

INFORMATION SUPPORT PROJECT

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission has statutory authority under A.R.S. 17-231 to “develop and distribute information about wildlife and activities of the Department” and under A.R.S. Title 17 Article 4 to “provide an informational and educational program on off-highway vehicle recreation and law enforcement activities relating to state off-highway vehicle laws and enforcement to protect wildlife habitat.”

The Arizona Game and Fish Department’s Information Support Project is charged with informing the public about the Department’s programs, goals, objectives and achievements, and marketing all of the Department’s products and services. These programs and activities include wildlife management work, as well as off-highway vehicle and watercraft safety and support projects such as law enforcement, public education, and watchable wildlife. The Information Project is a service-oriented project designed to support the dissemination of messages to the public of all of the Department’s programs as the need is identified. In addition, the Information Project’s customer service staff is responsible for fielding daily phone calls, e-mails and visits to Department offices by the public. Customer service staff sells licenses and publications, register watercraft, answer questions about Department issues and programs, and direct phone calls to other Department staff members.

The Information Project accomplish its work through the creation and distribution of various communications products, including press releases, media advisories, newsletters, brochures, fact sheets, posters, giveaway items with Department branding, videos and other multimedia products, content on the Department’s Web site at azgfd.gov, “Arizona Wildlife Views” television show, “Arizona Wildlife Views” magazine, advertising, direct mail, books, interpretive displays and signage, and various other publications, including the hunting and fishing rules and regulations, media field trips, news conferences, as well as direct public communications through telephone calls and personal contact.

The Information Project also plays a role in various Department outreach events, often coordinating and organizing the Department’s participation in those events to directly communicate with the public.

OPERATIONAL APPROACHES

Resource Management Objectives

1. Use various communication products to promote public awareness of wildlife management efforts with consideration of social and economic factors.
2. Use various communication products to promote habitat conservation and restoration projects, and habitat connectivity projects. (1.A.1, 1.A.3, 1.A.4)
3. Use various communication products to promote public awareness of invasive species issues.

4. Use various communication products to promote public awareness of threatened/endangered species recovery work.
5. Use various communication products to promote public awareness of rulemaking and legislation efforts to conserve wildlife populations and habitats.
6. Use various communication products to promote public awareness of partnerships that manage wildlife populations and their habitats.

Wildlife Recreation Objectives

1. Promote public awareness and encourage continued compliance with regulations governing wildlife-related recreational activities using various communications products to discuss law enforcement issues.
2. Implement efforts to increase hunter and angler recruitment and retention through the development and execution of a complete communications plan designed to communicate with the public about hunting recreation and other outdoor recreation opportunities that act as bridge programs to recruit and retain hunters and anglers.
3. Use various communication products to promote watchable wildlife recreational opportunities.
4. Use various communications products to promote Department wildlife areas.
5. Inform the public on factors influencing recreational opportunity and public access across private lands by communicating about various land management issues that arise and by promoting the Department's Landowner Relations Program.
6. Inform the public on responsible recreational use, including impacts on wildlife resources, courtesy toward other recreationists and respect for private property rights through various communications products.

Public Awareness, Support and Involvement Objectives

1. Incorporate messaging about the North American Model into various communications products
2. Incorporate messaging about the Department's mission into various communications products.
3. Promote the Department's "Focus Wild Arizona" environmental education program.

4. Continue to offer free copies of “Arizona Wildlife Views” magazine to all public school libraries.
5. Continue to use a kids’ section of the “Arizona Wildlife Views” magazine with content about environmental education.
6. Increase the number of media outlets and specific journalists to the Department’s news release distribution list.
7. Increase the number of constituent names to the distribution lists for the Department’s e-newsletter products, including the weekly “Fishing Report,” “Hunting Highlights,” “Shooting Sports News,” “Working with Wildlife” and “Wildlife News.”
8. Establish a new off-highway vehicle e-newsletter.
9. Promote and disseminate messages about alternative funding opportunities using the “Working with Wildlife” e-newsletter.
10. Increase efforts to inform the public about living responsibly with wildlife using various communications products.
11. Work with the Education Program to increase participation in hunter and angler recruitment and retention programs, hunter education, sportfishing education, boating safety education and shooting sports programs through publicity for those programs.
12. Increase public awareness of the need to use watercraft and off-highway vehicles in a manner that is safe and responsible by implementing complete communications plans on watercraft safety and the safe and responsible use off-highway vehicles.
13. Increase the use of volunteers through promotion of the Department’s volunteer programs.

Off-highway Vehicle, Watercraft and Shooting Sports Recreation Objectives

1. Inform the public on responsible recreational use, including impacts on wildlife resources, courtesy toward other recreationists and respect for private property rights through stories in Department communications vehicles.
2. Inform the public about factors influencing recreational opportunity and public access across private lands, including through promotion of the Department’s Landowner Relations Program.
3. Recruit and maintain shooting sports participants through publicity on the Department’s shooting sports programs and shooting range activities, including the programs and activities of the Ben Avery Shooting Facility.

4. Expand public awareness and acceptance of the shooting sports as a leadership and recreation opportunity for young people.
 - a. Promote youth shooting sports programs, including the Scholastic Clay Target Program, First Shots Program, Trail Blazers and Archery in the Schools, through the use of various Department communications vehicles, including the “Shooting Sports” e-newsletter and “Wildlife News.”
 - b. Improve the Department Web site sections on these youth sporting programs.
 - c. Participate in outreach events, such as school activities and kids’ fairs, to educate families about shooting sports and the positive values instilled by taking part in them.
5. Promote expanded operating under the influence (OUI) watercraft enforcement efforts.
 - a. Publicize OUI checkpoints and other OUI law enforcement efforts through Department communications vehicles, such as the “Wildlife News” e-newsletter.
6. Use a wide variety of techniques to communicate more effectively with off-highway vehicle and watercraft groups to promote safe and responsible use.
7. Incorporate messaging about watercraft and off-highway vehicle rules, regulations and safety in Department e-newsletters and press releases about watercraft and off-highway vehicle use.
 - a. Maintain and improve watercraft and off-highway vehicle sections of the Department’s Web site.
 - b. Add an off-highway vehicle newsletter to the list of Department e-newsletter products.

Customer Diversity Objectives

1. Identify the public’s education or service needs and desires related to wildlife, watercraft and off-highway vehicles.
 - a. Utilize information from recent focus groups on culturally diverse Department communications.
 - b. Develop a comprehensive list of Arizona media outlets serving culturally diverse communities and ask what those outlets would like to see in stories from the Arizona Game and Fish Department.
2. Identify underrepresented groups and develop programs to increase their participation in or understanding of the Department’s services and wildlife management mission.
 - a. Work with culturally diverse media outlets to identify and promote messaging to their audience groups.
3. Increase the number of classes, communication or other services provided to underrepresented or minority communities.
 - a. Identify appropriate Department communications products, including publications, for translation and distribution in other languages.

- b. Expand distribution of existing Spanish-language regulations and urban wildlife products, such as door hangers and posters.
 - c. Participate in outreach events hosted and attended by a range of culturally diverse groups.
4. Establish and maintain partnerships with a broad range of organizations.
- a. Work to establish partnerships with culturally diverse media outlets and culturally diverse groups that host outreach events.

Partnership Objectives

- 1. Effectively communicate the Department's goals to partners by coordinating on joint messaging in press releases and Department communications products.

Financial Services Objectives

- 1. Promote Department efforts to find significant new funding mechanisms.
 - a. Produce and distribute messaging in e-newsletters, press releases and Web site content.
- 2. Inform the public and partners about the Department's budget development and the budget approval process.
 - a. Produce and distribute messaging in e-newsletters, press releases and Web site content.

OTHER SUB-PROGRAM AND SUPPORT PROJECT PRIORITY NEEDS

Game, Nongame, Sportfish, Watchable Wildlife, Education, Law Enforcement, Off-highway Vehicles, Watercraft, Research, Development, Wildlife Area Management and Habitat and Sections of the Department – The Information Project will coordinate with those entities to identify opportunities for Department publicity and to create, get approval of, and distribute communications products about those opportunities.

Business Administration- The Information Project will coordinate with this area of the Department on financial and human resources aspects.