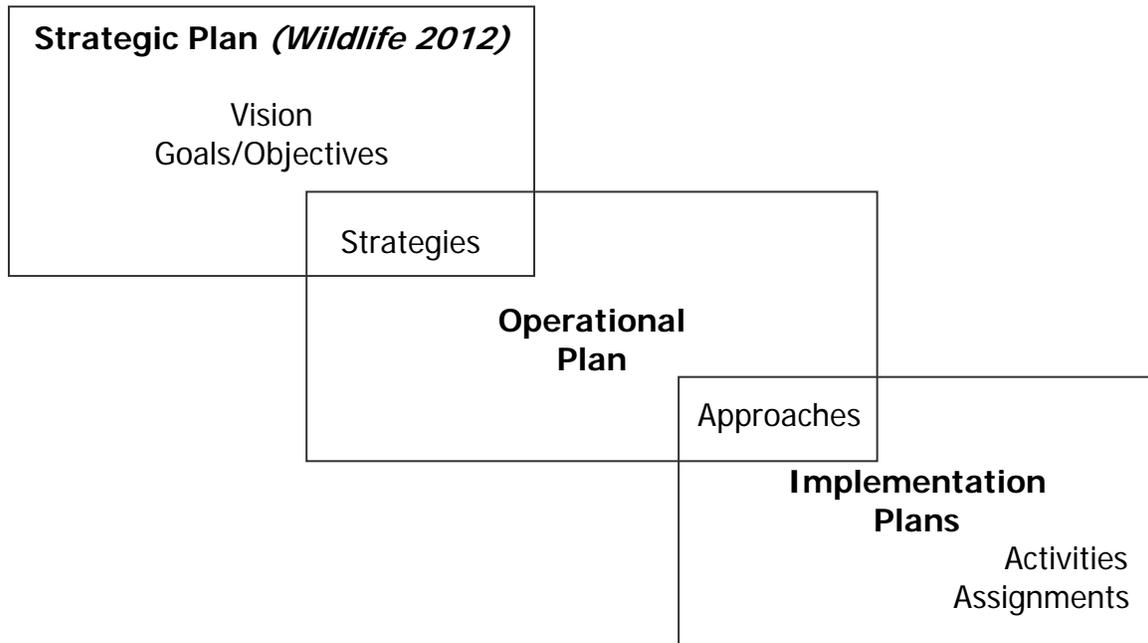


Arizona Game and Fish Operational Planning

Foreward

To accomplish its mission, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (Department) uses an integrated planning process to allocate the agency's resources into a comprehensive management system based on a three tiered-planning process. This process consists of a strategic plan (*Wildlife 2012*), an operational plan and associated implementation plans as illustrated below:



Within *Wildlife 2012 (2012)* the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, with public input, established a six year planning horizon by which specific goals and objectives are identified and translated into a suite of strategic commitments which drive a structured operational planning (on a two year horizon) and implementation process (on a one year horizon). The Department's statutorily mandated responsibilities are implemented through its major programmatic functions, identified in *2012* as "Key Areas of Emphasis" reflecting the Department's traditional lines of business. These key areas comprise of the following Programs and Subprograms:

- **Wildlife Program:** The wildlife management program is divided into three subprograms: game management, nongame management and sportfish management. The success of these subprograms relies on other key project areas, including environmental/habitat evaluation, research activities, law enforcement, habitat development/modification, information and education, among others.

Game Management Subprogram: The purpose of the Game Management subprogram is to protect, restore and manage game populations and their habitats to maintain the natural diversity of Arizona, and to provide equal wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities for all present and future generations. “Game” includes big game, small game, fur-bearing animals, predatory animals, upland game birds and migratory game birds.

Nongame Management Subprogram: The purpose of the Nongame Management subprogram is to protect, restore, preserve and maintain nongame and endangered wildlife as part of the natural diversity of Arizona and to provide opportunities for the public to enjoy nongame and endangered wildlife without detriment to those resources. “Nongame wildlife” is all wildlife except game mammals, game birds, furbearing animals, predatory animals and game fish. “Endangered wildlife,” are those species listed by the Department as Tier 1a Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies *Species of Greatest Conservation Need* or by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as endangered, threatened or a candidate for such status.

Sportfish Management Subprogram: The purpose of the Sportfish Management subprogram is to protect and manage sportfish populations and their habitats, while also working to preserve the natural diversity of Arizona. Sportfish management also provides fishing opportunities for present and future generations. “Sportfish” means fish that are pursued by anglers, including cold-water fish (such as trout) and warm-water fish (such as largemouth bass). The Department’s water quality staff help ensure the quality of our fishing waters.

- **Off-highway Vehicle Program:** The Arizona Game and Fish Department is the primary state agency for law enforcement, education and training related to off-highway vehicles. To fulfill its statutory responsibility, the Department works to manage off-highway vehicles in a manner that protects Arizona’s wildlife and wildlife resources; to educate people about responsible and ethical off-highway vehicle use opportunities; to manage off-highway vehicle recreation; and to encourage users of off-highway vehicles to operate in a manner that is safe, responsible and ethical. To accomplish these, the Department concentrates on public information and education, law enforcement and habitat damage assessment. The Department relies on the Off-highway Vehicle Recreation Fund (administered jointly between the Department and Arizona State Parks) for these activities.
- **Watercraft Program:** The Arizona Game and Fish Department is the primary agency coordinating watercraft law enforcement and boating safety for Arizona. The program’s purpose is to educate the boating public about safe use, facilitate watercraft recreation and promote safe and responsible watercraft recreation. To accomplish these, the Department enforces watercraft laws, maintains aids to navigation, registers watercraft and provides information materials and education opportunities to the public. The Department relies primarily on watercraft registration fees and U.S. Coast Guard grant funding for these activities.

- **Business Administration Program:** The Business Administration Program supports the financial, physical and information systems infrastructure that allows the Department to accomplish its many goals. This program includes specific processes, strategies and objectives for the systematic management of the Department’s financial and physical assets (facilities, information systems, infrastructure support, etc.), human resources, and outreach and marketing efforts. Business administration supports the entire Department, and as such is funded through all the Department’s funding sources.

These “Key Areas of Emphasis” have and will continue to channel the broad range of responsibilities charged to the Department into a distinct set of administrative priorities that influence both organizational structure and budgetary controls. However, to more coherently identify practical interfaces between work units and other departmental functions from a planning process perspective, *2012* established four “Strategic Themes,” that include Wildlife, People, Business Management and Staffing. It is under these four themes by which specific strategies provide a platform for guiding the development of an array of operational approaches which have been assimilated into this comprehensive planning document. In addition to the “Programs and Subprograms” that are directly aligned with the “Key Areas of Emphasis,” critical support functions have been similarly developed to fully encompass the diverse activities implemented by the Department in support of its overall mission. As such, the following planning components make up the Department’s “Operational Plan:”

Key Areas of Emphasis

- Game
- Nongame
- Sportfish
- OHV
- Watercraft
- Business Administration (includes Funds Planning, Risk Management, Human Resources, Finance and Accounting, Support Services and Information Systems)

Critical Support Functions

- Education
- Information
- Law Enforcement
- Development
- Wildlife Areas
- Watchable Wildlife
- Habitat
- Research

It is intended that this process facilitate collaborative planning across traditional work unit and project level barriers (branches, programs, sections, etc.) as opposed to independent project-driven planning and funding allocation. As a result, operational

plans will plainly integrate the Department's professional competencies, budget eligibilities and other resources into activities that collectively achieve the conservation and management strategies established in 2012. These plans are formatted in a manner that links each operational approach with a corresponding strategy or set of strategies in 2012. Additionally, they identify critical program/work unit interfaces as well as dedicated or eligible funding sources. To facilitate this linkage format, the four main "themes" and their corresponding sub-topics and strategies are listed below using an alphanumeric outline. Each operational plan will use this alphanumeric shorthand to link planned operational approaches back to specific strategies established in 2012.

Wildlife 2012 Strategic Theme #1: Wildlife

A. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

1. Assess the status of wildlife populations, habitats and resources to help prioritize wildlife management programs and activities.
2. Collect and analyze scientific information for use in decision making.
3. Establish guidelines for managing wildlife populations and their habitats that balance the uses of lands and waters with the public's values to ensure sustainability of wildlife populations.
4. Use available tools and resources and develop new ones to conserve and preserve wildlife habitats and populations.
5. Coordinate with partners to manage wildlife populations and their habitats.
6. Manage wildlife with consideration of social and economic factors.

B. WILDLIFE RECREATION STRATEGIES

1. Identify, assess, develop and promote recreational uses of wildlife in Arizona.
2. Minimize obstacles that prevent people from participating in wildlife-oriented recreational activities.
3. Implement efforts to increase hunter and angler recruitment and retention.
4. Identify, assess and develop watchable-wildlife recreational opportunities.
5. Enhance and promote watchable-wildlife recreation.
6. Develop and maintain strong partnerships with private landowners and land management agencies to increase recreation opportunities.
7. Provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners for wildlife habitat improvements in exchange for short-term or perpetual access agreements.
8. Inform and educate the public on factors influencing recreational opportunity and public access across private lands.
9. Inform and educate the public on responsible recreational use, including impacts on wildlife resources, courtesy toward other recreationists and respect for private property rights.

Wildlife 2012 Strategic Theme #2: People

A. PUBLIC AWARENESS, SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

1. Create a broader range of venues for public participation in Department management direction.
2. Publicize and actively market environmental education curriculum through the Web and other media.
3. Expand informational, educational and interpretive outreach opportunities.
4. Increase the recruitment and retention of hunters, anglers, shooting sports participants and volunteers.
5. Identify, assess, develop and promote watchable-wildlife recreational opportunities.
6. Provide materials to educators that help them meet Arizona educational standards.

B. OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE, WATERCRAFT AND SHOOTING SPORTS RECREATION STRATEGIES

1. Inform and educate the public on factors influencing recreational opportunity and public access across private lands.
2. Inform and educate the public on responsible recreational use, including impacts on wildlife resources, courtesy toward other recreationists and respect for private property rights.
3. Develop and maintain statewide shooting ranges.
4. Recruit and retain shooting sports participants.
5. Expand public awareness and acceptance of the shooting sports as a leadership and recreation opportunity for young people.
6. Provide additional Hunter Education training options.
7. Expand operating under the influence (OUI) watercraft enforcement efforts.
8. Construct new and enhance existing boating-related facilities (such as ramps), while minimizing impacts to wildlife resources.
9. Use a wide variety of techniques to communicate more effectively with off-highway vehicle and watercraft groups to promote safe, responsible and ethical behavior.

C. CUSTOMER DIVERSITY STRATEGIES

1. Identify the public's education or service needs and desires related to wildlife, watercraft and off-highway vehicles.
2. Identify underrepresented groups and develop programs to increase their participation in or understanding of the Department's services and wildlife management mission.
3. Increase the number of classes, communication or other services provided to underrepresented or minority communities.
4. Establish and maintain partnerships with a broad range of organizations.

D. PARTNERSHIPS STRATEGIES

1. Identify common wildlife interests and goals of current and potential partners.
2. Effectively communicate the Department's goals to partners.
3. Develop new and maintain effective partnerships.
4. Establish partnerships to support responsible watercraft, off-highway vehicle and shooting sports recreation.

Wildlife 2012 Strategic Theme #3: Business Management

A. FINANCIAL SERVICES STRATEGIES

1. Update and maintain financial and planning management systems to ensure funds are available to sustain planned activities and provide the agility to address unexpected opportunities or new priorities.
2. Develop and monitor short-term (less than two years out) and long-term (four years out) spending plans aligned with the Department's strategic plan.
3. Administer and revise as necessary the Department's fiscal/budget policies, procedures and business processes.
4. Use the three-tiered planning processes to enhance management of the Department.
5. Provide management with timely, consistent, uniform and accurate financial reports to assist in effective management decisions.
6. Find significant new funding mechanisms.
7. Inform the public and partners about the Department's budget development and the budget approval process.

B. PHYSICAL ASSETS STRATEGIES

1. Optimize the use of iPlan, the state's Web-based strategic planning tool, to capture and manage a detailed account of facility and building conditions to support short- and long-term capital improvement planning and scheduled maintenance and renewal projects.
2. Implement capital investment opportunities to increase energy efficiency, improve accessibility and enhance health and safety.
3. Conduct efficiency reviews and best practices evaluation of internal and external programs and implement strategies that will confer efficiency and value.
4. Invest in technology (such as motor pool and information systems) to upgrade the infrastructure to provide support to internal and external customer services.

Wildlife 2012 Strategic Theme #4: Staff

A. HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGIES

1. Improve recruitment strategies.
2. Revise and implement the Department's diversity plan with emphasis on developing mentoring programs and partnerships with schools to increase awareness of natural resources career opportunities to under-represented groups.
3. Continue to provide diversity awareness training to new employees and develop supervisory training that fosters understanding of and commitment to the value of a diverse work force.
4. Address pay issues, by seeking market-based compensation for all employees.
5. Develop and implement a systematic approach to leadership skills and attitude development, including an employee-mentoring program.
6. Provide training that incorporates core competencies to ensure leadership continuity.
7. Recognize employees for their contributions throughout the year.