations.

### **Customer Relations Strategies:**

- Implement a variety of methods to provide products and services to customers.
- Model expected behaviors and encourage employees to provide world-class customer service.
- Establish competencies and standards of customer service reflecting expected behaviors to be pleasant, respectful, responsive, and accountable.
- Use customer feedback to enhance customer service.
- Benchmark customer service best practices across industries to ensure world-class customer service.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Issues Affecting Education**

Demand for education and outreach events exceeds the Department's available resources. For example, the Department requires youth between the ages of 10 and 14 to complete a hunter education program in order to hunt big game. This creates demand for hunter education courses that exceeds staff and volunteer capacity in some areas. Likewise, the demand for sport fishing clinics and requests for events with live animals far exceeds the number of instructors available to meet the requests. Another challenge is attracting watercraft and OHV operators to take classes to learn safe and responsible use of those vehicles as there is little incentive for many to do so. In addition, implementation of curricula into the formal education system is challenging and complex.

### **Education Goals:**

- Promote safe, ethical and responsible wildlife-related and outdoor recreation.
- Enhance the public's understanding and appreciation of wildlife conservation.
- Increase public engagement in wildlife-related and other outdoor recreation.

### **Education Objectives:**

- Increase frequency and availability of Department education courses.

- Provide the Department’s wildlife related curriculum to Arizona schools including the concepts of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.
- Plan, design and construct the Wildlife Education Center at the Department’s Headquarters.
- Develop a comprehensive OHV education program.

### **Education Strategies:**

- Provide hunter education courses and field days to meet customer needs throughout Arizona.
- Implement approaches to increase the number of sport fish education programs provided throughout Arizona.
- Expand public access to watercraft and OHV education courses through a variety of methodologies.
- Develop and deploy Arizona standards based wildlife curriculum to Arizona schools and home school students.
- Distribute educational material to enhance understanding of wildlife conservation and increase awareness of “orphaned” wildlife issues.
- Expand opportunities for education and field days to engage the public.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

### **Issues Affecting Public Information:**

Many Arizonans are unfamiliar with the Department and its mission. In order to accomplish our mission it is imperative for the Department to build public support by promoting awareness and understanding of its activities. The Department uses a variety of communication styles to inform and engage the public.

### **Public Information Goals:**

- Build a well-informed and engaged public that supports wildlife conservation and the Department’s mission.
- Foster a diverse constituency that is valued and recognized for their support of the Department.
- Ensure the Department is recognized as the credible source for information on wildlife, shooting sports, watercraft and OHVs.

### **Public Information Objectives:**

- Increase awareness of the Department’s responsibility to manage wildlife.
- Increase the number of the Department’s E-News subscriptions.
- Increase the number Arizona Wildlife Views subscriptions.
- Provide quality, timely information.
- Improve communication with under-represented demographic segments.
- Encourage diverse participation in outdoor and wildlife-related recreation.
- Promote core concepts of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, emphasizing the “user-pay, user-benefit” construct which allows wildlife to be managed for the benefit of all citizens.
- Minimize human-wildlife conflicts.

### **Public Information Strategies:**

- Use all available methods and technologies to communicate with the public.

- Market the Department's *Wildlife Views* magazine and television show to gain wider audiences.
- Improve Spanish-language communication products and services.
- Develop and implement evolving social media vehicles for communications.
- Communicate Commission decisions in an effective, balanced and timely manner.
- Upgrade the Department's internal and external websites.
- Provide information to reduce the frequency and seriousness of human-wildlife conflicts.

## **RESOURCES AND LOGISTICS**

### **Issues Affecting Resources and Logistics Support**

Department facilities and habitat enhancements are critical to achieve the mission. The Department must maintain and develop facilities and enhancements to ensure safe use by employees and the public. The Department's logistical infrastructure includes its lands, buildings and fleet (trucks, cars, boats, ATVs, aircraft, heavy equipment and trailers), along with other supplies. Technological infrastructure includes the Department's enterprise integrated business, science analysis, productivity, and digital communication systems.

### **Resources and Logistics Goals:**

- Provide equipment, resources and technology necessary to achieve the Department's mission.
- Ensure the safety and functionality of Department resources.
- Deliver reliable technology and systems.

### **Resources and Logistics Objectives:**

- Provide the technological platforms to meet public expectations and increase Department effectiveness.
- Improve and diversify methods to meet public needs.
- Deploy fully-functioning enterprise architecture.
- Develop safe and functional facilities.
- Enhance technology to increase the efficiency and productivity of the Department's workforce.

### **Resources and Logistics Strategies:**

- Implement a comprehensive Department-wide facilities inspection and maintenance program.
- Maintain Department facilities to ensure useful life is attained or exceeded.
- Implement a fully integrated customer management system.
- Provide the necessary technology to ensure the productivity and safety of our employees.
- Assess the appropriateness of the Department's resources.
- Standardize and simplify technology resources.
- Ensure the integrity, security and standardization of our digital architecture and systems.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **Issues Affecting Human Resources:**

The Department faces various human resource challenges. Although the Department has a low employee turn-over rate, a significant number of long-term employees are expected to retire in the coming years taking with them institutional knowledge and continuity. Some younger candidates for wildlife positions lack many of the skills associated with working in the field. Additionally, the Department's workforce is not as representative of Arizona's diverse population as it could be.

#### **Human Resources Goals:**

- Be recognized as a great place to work where people are inspired to contribute to the Mission.
- Maintain a highly trained and qualified work force.
- Strive for a workforce that is representative of Arizona's diverse demographics.

#### **Human Resource Objectives:**

- Recruit, retain and reward the best employees.
- Ensure employees are adequately trained.

#### **Human Resource Strategies:**

- Provide mandatory employee training through a variety of methods.
- Secure partnerships to prepare potential candidates for Department employment.
- Implement a leadership succession program.

### **RESEARCH**

#### **Issues Affecting Research:**

The Department relies on the best available biological and social research to support management recommendations. Requests for research to guide Department management decisions are increasing and need to be prioritized to ensure primary management needs are met.

#### **Research Goals:**

- Inform management decisions through robust and credible biological and social research.
- Be a leader in biological and social science through credible research.

#### **Research Objectives:**

- Identify and prioritize research and needs.
- Expand scientific expertise relevant to wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation.

#### **Research Strategies:**

- Maintain and refine processes to identify and prioritize management information needs.
- Conduct robust research and communicate results.
- Establish best procedures for sharing research results and expertise.
- Develop and expand partnerships to increase research and science capacity and to provide synergistic research collaborations.
- Assess future capacity and expertise needs, and develop plans for attaining these resources.
- Enhance the Department's research capacity by actively pursuing alternative funding opportunities that support the Department's Mission.

Employ an entrepreneurial model to enhance the Department's research capabilities and services.