

A Strategic Plan for
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Natural Agenda



FISCAL YEARS 2027–2031



AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

For Fiscal Years 2027-2031

by the

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

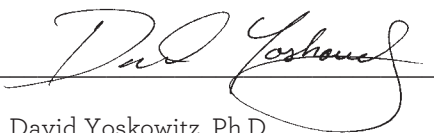
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Paul L. Foster
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TPWD STRATEGIC PLAN



TPWD STRATEGIC PLAN

This plan is the single strategic document guiding TPWD.

Core operational goals identify the general purposes that will direct TPWD efforts in support of its mission. Objectives outline steps towards attaining those goals. Action items represent current and future steps to be taken to ensure that goals and objectives are accomplished in a measurable and time-based manner. All action items are on a fiscal year (FY) basis. The scope of these action items is between 2027 and the end of 2031 unless a fiscal year or an annual basis is specified.

MISSION

To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

PHILOSOPHY

In fulfilling our mission, we will:

- Be a recognized national leader in implementing effective natural and cultural resources conservation, law enforcement, and outdoor recreational programs;
- Serve Texans, visitors, and our employees with the highest standards of service, professionalism, fairness, courtesy, and respect;
- Rely on the best available science to guide our conservation and management decisions;
- Responsibly manage agency finances and appropriations to ensure the most efficient and effective use of taxpayer and user fee resources; and
- Attract and retain the best, brightest and most talented workforce to successfully execute our mission.

GOAL 1

Practice, Encourage, and Enable Science-based Conservation and Stewardship of Natural and Cultural Resources

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Be an exemplary steward of the public's lands and waters by using the best available science for ecosystem-based management.
- B. Provide technical assistance, scientific tools, and strategies to restore and protect healthy aquatic ecosystems.
- C. Maintain, restore and protect healthy ecosystems on public lands.
- D. Foster conservation of healthy ecosystems on private lands.
- E. Maintain the highest level of scientific validity and credibility.
- F. Restore, recover, and protect Species of Greatest Conservation Need, including state and federally listed species.
- G. Establish and enforce regulations to conserve fish and wildlife resources.
- H. Protect and interpret cultural resources.
- I. Anticipate and plan for emerging conservation issues.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

- » Conduct 9,750 surveys annually to assess population trends of recreationally and commercially important species and their habitats.
- » Perform 190 project-based consultations annually, through state and federal regulatory processes, to inform the conservation of fish and wildlife resources.
- » Create and publish maps of subtidal habitats in one bay every three years.

- » Restore 50 acres of degraded and lost oyster habitats annually to contribute to the sustainability of the oyster fishery and resilience of Texas estuaries.
- » Design, plan, and implement 25 aquatic habitat restoration or enhancement projects annually in Texas creeks, rivers, and lakes.
- » Manage 15,000 acres of aquatic invasive or nuisance vegetation annually on Texas lakes to enhance fish habitat and fishing access.
- » Stock 33 million fish fingerlings annually in Texas public waters.
- » Support 10 public leased fishing access areas annually on Texas creeks and rivers.
- » Provide 1,425,000 acres of Texas land annually for public hunting.
- » Dedicate 17,000 hours of staff time annually to the management of aquatic invasive species.
- » Fulfill statewide sampling goals for surveillance of Chronic Wasting Disease.
- » Perform 100 fish kill or fish health investigations annually.
- » Update the statewide assessment of ecologically significant stream segments by 2028.
- » Work towards facilitating voluntary environmental water transactions, flow agreements, or water level agreements that focus on conserving fish and wildlife resources and enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities.
- » Provide technical input into the 2029 State Flood Plans and associated regional flood plans, focusing on nature-based solutions, floodplain maintenance, and riparian and riverine floodplain ecosystem health.
- » Provide technical input into the triennial reviews of the Texas Surface Water Quality Standards to enhance protection of fish and wildlife resources.
- » Implement 14 cooperative agreements with federal and state agencies to manage wildlife habitats and provide hunting opportunities on public lands.
- » Collaborate with the Texas land trust community and cooperating landowners using conservation easements to protect an additional 18,000 acres of private working lands by 2029.
- » Implement and maintain TPWD-approved wildlife management agreements on 20% of the total land acreage of Texas.
- » Maintain the Texas Ecosystem Analytical Mapper Tool to enable access to data and information on vegetation communities and inform the management and conservation of fish and wildlife habitats.
- » Conduct or collaborate on 70 applied research projects annually to inform the management and conservation of fish and wildlife resources.
- » Host 10 science events (e.g., virtual webinars, workshops) annually to facilitate information-sharing among TPWD scientists, external cooperators, stakeholders, and the public.
- » Reassess the conservation status of 25 Species of Greatest Conservation Need annually.
- » Review the best available science and update the lists of Species of Greatest Conservation Need, State Threatened species, and State Endangered species at least every five years.
- » Expand or restore the occupied range of five Species of Greatest Conservation Need by 2031 through repatriation, habitat restoration, and other conservation actions.
- » Dedicate 500,000 hours annually to educate the public and enforce fisheries and wildlife rules and regulations.
- » Dedicate 165,000 hours annually to educate the public and enforce water safety rules and regulations.
- » Perform a comprehensive gap analysis of laws, regulations, and enforcement strategies needed to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants by 2028.
- » Initiate a comprehensive gap analysis of laws, regulations, and enforcement strategies needed to prevent the introduction and spread of terrestrial invasive plant and wildlife species.
- » Conduct five cultural resource inventories on state park sites by 2028.
- » Provide six training courses annually for relevant TPWD personnel on the identification and protection of archeological and historic resources on public lands.
- » Review 200 project planning proposals annually to address impacts to cultural resources on TPWD sites.
- » Assemble six new archeological site monitoring plans annually.
- » Install 18 interpretive exhibits at state parks focused on cultural heritage by 2028.

GOAL 2

Increase Access to and Participation in the Outdoors

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Provide a variety of high-quality, nature-oriented outdoor recreational opportunities on TPWD sites.
- B. Encourage people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to experience the outdoors.
- C. Encourage nature and heritage tourism.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

- » Facilitate 31.5 million paid state park visits.
- » Provide fishing opportunities and related outreach to 30,000 visitors annually at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center.
- » Construct 52 miles of trails on state park sites.
- » Provide outdoor programs at TPWD sites reaching 226,000 youth annually.
- » Add 66,000 acres to the state park system.
- » Acquire and initiate development on three additional properties to add to the state park system by 2029.
- » Coordinate with federal, state, and local land management agencies to plan, construct, and provide access to four state park sites currently owned by the state park system.
- » Increase the amount of state park acreage within a 60-mile radius of the Texas Triangle by 4%.
- » Certify 60,000 students annually in hunter education.
- » Certify 30,000 students annually in boater education.
- » Reach 400,000 Texans annually through delivery of angler education, aquatic education, shooting sports, and other outreach and education programs.
- » Introduce 2,000 Texans to camping annually through Texas Outdoor Family workshops.
- » Increase fishing participation annually by an average of 2%.
- » Increase hunting participation annually by an average of 1%.
- » Maintain websites of and partnerships with existing Texas Paddling Trails for access to paddling, fishing, and wildlife viewing on rivers, lakes, bays, and coastal areas.
- » Increase Texas Paddling Trails by 100 miles.
- » Update at least 33% of the Great Texas Wildlife Trails on the website annually.
- » Increase Great Texas Birding Classic participation by 2% annually.

GOAL 3

Educate, Inform, and Engage Texans in Support of Conservation and Recreation

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Cultivate support for the conservation of natural and cultural resources.
- B. Increase awareness of the value of urban and suburban ecosystems.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

- » Conduct 800 presentations and consultations annually for the public focused on the management and conservation of fish and wildlife resources.
- » Conduct a Fishing and Hunting for Conservation workshop annually to grow advocates for hunting, wildlife, fishing, and aquatic resource conservation.
- » Support 18 high-use urban fishing sites annually through the Neighborhood Fishin' Program.

- » Complete an average of 30 local park construction projects annually supported through the Recreation Grants Program.
- » Produce and disseminate seven videos annually that provide technical guidance to the public on urban and suburban wildlife topics.

GOAL 4

Employ Efficient, Sustainable and Sound Business Practices

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Continuously improve business management systems and business practices.
- B. Provide excellent customer service with integrity and professionalism.
- C. Seek and leverage financial resources.
- D. Ensure regulations and publications are balanced, effective and easy to understand.
- E. Develop effective communication processes and tools.
- F. Continuously refine and improve the customer-service experience of purchasing and using licenses, permits, and entrance fees.
- G. Efficiently manage lands and facilities for sustainable public use.
- H. Promote an organizational culture which is informed, adaptive, and innovative.
- I. Promote a human capital strategy to ensure a professional workforce.
- J. Provide a healthy and safe work environment for its employees and customers.
- K. Continually improve the department's security posture through innovative approaches that enable TPWD to respond quickly and efficiently to cybersecurity threats.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

- » Complete a succession plan for all TPWD divisions by 2028.
- » Continue a department-wide survey of former department interns currently holding FTE positions by 2027.
- » By 2028, develop and implement a department-wide data literacy program that empowers staff to confidently use and understand data in their work, build knowledge, and make informed decisions.
- » By 2028, based on funding availability, complete a department-wide assessment of the agency data landscape to identify strengths, gaps, and priority areas that will guide more informed and effective data management practices.
- » By 2028, invest funds to expand network infrastructure, tripling its capacity to support faster, more secure, and more reliable connectivity for staff and constituents.
- » Maintain department cybersecurity maturity levels above level three, in accordance with Texas Cybersecurity Framework standards, by continuing to improve the department's security posture through strengthening data security and privacy practices, building a culture of security awareness, reviewing and modernizing cybersecurity policies, enhancing incident response readiness, improving configuration and asset management, and reducing the overall attack surface.

OPERATIONAL GOALS AND ACTION PLANS



OPERATIONAL GOALS AND ACTION PLANS

The following section includes information in compliance with instructions issued by the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor's Office, including goals, objectives, and action items, as well as explanations of how each goal supports key statewide objectives, and considerations relevant to each goal, based on an internal/external assessment of key factors influencing TPWD.

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SUPPORT OF STATEWIDE OBJECTIVES:

The goal/action items above support the statewide objectives as follows:

Accountable to tax and fee payers of Texas:

- TPWD relies heavily on user fees paid by a variety of customers, including hunters, anglers, park visitors, outdoor enthusiasts, and others. Use of these fees to provide and improve the quality and availability of programs and services aimed at managing, conserving, and protecting the state's natural and cultural resources compels TPWD to be accountable to constituents and to use funds in accordance with taxpayer expectations.
- The department's stewardship of natural and cultural resources provides access to a broad array of state parks and wildlife management areas, as well as fishing and hunting opportunities, for a wide variety of Texans. The State Parks Division has initiated multiple wetland and prairie restoration projects, including but not limited to projects in Galveston Island, Huntsville, Lake Livingston and Lake Somerville state parks.
- The public's participation in discussions related to the strategic direction of the department is vital to ensure that TPWD meets changing constituent priorities. Recent efforts include scoping meetings with the public regarding New World screwworm, cultivated oyster mariculture, oyster certificate of location regulation changes, state park developments, hunting regulations, and the expansion of digital license and tag options for recreational hunting and fishing.
- TPWD provides both in-person and online public comment opportunities for all action items on Commission meeting agendas, allowing meaningful feedback opportunities for constituents to engage with department leadership on issues of importance to them.

Efficient such that maximum results are produced with a minimum waste of taxpayer funds, including through elimination of redundant and non-core functions:

- TPWD is committed to increasing the automation of agency functions as a means of efficiently supporting its programs. The agency continues to provide new services in mobile and web-based applications. Examples include rewriting the Boat Titling and Registration System, expansion of digital license and tag options for recreational hunting and fishing, and adopting technologies like low-code development to quickly develop applications. These applications improve workflows and increase convenience and customization for department customers.
- The use of the best available science to guide natural and cultural resource management allows TPWD to focus efforts appropriately and to better anticipate emerging issues, ultimately enabling the department to implement programs and respond to new concerns in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- Improvements to the Commission Hearing Room at TPWD headquarters include an upgraded AV system that incorporates multiple cameras, more targeted lighting for streaming Commission meetings, and additional features to aid in engaging with a wider digital audience.

Effective in successfully fulfilling core functions, measuring success in achieving performance measures, and implementing plans to continuously improve:

- Management and conservation of natural and cultural resources are integral to the department's mission. Reliance on best available science to guide decisions regarding these resources has not only resulted in a data-rich environment, but has also fostered an agency culture that is accustomed to using quality data and data analysis to gauge progress towards attainment of conservation and management goals. TPWD continuously relies on these data to redirect and fine-tune programs and to report success in attaining agency goals to oversight agencies using various performance measures. TPWD has established a Science Council to ensure that science-based data continue to be at the center of its decision-making processes.
- In addition to continuously fine-tuning existing programs and reporting on these developments, the department uses its data-rich environment to engage in planning activities, including those related to the development of new wildlife management and state park sites. One example is the development of the Centennial Park Plan (CPP).

Providing excellent customer service:

- TPWD strongly emphasizes customer service in all aspects of agency operations, as evidenced by inclusion of a customer service component in the agency philosophy and as a core competency in staff performance evaluations.
- TPWD uses a variety of mechanisms to solicit stakeholder and customer feedback. The programs within this goal rely heavily on feedback gained from advisory committees, scoping meetings, constituent surveys, and other means to improve programs. Soliciting customer input in these ways allows TPWD to be more responsive to customer needs in structuring programs and services.

Transparent such that agency functions can be understood by any Texan:

- TPWD has several methods for engaging stakeholders in resource stewardship, including the proliferation of technology to increase transparency. Examples include holding meetings for stakeholder groups, publishing proposed regulations online, and inviting public comments to proposed regulations in person and online, including conducting online public hearings regarding proposed regulations. These mechanisms provide opportunities for the public and stakeholders across the state to become aware of planned actions and better understand TPWD programs.
- Using science as a benchmark for decisions concerning what to conserve and how to implement conservation efforts makes these processes both more transparent and more objective.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Modernization of Science-Based Stewardship of Natural and Cultural Resources

One of TPWD's ongoing areas of focus is a cross-divisional overlay initiative containing numerous ongoing and planned efforts to modernize its ability to provide science-based stewardship of land and water resources across the state of Texas.

An example is TPWD's recently launched 2025 revision of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). For the first time, the plan is presented as a fully online, interactive resource designed to be more transparent, accessible, and useful for making real world conservation decisions. This represents the nation's first fully digital SWAP revision and shows TPWD's commitment to forward-thinking user engagement with conservation tools. The new format includes clear, interactive knowledge gap analyses for each Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), map-based Conservation Opportunity tools for both land and water, and an integrated SWAP Portal and Conservation Workbench. These tools allow partners to contribute observations, field notes, and research insights, helping maintain an up-to-date understanding of species and conservation needs. Together, these features make the 2025 SWAP more accessible to a wider audience and more effective in guiding conservation actions across Texas. The SWAP also includes a Knowledge Gap Assessment (KGA) methodology to inform conservation priorities for SGCN. This methodology provides a structured process for prioritizing research, management, and monitoring actions for SGCN by categorizing species based on barrier assessments to guide how to best allocate limited resources.

TPWD recently released a Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA) of Texas smart map model. This model highlights potentially important areas and habitats using the Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas dataset. SGCN habitats and occurrences, threats, and land cover connectivity are used as indicators of potential habitat value. The COA functions as both a decision support model and a database to provide a comprehensive view of Texas' diverse conservation priorities. In addition to providing a tool for informed conservation decisions, it is designed to support the SWAP requirements of "identification of SGCN habitats, threats, actions, monitoring, partnerships and public engagement."

The TPWD Permitting system supports the administration of several permits that authorize individuals to handle and possess otherwise restricted wildlife. The system was first launched in October 2020 to replace paper-based forms and processes with an efficient, web-enabled platform where customers and staff are able to manage all permit-related activities. Since its initial launch, five permit programs have been successfully included in the system, with additional permits planned to be moved online in the FY28-29 biennium (Wildlife Rehab, Zoological, and Educational Display).

TPWD's Texas Natural Diversity Database (TXNDD) manages and disseminates scientific information on rare species, native plant communities, and animal aggregations for defensible, effective conservation actions. After many years of planning, TXNDD staff have developed an online Information Request Tool (IRT) to streamline answering requests for TXNDD data from conservation partners and entities wishing to use the data for development planning. The IRT will be online in the current biennium and should be fully functional in the following biennium.

TPWD's Texas Ecosystem Analytical Mapper (TEAM) application is an interactive mapping tool that delivers Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas (EMS) data in an easy-to-use format. The TEAM app was recently updated and moved into the Land Management Assistance application where it can more easily be used to explore EMS data, learn about Texas landcover types, and support land management and resource planning efforts. Additional functionality is planned for the FY28-29 biennium if resources allow.

Since its initial charge in 2024, the TPWD Science Council has focused on three main components of modernizing the department's scientific footprint. This includes data management (modernizing and enhancing scientific data collection, entry, storage, accessibility, security and integrity, and reporting capabilities), internal communication (enhancing communication, awareness, collaboration, and exchange of cross-divisional science priorities, research frameworks, best practices, technologies, methodologies, and knowledge gaps across science functions within the agency), and external communication (presenting and publishing scientific work at local, regional, national, and international levels).

From FY25 to date, the council has met to discuss and advance projects aligned with this charge. Key efforts include distributing a survey to identify and engage subject matter experts across the agency and summarizing results for future internal communication; providing topic ideas for the monthly science column in *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine to support external communication; finalizing the agency's AI policy and discussing the use of machine learning in research; working with IT Division to train staff on leveraging Microsoft Copilot to improve productivity and implement organizational data management tools to strengthen departmental data governance; and coordinating with the Communications Division's Creative and Interactive Services team to enhance access to scientific publications for both internal and external audiences on the TPWD website.

Wildlife Health

The current environment in Texas requires TPWD involvement to respond to a variety of wildlife health risks in a timely and purposeful way, as well as educating the public about potential risks and best practices. TPWD will continue to engage with partners and navigate resource challenges to attempt to best influence these situations as they continue to develop.

New World Screwworms (NWS) are parasitic flies that lay eggs in open wounds and mucous membranes of live warm-blooded animals. In early June 2026, NWS was detected in Texas counties, prompting the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to activate the Texas State Emergency Operations Center (SOC) to Elevated Response. At direction of the Governor's Office, TPWD representatives report to the SOC in conjunction with Texas A&M and other agencies. Because an infestation of NWS can have devastating effects on livestock and wildlife, TPWD's response includes the deployment of staff for monitoring and possible treatment of captive and free-ranging wildlife. TPWD staff also provide personnel for emergency response, and coordinate with wildlife surveillance and inspections on hunter-harvested and roadkill wildlife. The extent of the required response in the upcoming biennium has the potential to divert significant resources from other initiatives, depending on the scale of the infestation. Additional resources may be necessary for long-term deployments, and a new permit may be necessary for the take of animals with NWS. TPWD is making active efforts to educate the public, including video campaigns, news releases, e-newsletters, and social media posts. In addition, TPWD is coordinating with Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) in their joint capacity as the Texas New World Screwworm Response Team, and has met with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and leadership from Arizona and New Mexico fish and wildlife agencies to discuss state readiness and best practices.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) also continues to be an area of concern. On September 16, 2025, TAHC discontinued its voluntary CWD Herd Certification Program for captive deer and adopted rules facilitating the separation of CWD management responsibilities between TPWD and TAHC. TAHC's responsibility will focus on exotic CWD-susceptible species, and TPWD's responsibility will focus on native CWD-susceptible species. TPWD now holds sole responsibility for managing the state's CWD response for all native cervids, including in both free-ranging populations and captive deer. This expanded regulatory role is expected to evolve through the FY28-29 biennium as CWD continues to spread in Texas and additional monitoring and response measures are required. The potential for future legislative actions to direct TPWD's approach may involve significant time and effort to interpret and implement, requiring significant coordination with stakeholders.

Another major wildlife disease challenge relates to the significant population decline in desert bighorn sheep (DBS). Invasive aoudad sheep have spread pneumonia caused by the bacterium *Mycoplasma ovipneumonia* (*M. ovi*) in the DBS population. The DBS population at Elephant Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is the only source population that can restock their numbers within a historical range in Texas. To protect this population, the Wildlife Division is considering fencing a portion of the 23,147-acre WMA to prevent the incursion of aoudad and potential transmission of *M. ovi* to the DBS within. Due to the relative isolation and rugged terrain of this Trans-Pecos WMA, fencing could be difficult and/or costly.

Oysters

Oysters and oyster reefs play several roles in the ecosystems in which they occur. As filter feeders, oysters feed by filtering planktonic particles from the water column, thereby helping to remove excess nutrients. Oyster reefs serve as habitat for a number of estuarine organisms and provide erosion control for shorelines and shallow water habitats such as seagrasses and salt marsh. Additionally, researchers are beginning to find that oysters and oyster reefs may serve as carbon sinks (i.e., carbon sequestration), thus reducing the greenhouse gas CO₂ in the atmosphere.

Oyster populations in Texas bays have been subjected to multiple stressors, including commercial oyster harvest, floods, reduced freshwater inflow, and record droughts, leading to a decline in abundance since the mid-2000s. Habitat destruction, either through the act of fishing using mechanical dredges or other man-made factors such as ship channel widening or pipeline repair, is also cause for concern. In addition, as oyster fisheries on the Atlantic Coast and other Gulf states have also declined, the demand for Texas oysters has increased.

The number of active boats and licenses currently exceeds the number that can harvest the available resource in any given year. Thus, available harvest can quickly be exploited, resulting in increases in user conflicts. Concerns arising from these observations

have caused the department to further evaluate strategies on how to manage the distribution of vessels coastwide to avoid the degradation of reefs in the future.

User conflicts have also arisen due to competing interests between stakeholders such as universities, anglers, and conservation organizations advocating for management strategies that restrict or prohibit harvest and those in the oyster industry advocating for management strategies that allow for the maximum oyster harvest each season with minimal restrictions to harvest.

TPWD has worked with the oyster industry, the Legislature, and the TPW Commission to develop a suite of strategies to manage and conserve oysters in Texas. This holistic approach, which includes strategies to restore and protect reefs, reduce commercial fishing effort, and increase penalties to deter illegal fishing, benefits not only oysters, but the numerous other species that rely on oyster-reef habitat.

In 2024, TPWD was granted \$8.23 million by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to restore a network of oyster broodstock spawning reserves across six sites in the Mission-Aransas Estuary. These restored broodstock spawning reserves will be unharvested and allow oyster populations in these reserves to grow and serve as a source of larvae to surrounding oyster reef areas. To date, there has been limited work on the use of such spawning reserves in Texas bays, so this project would be the first of its kind for the area. The project will rely heavily on input from the local community (e.g., local anglers and oyster fishers) to avoid user conflict in siting these reserves. Siting, permitting, design, and pre-restoration monitoring for this project have already begun. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2027.

Additionally, the department continues to discuss ways to improve the management of the fishery with its Oyster Advisory Committee and with other stakeholders. TPWD continues to review the approaches to management of the oyster fishery and oyster habitat to ensure the long-term health of oyster resources and the additional habitat and ecosystem services they provide.

Recent legislation related to oyster management includes Senate Bill 1032 (88th Legislature), which allows for the expansion of the certificate of location (CoL) program in the oyster fishery. CoLs are private rental leases in Texas coastal waters used for private on-bottom oyster harvesting. Currently, 43 CoLs exist in Galveston Bay (spanning over 2,300 acres), but proposed changes would allow for the use of expanded opportunities for use of the program for reef restoration and harvesting beyond Galveston Bay. The department reviews applications and makes joint determinations related to location, size, and intent of CoLs in collaboration with the General Land Office.

Challenges for Wildlife, Fisheries, Enforcement and Related Activities

TPWD's ability to meet responsibilities and activities under this goal is challenged by several factors. Human population growth, increasing urbanization, and development expansion have placed greater pressure on the state's fisheries, wildlife, and other natural resources as habitat fragmentation and land-use conversion have become more prevalent, pollution and other factors deteriorate water quality, and increased demand for water and recreational access affects fish, wildlife and their associated habitats. Further, fisheries, wildlife, and enforcement activities are highly sensitive to inflationary cost increases, including those impacting commodities such as electricity, natural gas and fuel, goods, services, and materials. These increases have further strained the department's ability to deliver wildlife, fisheries, and enforcement programs within existing funding resources.

Further exacerbating the concerns above are demographic trends and societal shifts showing that in the long term, the proportion of traditional financial supporters of the agency (fee-paying constituents such as hunters, anglers and boaters) to the total customer base will likely require focused efforts to recruit and retain new users. This is especially concerning considering recent evaluations of Game, Fish and Water Safety Account (Fund 9) balance projections indicating that existing funding mechanisms may be inadequate to effectively support conservation and recreation efforts over the long term.

In the next biennium, TPWD must work with the Legislature to secure sufficient appropriation authority to support fish-, wildlife-, and enforcement-related human resources, operating and capital transportation, and equipment needs. TPWD must also seek support from the Legislature to modernize its fee structure, develop or seek new funding streams, and seek statutory changes to better position the department to support conservation and recreation now and in the future. A more general discussion of Fund 9 can be found under Goal 2.

Resumption of Prescribed Burn Land Management Program

Prescribed fire is a proven, science-based land management tool essential for restoring ecosystem health, reducing wildfire risk, and sustaining Texas' natural landscapes. TPWD has recently made significant improvements to its prescribed burn program to enhance safety and planning and rebuild community trust. This follows a moratorium period for prescribed burns while TPWD engaged with a multi-state expert panel to conduct a facilitated learning analysis. The State Parks Division worked with partners to expand dedicated resources, including personnel, equipment, training, and policies, to support a safer and more resilient prescribed fire program. The division has since successfully completed prescribed burns statewide by applying the lessons learned. Among them, burns are now smaller and more manageable, with only one unit ignited at a time. Burn plans in high-risk locations now undergo an external review by experienced burn bosses who understand fire behavior, weather patterns, and fuel conditions.

Mountain Lion Research and Monitoring Plan

In FY26, TPWD developed the Mountain Lion Research and Monitoring Plan, based on the feedback of the 2024 Mountain Lion Stakeholder Group. This document outlines a 10-year plan for TPWD to improve its knowledge of mountain lion populations across Texas, to enhance understanding of constituent opinions within occupied mountain lion habitats, and to decrease conflict related to mountain lions in agricultural communities. The department will implement the Research and Monitoring Plan through FY36. For the first five years, the department's priorities will be to work with stakeholders to establish a pathway for collecting and analyzing mountain lion harvest data, build a predictive population model, and conduct field research to inform and validate the model. During this time, the department will also engage with constituents and user groups within the current mountain lion range to better understand values, opinions, and potential sources of conflict.

Trophy Trout Tagging Baffin Bay

Based on public scoping meetings and surveys after Winter Storm Uri, Texan anglers made it clear that they are interested in promoting a trophy fishery for spotted seatrout. While spotted seatrout are well-studied throughout their range, research has not focused on trophy-sized cohorts. Prior work completed by TPWD biologists suggests that trophy trout occupy distinct areas within Texas estuaries and may behave differently than smaller adults. To better understand trophy trout behavior and habitat use, the Upper Laguna Madre team began acoustically tagging trophy large adult trout in Baffin Bay and will monitor their movements over the next few years. Data collected from this project will describe habitats important for this size class of fish and allow TPWD to assess the potential impacts of environmental disturbances such as freezes, hypersalinity, and harmful algal blooms. So far, large adults have been successfully tagged throughout Baffin Bay, and movement data have been recorded for almost a year. While a variety of movement patterns have been observed, TPWD has documented a clear affinity for highly structured serpulid reef habitats. Most tagged trout have been detected in areas close to serpulid reefs and the highest residency times have been at reef locations. Since Baffin Bay is one of the only systems in the world where serpulid reefs are found, these results highlight the need for sound management of these habitats. Data collected over the life of this project will aid the management of the species by describing what environmental conditions and habitats they rely on. Managing essential habitat will be increasingly important as angler interest and fishing pressure grow on trophy trout coastwide.

GOAL 2

Increase Access to and Participation in the Outdoors

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Provide a variety of high-quality, nature-oriented outdoor recreational opportunities on TPWD sites.
- B. Encourage people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to experience the outdoors.
- C. Encourage nature and heritage tourism.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

- » Facilitate 31.5 million paid state park visits.
- » Provide fishing opportunities and related outreach to 30,000 visitors annually at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center.

- » Construct 52 miles of trails on state park sites.
- » Provide outdoor programs at TPWD sites reaching 226,000 youth annually.
- » Add 66,000 acres to the state park system.
- » Acquire and initiate development on three additional properties to add to the state park system by 2029.
- » Coordinate with federal, state, and local land management agencies to plan, construct, and provide access to four state park sites currently owned by the state park system.
- » Increase the amount of state park acreage within a 60-mile radius of the Texas Triangle by 4%.
- » Certify 60,000 students annually in hunter education.
- » Certify 30,000 students annually in boater education.
- » Reach 400,000 Texans annually through delivery of angler education, aquatic education, shooting sports, and other outreach and education programs.
- » Introduce 2,000 Texans to camping annually through Texas Outdoor Family workshops.
- » Increase fishing participation annually by an average of 2%.
- » Increase hunting participation annually by an average of 1%.
- » Maintain websites of and partnerships with existing Texas Paddling Trails for access to paddling, fishing, and wildlife viewing on rivers, lakes, bays, and coastal areas.
- » Increase Texas Paddling Trails by 100 miles.
- » Update at least 33% of the Great Texas Wildlife Trails on the website annually.
- » Increase Great Texas Birding Classic participation by 2% annually.

SUPPORT OF STATEWIDE OBJECTIVES:

The goal/action items above support the statewide objectives as follows:

Accountable to tax and fee payers of Texas:

- Direct, face-to-face contact with customers fosters greater accountability by necessitating direct awareness of and engagement with customer priorities, accolades, and concerns.
- Meaningful relationships with private landowners and the public as stakeholders are vital to TPWD's success in accomplishing conservation and outdoor recreation goals. Involvement and engagement with these affected groups helps foster greater accountability to the constituents served.
- The public's participation in discussions related to the department's strategic direction is vital towards ensuring that TPWD meets changing constituent priorities. Recent efforts include meetings with the public regarding the New World screwworm, cultivated oyster mariculture, oyster certificate of location regulation changes, state park developments, regulations related to hunting, and expansion of digital license and tag options for recreational hunting and fishing.
- TPWD expands access to high-quality, nature-based recreation by supporting local park development beyond TPWD sites. In the 2024–2025 biennium, the Recreation Grants Branch awarded more than \$161 million through 256 state and federal community grants, helping Texans connect with the outdoors and advancing the department's mission to conserve and enhance outdoor recreation for future generations.

Efficient such that maximum results are produced with a minimum waste of taxpayer funds, including through elimination of redundant and non-core functions:

- TPWD aims to use technology to enhance outdoor experiences in an efficient manner. Examples include the State Parks Business System, which allows customers to make site-specific campsite reservations online, expanding the rollout of information kiosks installed in state parks, and the new Boat Titling & Registration System (BTR).

Effective in successfully fulfilling core functions, measuring success in achieving performance measures and implementing plans to continuously improve:

- Providing access to and opportunities for participation in the outdoors is one of the broadest and most fundamental functions of TPWD. By providing access to a variety of public and private lands and waters, the department is fulfilling its mission to provide hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreational opportunities. This year, Texas State Parks led the nation in First Day Hikes participation, drawing 12,835 hikers who logged 28,154 miles on January 1. In the previous

biennium, the Texas Outdoor Family program introduced 2,800 new campers and partnered with 28 community organizations to deliver 56 workshops across the Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, and Central Texas regions.

- Recreation Trails staff recently completed construction on 12.3 miles of trails at the new Palo Pinto Mountains State Park, supporting increased public access to Texas' newest outdoor destination.
- By continuously monitoring department activities, TPWD can be both proactive and responsive to changing needs, demands, and trends. Specific performance measures related to increasing outdoor participation include state park visitation figures, the number of participants in outreach and education events, and public hunting and fishing participation.
- Careful, diligent planning by the department ensures the effective provision of services in the future. Newer developments to improve outdoor access include additional public wildlife management areas and paddling trails, as well as entering into lease agreements with private landowners to allow public access to rivers and conservation areas.

Providing excellent customer service:

- At its core, the goal of increasing access and providing high-quality outdoor recreational opportunities inherently entails providing quality customer service to the citizens of Texas.
- TPWD has a culture that is strongly focused on its customers in all aspects of operations, as evidenced by inclusion of a customer service component in the agency philosophy and as a core competency in staff performance evaluations.
- TPWD also uses a variety of mechanisms to solicit stakeholder/customer feedback. This input allows TPWD to be more responsive to customer needs in structuring programs and services.

Transparent such that agency functions can be understood by any Texan:

- By providing access to state parks, wildlife management areas, hunting and fishing opportunities, and various historical and cultural interpretation programs, TPWD increases Texans' understanding of the department's broad range of activities, as well as the natural and cultural resources of the state.
- TPWD extensively uses web-based applications, digital media, and targeted email services to communicate news and information remotely to a wide and varied audience.
- TPWD has several programs to communicate to the public how to responsibly and safely participate in outdoor experiences, including Hunter Education, Boater Education, Angler Education, and Water Safety.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Game, Fish and Water Safety Account Balance Concerns (Fund 9)

Fund 9 plays a critical role in supporting fisheries and wildlife conservation, law enforcement, and water safety in Texas. Despite strong revenue generation, the fund faces a projected negative balance in its General/Unrestricted subaccount by 2029, which would severely impair agency operations. TPWD relies primarily on the General/Unrestricted subaccount to fund most operations as the other primary subaccounts are dedicated or restricted, and this balance is experiencing a concerning decline.

Multiple funding sources support the agency's work but can generally be assigned to either the broad category of state parks operations or fisheries and wildlife conservation. Based on legislatively mandated restrictions, the funding that supports each of these primary objectives can generally be used only for its specified purpose and cannot be shifted from one category of activities to the other. As a statutorily dedicated account, Fund 9 may be used only for purposes related to the protection, regulation and conservation of the state's fish and wildlife, sand, shell, and gravel, and the enforcement of water safety laws.

In recent years, Texas' state parks have benefited significantly from legislatively directed efforts to strengthen funding, including the dedication of Sporting Goods Sales Tax (SGST) to support general park operations and the creation of the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund to provide for new park land acquisition and development. These critical investments will provide lasting benefits for Texans well into the future. However, fisheries and wildlife conservation in Texas faces mounting financial challenges, and additional action is needed to ensure TPWD's ability to deliver on its mission on behalf of Texas' rapidly growing population.

Based on current revenue projections and budgeted expenses authorized under the 89th General Appropriations Act, the General/Unrestricted subaccount is projected to reach a negative balance as early as FY29. Declining trends in per capita

license sales volume, despite consistent total sales, highlight both the state's rapid population growth (and associated challenges for access to public and private lands) and the challenges of the current Fund 9 revenue model to keep pace with shifting recreation interests. TPWD services benefit all Texans, and sustaining operations under existing revenue structures is becoming increasingly difficult. Non-license activities have become increasingly popular, but do not derive value to Fund 9 despite the divisions supporting these activities.

TPWD has engaged in several efforts targeted at streamlining Fund 9 outflows and increasing Fund 9 inflows. However, inflation, mandated pay raises without ongoing associated appropriations, and one-time exceptional item requests, while vital, have affected the fund balance. The 'user-pay, user-play' model, the predominant source of revenue to Fund 9, has served Texas well for many years, but is increasingly unable to keep pace with Texas' growing population and demand for outdoor recreation and the associated need for natural resource management. Addressing this budget shortfall is crucial and will stabilize TPWD's current operations. However, strategically addressing the issue into future will be critical towards continuing to meet demand for its services.

Because of the prioritization of essential functions to somewhat stabilize the fund balance, a backlog of needs already exists, including deferred maintenance, delayed construction on new WMAs, staffing to operate new WMAs, limited road maintenance/repair funding, replacement of aging equipment/fleet, and modernizing outdated technology. Current Fund 9 capital construction funding levels appropriated for the FY26-27 biennium are \$6.26 million, \$3.35 million of which is dedicated specifically to Texas freshwater fisheries capital projects. The level of Fund 9 deferred maintenance appropriations creates a significant repair backlog and contributes to further deterioration of these facilities. The FY26-27 General Appropriations Act limits the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to spending no more than \$20,000,000 in transportation funds during the biennium for road and bridge work on or adjacent to TPWD facilities. This \$20,000,000 allocation has not been increased since 2010. TPWD is coordinating with TxDOT to request an increase in program funding to address inflationary impacts and agency deferred road maintenance needs. WMAs would especially benefit from increased allocations due to long-standing WMA road repair needs. The Wildlife Division also recognizes that the State Park Division is increasing their road maintenance needs as their portfolio of sites expands, especially due to the Centennial Fund acquisitions. In turn, this may reduce the proportion of funding available for WMA road repairs.

In addition to the existing backlog, TPWD intends to prioritize opportunities to increase public access to hunting, fishing, and general outdoor recreation opportunities through land acquisition and private-land leases. Several potential strategies are available to address this issue. A report will be submitted this summer that discusses these potential strategies, as required by the Legislature. TPWD is currently in conversation with LBB and the Governor's Office to ensure a financially sustainable and mutually agreeable path forward to ensure the continuation of its current and future ability to provide recreational opportunities.

TPW Commission Directed New Park Development Implementation Progress

The TPW Commission's approval of the New Park Development Plan in March 2025 requires the State Parks Division to provide initial public access to newly acquired Centennial Parks within 12 months of acquisition, and to deliver full park access with standard state park amenities within 48 months. State Parks and Infrastructure divisions are successfully meeting these ambitious milestones, with the new Post Oak Ridge State Park development and Enchanted Rock State Natural Area expansion moving steadily through land management, early construction, and public access phases.

Both Post Oak Ridge and Enchanted Rock have advanced through early planning stages, supported by two well-attended public meetings for each park that provided meaningful opportunities for community input. These sessions, led by staff in collaboration with Studio Outside and Cultural Strategies, exceeded attendance expectations. Community feedback is guiding decisions on priority amenities and development sequencing. Additional focus groups are being scheduled to further refine community-informed planning throughout the four-year development timeline.

At Post Oak Ridge, a fully accessible temporary headquarters facility has been installed to support operations during the design and construction phases. The temporary building will be repurposed at another state park once permanent facilities are complete, demonstrating a commitment to fiscal responsibility and reuse.

Early land management activities have occurred at each site, such as establishing a scenic overlook and conducting a prescribed burn, to ensure that natural resources are protected and resilient as public access expands. These efforts reflect TPWD's commitment to integrating conservation with recreation planning.

Both Post Oak Ridge State Park and the Enchanted Rock State Natural Area expansion opened to visitors on January 1, 2026, hosting First Day Hikes. The guided program highlighted the sites' natural features, cultural significance, and emerging recreational opportunities. Additionally, both parks hosted public hunts, with Post Oak Ridge State Park's adult hunt attended by Governor Abbott.

While State Parks and Infrastructure divisions are successfully meeting the accelerated development timelines, the compressed schedule places pressure on community engagement processes. Shorter planning windows reduce the time available to fully evaluate public feedback and thoughtfully incorporate new ideas that were not part of the original concept planning.

Operational Expenditures to Support New Park Development

Texas' state parks have benefited significantly from legislatively directed efforts to strengthen funding in recent years, including the creation of the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund to provide for new park land acquisition and development. Palo Pinto Mountains State Park opened on March 1, 2026. An additional new park is scheduled to open later in 2026, with three more planned by 2029, and two park expansions currently underway. These critical investments will provide lasting benefits for Texans well into the future. However, the State Parks Division's operational needs also grow as the system expands.

New park development significantly increases public access to nature, providing more opportunities for outdoor recreation, education, and community wellbeing. As more Texans seek the multiple benefits of time outdoors, the demand on the State Parks Division's operational capacity continues to rise. To meet these needs, the division relies on the full annual SGST appropriation to operate, maintain, and protect natural and cultural resources, while delivering high quality visitor experiences. Any reduction to the current 94% allocation risks a return to past underfunding, directly affecting operations, maintenance, and customer service. Ten-year forecasts suggest that even with full allocation, base operational needs are likely to outpace SGST revenues within the next decade. Although State Parks uses a conservative 5% annual inflation assumption to ensure responsible financial planning, sporting goods prices historically grow more slowly (about 1% annually according to Consumer Price Index data). This may indicate that future SGST revenues may not keep pace with rising operational costs. As the parks system expands, this potential gap represents a risk to sustaining core operations and maintaining public access.

Resource Considerations for Newly Added Wildlife Management Areas

Over the past several years, the Wildlife Division has been fortunate to add several important properties to the WMA system, including Paul and Toni Fox Burns WMA (2,178 acres in 2023), Teacup Mountain WMA (11,091 acres in 2025), Trinity River WMA (6,900 acres in 2025), and Robbie Davis WMA (2,836 acres in 2026). Adding new lands to the WMA system is one of the most effective ways to expand outdoor public access, including opportunities for public hunting. However, managing public land requires significant staff time, equipment, and habitat management tools (e.g., prescribed fire, herbicide, water control structures), which can be expensive. The Wildlife Division remains committed to securing the resources necessary to properly manage these properties for the benefit of wildlife and those who enjoy wildlife-based recreation.

ADA Accessibility Improvement Progress and Web Accessibility Challenges

The State Parks Division has made it a priority to provide and track Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) related improvements throughout the State Parks system to ensure access for all. Purtil Creek State Park recently made significant improvements to its trailhead and access routes leading to the fishing pier and fish cleaning station in partnership with the Get Outside Alliance. Palmetto State Park recently completed comprehensive upgrades to its campground restrooms and added an accessible kayak launch, fishing pier, walkways, ramps, and picnic site. LBJ State Park & Historic Site recently renovated its pool to address numerous findings from its transition plan. Barton Warnock at Big Bend Ranch State Park recently updated an accessible campsite.

Additionally, the State Parks adaptive equipment loaner program has grown by roughly 129% in the last year, now offering more than 55 pieces of equipment statewide, ensuring all individuals can enjoy the outdoors. The State Parks Division is

currently working to acquire 12 additional pieces of adaptive equipment. This work continues alongside several challenges, including innovative planning within natural terrain, environmental limitations, and historical preservation requirements that sometimes call for creative accessibility solutions. To advance progress and meet challenges, the division has expanded staff training and added an ADA Minor Repair Project Manager position to focus on accessibility priorities.

One related ongoing concern is the complex set of challenges in complying with and managing electronic information resource accessibility requirements under the ADA, including reconciling overlapping frameworks and keeping pace with evolving standards and technologies across large, decentralized web and application ecosystems. Legacy systems, archived content, and thousands of PDFs and forms often require labor-intensive remediation, while frequent platform updates, third-party widgets, and vendor products introduce accessibility regressions that are hard to control without robust procurement and contract clauses. Agencies must build sustained capacity (governance, policy, training, and role-based accountability for content authors, designers, developers, and procurement staff) alongside routine testing, issue tracking, and release-management processes that embed accessibility checks. Budget and staffing constraints, limited specialized expertise, and the need to serve diverse populations (including users with low bandwidth, mobile devices, multiple languages, and various disabilities) further complicate delivery, as do captioning and audio descriptions for multimedia, accessible map and data visualizations, and secure, usable digital forms. Finally, the risk of litigation and complaints requires documented compliance plans and continuous monitoring to ensure accessibility remains an ongoing operational practice rather than a one-time project. TPWD remains committed to providing accessible, electronic communications, but must address these challenges to be successful.

Expanding Access to Public Land

Access to land is one of the primary barriers to hunting in a private lands state like Texas, making it an ongoing challenge for the Wildlife Division to secure funding for programs that expand public hunting opportunities. The Annual Public Hunting Permit offers walk-in access to TPWD-owned and leased lands, including short-term leases of private lands for dove and other small game hunting. The Public Hunt Drawing system provides online opportunities to apply for a variety of supervised, drawn hunts on state-owned and leased private properties. Big Time Texas Hunts offer guided package hunts for high-quality native and non-native species on TPWD lands and leased private lands. However, rising lease prices continue to make it difficult for TPWD to compete with private hunting lease markets, increasing the need for additional funding to support private lands hunting leases. Despite the resource challenges associated with managing newly acquired WMAs, expanding public access to land remains a high priority. The Wildlife Division will continue to pursue creative and collaborative strategies to increase public land availability, including WMA acquisitions from willing sellers and agreements with other government entities that allow TPWD to manage public access on their lands. TPWD is also exploring opportunities to increase non-hunting, wildlife-based recreation on WMAs under its Limited Public Use Permit.

Strengthening Community Access to Local Parks and Associated Challenges

During the 2024–2025 biennium, State Parks Recreation Grants Branch advanced Texas' outdoor access goals in meaningful and measurable ways, awarding more than \$161 million in state and federal funding through more than 256 community grants statewide. These investments help Texans of all ages and backgrounds connect with the outdoors while strengthening TPWD's mission to conserve and enhance outdoor recreation for generations to come. Recreation Trails staff also completed construction of 12.3 miles of trails at the new Palo Pinto Mountains State Park, further expanding public access to one of Texas' newest outdoor destinations through both external communities and internal trail building operations.

While these successes reflect the dedication and expertise of the Local Grants team, continued limits on FTE authority remain a significant challenge. Four positions were added through existing funding to support \$100 million in new Rider grants, yet no new permanent FTEs have been authorized for program directed areas. As a result, the State Parks Division has had to shift funding and FTE allocations among competing priorities. At the same time, fluctuating federal requirements and reduced federal staffing have shifted greater administrative and compliance responsibilities to the state. Combined with sharp increases in Rider appropriations and a 30% rise in federal grant funding, this has increased operational strain and elevated workload demands across the Local Grants section.

The statewide initiative to open a new state park every biennium has also intensified the need for State Parks Trails subject matter experts. Sustaining high quality support for new park development will require additional staff with specialized expertise in trail design and consultation. Despite these challenges, the Recreation Grants Branch continues to deliver exceptional results, expanding outdoor access and supporting communities across Texas.

GOAL 3

Educate, Inform, and Engage Texans in Support of Conservation and Recreation

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Cultivate support for the conservation of natural and cultural resources.
- B. Increase awareness of the value of urban and suburban ecosystems.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

- » Conduct 800 presentations and consultations annually for the public focused on the management and conservation of fish and wildlife resources.
- » Conduct a Fishing and Hunting for Conservation workshop annually to grow advocates for hunting, wildlife, fishing and aquatic resource conservation.
- » Support 18 high-use urban fishing sites annually through the Neighborhood Fishin' Program.
- » Complete an average of 30 local park construction projects annually over a five-year period supported through the Recreation Grants Program.
- » Produce and disseminate seven videos annually that provide technical guidance to the public on urban and suburban wildlife topics.

SUPPORT OF STATEWIDE OBJECTIVES:

The goal/action items above support the statewide objectives as follows:

Accountable to tax and fee payers of Texas:

- By increasing public awareness of natural resources and encouraging participation in conservation activities, TPWD increases the number of potential stakeholders in both the programs and resources provided to the public by the department, and the natural resources of the state in general.
- By increasing the number of fee payers, license holders, and general constituents, the department can be increasingly responsive to a broader range of interests and concerns.

Efficient such that maximum results are produced with a minimum waste of taxpayer funds, including through elimination of redundant and non-core functions:

- Investment in education and outreach helps increase the number of people with hands-on outdoor experiences, serves to garner greater understanding of and support for conservation issues and other agency efforts, and helps to develop stronger partnerships with constituents and stakeholders. This ultimately creates a more stable and supportive operating environment for the department, and also makes it possible to enlist the public as partners in spreading conservation messages, thereby allowing the department to function more efficiently and maximize its use of state funding.
- The department continues to leverage the public's support for its efforts by utilizing a "train the trainer" paradigm in programs including Texas Outdoor Family, Texas Nature Trackers, Wildsearch, and Texas Master Naturalist. This allows TPWD to expand its reach with minimal use of staff resources.
- TPWD aims to use technology to educate, inform, and engage Texans in an efficient manner. The agency uses modern mapping tools to help Texans learn about, explore, and better understand the state's natural and cultural resources. The TPWD GIS Open Data Portal serves as a single place where anyone can browse, search, and download publicly available maps and location-based information across TPWD resources. People can view interactive maps online or download the data in common formats to support local planning, research, education, or other interests.

- The department also maximizes the use of volunteers in provision of its services. In FY25, over 9,000 volunteers contributed 1,149,729 hours across the agency, the equivalent of \$40 million, or 552 FTEs.
- TPWD's Local Park Grants program leverages state dollars with a required local match to ensure that state dollars are used efficiently to provide funding for local parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces. This also ensures that local governmental entities have a stake in the efficient provision of high-quality outdoor recreational opportunities.

Effective in successfully fulfilling core functions, measuring success in achieving performance measures and implementing plans to continuously improve:

- A high level of public awareness and support is necessary for TPWD's continued success in achieving its mission. This support makes it easier for the department to form meaningful and lasting partnerships with landowners, non-profit organizations, and others who are critical to TPWD's success and have a stake in the natural and cultural resources of the state.
- The department monitors its public engagement with measures that track the reach of the *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine, email notifications, website, social media, and online videos, as well as the number of participants contacted by outreach efforts and paid advertising efforts. In addition to these performance measures, the department internally tracks the number of its mobile application users and social media followers.

Providing excellent customer service:

- Because customer use of and engagement with TPWD services is mostly voluntary, the department has an incentive to satisfy customer demand and provide ideal customer experiences. TPWD is largely a fee-driven department, which creates a businesslike emphasis on customer service.
- Engaging citizens in support of conservation and recreation helps the agency to provide excellent customer service in at least two additional ways. These efforts provide opportunities for volunteers and staff members to expose Texans to outdoor opportunities that they otherwise may never have discovered. These efforts also aim to widen the range of potential constituents, giving the agency the ability to be responsive to a wider array of concerns and interests in the long term.

Transparent such that agency functions can be understood by any Texan:

- Educational activities make agency operations increasingly transparent, as they seek to inform Texans on the broad range of activities undertaken by the agency.
- The department engages in many forums for interactive communication, including creating dialogues and answering questions through social media and annual public meetings.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Modernization of Education, Information, and Engagement Efforts

As the population of Texas both grows and modernizes, TPWD must continue to expand digital and mobile-friendly customer communication options to keep pace with growing expectations for quick and easy access to digital information and services. Over the years, the department has developed a strategy for using web development, mobile apps, email marketing technologies, and social media. TPWD also regularly employs cost-effective methods like emails and text messages to communicate with customers and constituent groups to increase engagement and generate incremental revenue from agency license sales, fees, products, and programs. For example, regularly scheduled license renewal emails encourage customers to renew quickly and continue engaging with TPWD.

Another recent modernization initiative involves improvements to the Commission Hearing Room at TPWD headquarters, including an upgraded audio-visual system incorporating multiple cameras and more focused lighting. These changes enable digital video streaming of TPW Commission meetings, so audiences around the state and beyond can easily stay informed about TPWD-related issues.

There are additional opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of these communications through advanced services that would enable more regularly scheduled email campaigns, sophisticated audience segmentation, improved testing capabilities, advanced analytics, and interactive text messaging. These efforts support purposeful, data-driven, and lasting customer retention.

At the same time, digital communications have not entirely replaced print materials such as facility maps, guidebooks, rack cards, brochures, and flyers. TPWD will continue to evaluate customer preferences and communications options to ensure its products and services are as accessible and contemporary as possible. *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine is an example of this shift in strategy. Rather than selling print and digital subscriptions separately, each print subscription now includes full access to the magazine app, offering increased flexibility for subscribers. To attract more potential customers, the magazine now offers a more flexible \$2/month subscription model in addition to a traditional annual/biannual model. Magazine-adjacent activities and events such as the Great Outdoor Scavenger Hunt (GOSH) and Texas Bird Bingo also increase awareness of the magazine and TPWD's broader mission while encouraging participation in outdoor recreation.

The TPWD hunter and angler education programs inspire participants to move along an education and engagement continuum that equips them to engage regularly in hunting and fishing activities and purchase the associated required licenses. Enrollment numbers for the state-mandated Hunter Education certification course continue to increase with 55,000 new certifications in FY25. The need to modernize and digitize associated curriculum materials continues to be a challenge. In FY25, 66% of Hunter Education certifications included some virtual instruction, requiring agency support for customer service and online vendors. Volunteer instructor and customer demand for digital education manuals and video resources continues to increase. The variety of outreach and education efforts continues to expand, offering Texans new ways to participate in hunting and fishing activities. A new mentored fishing program, new firearms training workshops, and expanded participation opportunities for "Explore Bowhunting" are just a few examples of how outdoor recreation education continues to evolve.

TPWD divisions have identified specific modernization needs that would assist in educating, informing, and engaging Texans in support of conservation and recreation through online media and interactive platforms. Insufficient funding to advance these modernization initiatives creates challenges in meeting the current demand for online resources and tools. With more digital tools and online services being deployed, internal network usage will also grow. This can increase demand on IT infrastructure, support services, and cybersecurity teams. Staff may benefit from easier access to digital resources and more efficient tools, but they may also experience temporary adjustments as systems scale or as new platforms are adopted.

Economic Impact Study

In 2018, the State Parks Division conducted an economic impact study that demonstrated that its parks supported more than 6,800 local jobs in sectors aligned with park visitation, including restaurants, lodging, retail shops, outdoor recreation services, and other tourism-related businesses, as well as companies supplying equipment and materials essential to park operations. The study estimated that State Parks contributed a total economic impact of \$891 million to the Texas economy. State Parks has initiated a new economic impact study in partnership with Texas A&M, with results expected in early summer 2026. This updated analysis will provide critical, data-driven insight that strengthens the department's ability to inform the public, policy-makers, and community leaders about the substantial economic benefits State Parks generate for local and regional economies.

GOAL 4

Employ Efficient, Sustainable and Sound Business Practices

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Continuously improve business management systems and business practices.
- B. Provide excellent customer service with integrity and professionalism.
- C. Seek and leverage financial resources.
- D. Ensure regulations and publications are balanced, effective and easy to understand.
- E. Develop effective communication processes and tools.
- F. Continuously refine and improve the customer-service experience of purchasing and using licenses, permits, and entrance fees.
- G. Efficiently manage lands and facilities for sustainable public use.
- H. Promote an organizational culture which is informed, adaptive, and innovative.

- I. Promote a human capital strategy to ensure a professional workforce.
- J. Provide a healthy and safe work environment for its employees and customers.
- K. Continually improve the department's security posture through innovative approaches that enable TPWD to respond quickly and efficiently to cybersecurity threats.

ACTION ITEMS TO ACHIEVE GOAL:

- » Complete a succession plan by 2028 for all TPWD divisions.
- » Continue a department-wide survey of former department interns currently holding FTE positions by 2027.
- » By 2028, develop and implement a department-wide data literacy program that empowers staff to confidently use and understand data in their work, build knowledge, and make informed decisions.
- » By 2028, based on funding availability, complete a department-wide assessment of the agency data landscape to identify strengths, gaps, and priority areas that will guide more informed and effective data management practices.
- » Invest funds to expand the network infrastructure, resulting in triple the capacity by 2028, which supports more secure, reliable and faster connectivity for staff and constituents.
- » Maintain department cybersecurity maturity levels above level three, in accordance with Texas Cybersecurity Framework standards, by continuing to improve the department's security posture through strengthening data security and privacy practices, building a culture of security awareness, reviewing and modernizing cybersecurity policies, enhancing incident response readiness, improving configuration and asset management, and reducing the overall attack surface.

SUPPORT OF STATEWIDE OBJECTIVES:

The goal/action items above support the statewide objectives as follows:

Accountable to tax and fee payers of Texas:

- TPWD aims to be respectful of the public's trust by efficiently using tax and fee dollars in line with best practices for business operations, communications processes, and organizational culture. Key actions within this goal include seeking ways to best leverage agency resources through efficient and effective management of staff, finances, and assets.

Efficient such that maximum results are produced with a minimum waste of taxpayer funds, including through elimination of redundant and non-core functions:

- Using sound business practices ensures that operations are undertaken with a minimum of waste, duplication, or inefficiency. The department has engaged in several technological modernization efforts aimed at increasing efficiency by automating business functions. For example, there are ongoing initiatives to automate repeated functionalities in the Accounts Payable section.
- The department leverages its funds by using a variety of grants, federal funds, and private donations to augment appropriated tax and fee revenues.
- TPWD's 2025-2030 Sustainability Plan includes five goals that establish and report percentage goals for reducing water, electricity, transportation fuel, and natural gas usage. Using this plan can create not only cost savings, but resource savings as well.
- TPWD is currently implementing a modernization initiative that includes projects that will upgrade the physical and digital infrastructure of the department in ways that will provide efficiency, both for staff and the public. Examples include self-pay kiosks in state parks, increased Law Enforcement technology/capacity, a low code platform, and the Fish Hatchery Data System.

Effective in successfully fulfilling core functions, measuring success in achieving performance measures and implementing plans to continuously improve:

- This goal encompasses several agency initiatives, including recruitment, retention, and development of the department's human resources; securing sustainable funding and seeking opportunities to leverage that funding; making use of technology to improve staff efficiency and customer experiences; and ensuring staff and customer safety. Well-trained and professional personnel, stable funding, technological improvements, and a safe and healthy environment are all critical to successful fulfillment of the core functions of the agency.

- TPWD programs and finances are frequently reviewed by both internal and external parties. The department is strongly committed to using the findings of these reviews/audits to identify concerns and engage in a process of continuous improvement.
- TPWD is also subject to continuous monitoring and evaluation by oversight entities. Reporting requirements such as FTE reporting to the State Auditor's Office and similar requirements help oversight entities monitor the agency's progress and ensure the agency is on track in meeting legislative expectations.

Providing excellent customer service:

- Agency efforts to employ efficient and sound business practices include several methods to ensure that the agency provides excellent customer service. TPWD remains committed to maintaining strong relationships with stakeholders, treating customers with integrity and professionalism, soliciting feedback from agency contacts in a constant improvement process, and communicating its efforts in these and a broad array of other areas. One recent example is State Parks' FY26 rollout of automated self-serve kiosks, which improved visitor flow, expanded after hours check-in options, and provided a convenient digital alternative for reservations and site selection. These upgrades also reduced office congestion and supported park staff with better operational awareness.

Transparent such that agency functions can be understood by any Texan:

- Agency efforts to employ efficient and sound business practices include several methods to ensure that the agency's activities are both internally and externally transparent. Among these are efforts to ensure that regulations and publications are easy to understand and to effectively communicate TPWD activities to stakeholders. One example would be recent public meetings to share planning information and status of the Public Use Plans for Post Oak Ridge State Park, Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, and Bear Creek State Park.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Fund 9 and Federal Funds Issues

Fund 9, which is supported primarily by hunting and fishing license revenue, is essential to funding fisheries and wildlife conservation, law enforcement, and water safety programs across Texas. Current projections show that the General/Unrestricted subaccount could reach a negative balance by FY29, which would significantly affect agency operations. TPWD is preparing a report required by the General Appropriations Act to outline the underlying issues and propose potential solutions to this funding shortfall. A more general discussion of Fund 9 can be found under Goal 2.

A substantial portion of the Wildlife Division's base budget comes from federal Pittman-Robertson funds, which originate as excise taxes collected from firearm and ammunition manufacturers and distributed to states based on a federal formula. TPWD's apportionment has declined by an average of approximately 11% over the past three years. While this decrease has not yet caused budget shortfalls, it is a concerning trend that warrants advance planning.

Other federal programs that mainly support research, such as State Wildlife Grants and Section 6 funding, depend on annual congressional appropriations. Because Congress often faces delays in passing federal budgets, the stability and timing of these programs remain uncertain.

This uncertainty and instability surrounding state and federal funding sources create significant challenges for budget management and long-term planning. Conservation actions that support species recovery often require sustained management strategies and reliable funding to ensure the delivery of prescribed treatments and management actions. These challenges present substantial obstacles to implementing successful habitat projects on lands in Texas. TPWD will continue to support conservation delivery to the greatest extent possible, but conservation efforts would benefit greatly from dedicated, stable funding.

Modernization of Departmental Business Practices

TPWD has many programming and application development needs under its broader goal of modernization. One of the highest priorities is creating a digital system to organize and store records and information related to lands owned or managed by TPWD. The current Land Conservation Program Records System is outdated and lacks a geospatial component. The Wildlife Division oversees more than 750,000 acres across 52 WMAs. These properties have been acquired over the past 80 years through donations, purchases using license revenue, federal grant funding, and long-term management agreements. Most properties include easements and surface use agreements for oil, gas, and public utilities, and some include new surface rights requests. Existing agreements often include payments by barter (goods and services), and the current system's mechanism for tracking these payments has room for improvement. Accurate boundary management is also challenging in the existing system, though reliable boundary information is crucial for habitat work, public hunting access, and maintaining positive relationships with neighboring landowners. A modern, geospatially based land records system is urgently needed to manage this complex portfolio. However, funding will be required to design and develop this new system.

Another key modernization need is an updated system for tracking environmental reviews of development projects. Under TPW Code §12.0011, TPWD is responsible for providing recommendations that protect fish and wildlife resources to local, state, and federal agencies that approve, permit, license, or construct development projects. TPWD must also provide resource information to agencies or private organizations making decisions that affect those resources. Together, TPWD reviews and comments on roughly 1,500 projects each year. Each project must be logged in a database to document when it was received and when a response was provided, and to ensure all associated files can be easily accessed far into the future. The current Environmental Review Coordination System was developed in 2011, before the program transitioned to a fully digital review process. As a result, the system no longer adequately meets program needs. A complete rebuild of the system is required, and funding will be necessary to design and develop this new platform.

The department's commitment to efficient and sound business practices includes providing excellent customer service. TPWD supports this goal by piloting automated service systems designed to increase customer satisfaction at select state park locations. A key example is the FY26 rollout of automated self-serve kiosks, which significantly improved the visitor experience. These kiosks streamline visitor flow, expand after-hours check-in options, and offer a convenient digital method for reservations and site selection. By moving many routine transactions to self-service, the kiosks reduce office congestion and give park staff better operational awareness for the next day, allowing them to more effectively support visitors and park needs. The pilot was implemented at Cedar Hill State Park, Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, Garner State Park, Lake Casa Blanca International State Park, Lake Tawakoni State Park, and Pedernales Falls State Park. With available funding, the TPWD plans to expand the program to additional locations.

TPWD plans to implement another customer service enhancement by prioritizing a transition to digital passes for state parks in 2026–2027. This shift will reduce costs associated with purchasing and shipping physical passes, allowing the capture of savings without requiring additional funding.

AI and machine-assisted tools are expanding quickly across government operations, from data analysis to service delivery. While these tools create opportunities for greater efficiency, they also introduce new policy, governance, and ethical considerations. Agencies must develop clear guidelines, risk frameworks, training, and oversight processes to ensure responsible AI use. The rollout of an agency-wide AI policy will introduce clearer rules on how staff can use AI tools, what data can be processed, and what safeguards must be followed. This will help protect sensitive information and ensure responsible use, but it will also require staff training, updated workflows, and ongoing oversight from leadership and IT to ensure compliance.

With more digital tools and online services being deployed, internal network usage will grow. This can increase demand on IT infrastructure, support services, and cybersecurity teams. Staff may benefit from easier access to digital resources and more efficient tools, but they may also experience temporary adjustments as systems scale or as new platforms are adopted. Automation tools are becoming more common to streamline repetitive tasks, reduce errors, and free up staff capacity. Successful adoption requires training, careful process mapping, and collaboration between business units and IT teams. Low-code and no-code development platforms are enabling faster creation of digital applications and workflows. These tools can expand development capacity and improve service delivery but require strong governance to ensure security, consistency, and appropriate use across divisions.

Capital Construction Management System

The Infrastructure Division utilizes a capital construction management system (CCMS) to document and carry out project delivery of the capital design, construction, and repair needs within the agency. In late 2025, the division transitioned to a new CCMS vendor and successfully implemented the new system. Additionally, the division's Contracting Branch is utilizing a new electronic procurement system to handle solicitations and awards. Both systems will provide the division with more advanced tools for use in project delivery to include more robust reporting features that will enable leadership and staff to more efficiently monitor and report on project budgets, schedules, deliverables, and solicitation and award metrics.

TPWD Headquarters Renovations

The TPWD Headquarters (HQ) building located in southeast Austin is in dire need of renovation. The maintenance for the HQ building has been handled in a piecemeal approach for decades, due in large part because a sustainable maintenance budget has been difficult or impossible to secure. After thoughtful analysis, it was clear that renovating the existing headquarters into a modern and energy efficient building was the most cost-efficient route. Additionally, renovation has the potential to reduce TPWD's footprint by reducing use of leased space in Austin. Utilizing this approach to address needed improvements will promote the responsible use of TPWD resources, including its built environment, in line with its conservation mission.

With the passage of HB 500 (89R), TPWD was appropriated \$21,400,000 from the general revenue fund for FY26–27 to address improvements to and repairs of the department's headquarters facility. This funding, along with capital construction appropriations in the agency's base budget, will enable the department to address repairs to the building's utility system (water/waste-water drain lines), envelope, and security systems (to include fire and public announcement systems) and replacements of air handlers, backup generator, and an HVAC system for an auxiliary building on the HQ campus for boat titling and registration. A headquarters roadway and access control system will also be constructed to provide safety and security and prevent unauthorized entry as nearby development continues around the campus. Additionally, the department is now funded for the planning and design for the headquarters building renovation/modernization effort.

The agency plans to request additional funding in the 90th Legislative Session for the phased or comprehensive construction portion of the building renovation/modernization project. The utilization of general revenue funding for the Austin HQ campus as stipulated in HB 500 successfully alleviated the issues that historically plagued building maintenance funding efforts due to the multiple funding streams required for such projects. Using general revenue funding for the future construction effort would be consistent with this approach.

Cybersecurity/Data Security Efforts

Growing cybersecurity threats have led to stronger state and federal oversight, more mandatory reporting requirements, and heightened expectations for secure data practices. As a result, TPWD must enhance cybersecurity protocols, conduct continuous monitoring, and manage compliance with emerging standards, all of which increase demands on IT, security, and program teams. Oversight bodies at both the state and federal levels also continue to require more detailed tracking of program performance, financial compliance, technology use, and data integrity. This trend creates additional administrative workload and requires more robust, secure data systems to capture and report required information reliably. As federal and state mandates place greater emphasis on data accuracy, privacy, security, and transparency, TPWD must invest in secure systems and processes that support responsible data collection, sharing, and reporting, particularly as datasets grow and become more interconnected.

HB 3088 (Relating to the Authority of the Parks and Wildlife Department to Procure Goods and Services Related to Items for Resale by the Department)

The 89th Texas Legislature passed HB 3088, allowing TPWD to procure goods and services for resale using any Commission-approved method that provides best value. With the Commission's approval, state park retail operations now have expanded direct award purchasing options for resale items, offering greater flexibility and efficiency than traditional procurement processes. This business process change enables faster purchasing, reduces administrative burden, and allows gift shops to tailor merchandise to the unique character and needs of each park. This results in better value, higher quality, and more relevant product offerings for visitors. Criteria such as craftsmanship, uniqueness, local production, artistic quality, site specificity, and price reasonableness guide purchasing decisions, ensuring transparency and quality standards while safeguarding against conflicts of interest.

These enhancements improve the visitor experience through more diverse and appealing merchandise, while also strengthening support for local and Texas-based artisans and small businesses by streamlining access to state park retail channels. Accelerated procurement timelines further improve operational efficiency, reducing delays and ensuring consistent product availability. Since Commission approval in January 2026, the agency has developed policies and procedures to implement this new authority, with full implementation expected by the end of 2026.

New FTEs

The Wildlife Division has added several FTE positions in recent years to address emerging issues such as CWD and NWS, as well as multiple positions supported by a new revenue stream generated through the Managed Lands Deer Program participation fee. This fee was created specifically to fund additional staff needed to expand technical guidance services on private lands statewide. However, the division has not yet received an official increase in its FTE authority to match these staffing needs. Additionally, without formally appropriated FTEs, the division does not receive the associated computers, vehicles, and other resources needed to equip new staff, creating ongoing operational challenges.

Employee Compensation

Employee compensation surveys and studies have consistently identified pay and compensation as significant issues for the department. Despite legislatively mandated pay increases for FY23 and the FY24-25 biennium, competition with other agencies and the private sector remains a factor. Success in recruitment and retention of qualified staff is often further complicated by factors such as the remote location of many TPWD sites. Inflationary pressures on the purchasing power of wages can cause talent to look for employment opportunities elsewhere. The rising cost of living in major metropolitan areas has made recruitment in those areas more challenging. In Austin for example, the combined effect of a highly competitive private and public sector job market and cost of living has made it difficult to recruit and retain positions for TPWD headquarters positions, particularly those related to support functions such as finance, revenue, accounting, legal, communications, and information technology.

Ultimately, an effective compensation package that includes competitive salaries is critical to the department's ability to recruit and retain qualified staff. As such, one of TPWD's highest priorities continues to be assuring that staff are appropriately compensated and that salaries are competitive with other similar state agencies. In addition, efforts to attract and retain talent, and robust succession planning to minimize disruptions when more experienced staff depart, are key to TPWD's future success. Additional information on this and other workforce-related challenges and priorities for the department can be found in Schedule F, Workforce Plan.

NOTES:

Location of Service Populations: The department's service population includes hunters, anglers, boaters, landowners, commercial fishermen, local governments, state park visitors, and the general public. The majority of TPWD services reflected in each goal and action item are available in all regions of the state, including the targeted Texas-Mexico and Texas-Louisiana border regions. A specific breakdown of services provided in these regions can be provided upon request.

Action Items: All action items are on a fiscal year (FY) basis. The scope of these action items is between 2027 and the end of the fiscal year provided unless otherwise specified.

**INFORMATION
RESOURCES
PLANNING
AND
TECHNOLOGY
RESOURCE PLAN**



INFORMATION RESOURCES PLANNING

The Information Technology (IT) Division plays a central role in advancing the agency's mission by enabling secure, modern, and reliable technology services and by facilitating the introduction, adoption, and use of new technologies. It delivers digital solutions that support agency business goals, meet the needs of customers, and align with statewide priorities established in the State Strategic Plan for Information Resources Management. The agency adheres to Department of Information Resources processes and Texas Administrative Code Title 1, Chapter 202 requirements to safeguard data and systems, ensuring technology practices promote security, efficiency, and public value. Guided by the statewide principles to Prioritize Security, Focus on Customers, and Collaborate, the IT Division ensures that its decisions and initiatives strengthen security, improve service delivery, and support enterprise-wide technology objectives as outlined in the Technology Resource Plan.

The strategies that drive the business activities necessary to achieve this goal are:

- **Cybersecurity:** Enforcing security policies and utilizing threat prevention tools are essential for risk management and new threat mitigation. Regular monitoring of agency practices ensures compliance with the Texas Cybersecurity Framework (TCF) and legislative goals, creating an overarching strategy to minimize cyber threats.
- **Enhanced Connectivity:** Ongoing improvements to network infrastructure and connectivity enable the agency to operate more efficiently by supporting faster data transfer, seamless communication, and streamlined processes. Investing in reliable infrastructure ensures consistent service delivery, faster response times, and improved user experience, driving higher customer satisfaction.
- **Responsible Data Management:** Implementing data management best practices will provide an increase in efficiency across all programs, improve data quality and consistency, strengthen decision-making, and improve analytics throughout the department. TPWD continues to invest in data management tools, apply robust quality standards, and hire staff with data expertise to build a modern, sustainable data environment that supports operational efficiency and department-wide coordination.
- **Collaborative Solutions:** Adopting new technologies streamlines operations, enhances workflow, and may reduce costs. This advancement will elevate user experiences with parks and wildlife services and support TPWD's IT Division in managing natural and cultural resources effectively.
- **Workforce Planning:** Attracting and growing talent, engaging staff through events and division partnerships, and leveraging external resources give staff the ability to prioritize key tasks.
- **Modernization of Digital Services:** The IT Division collaborates with business partners to prioritize initiatives, focusing on transforming systems that lack scalability and negatively impact business and security needs. The division is committed to improving digital services to meet growing customer demand for accessible services by enhancing response times, strengthening service availability, and applying customer experience strategies that streamline interactions across all digital platforms.

IT Division's current activities and initiatives are focused on addressing the following main areas:

- **Network Improvement:** Ongoing enhancements to network reliability, bandwidth, and redundancy will improve performance, reduce downtime, and support consistent service delivery, positioning the agency to effectively adopt and scale emerging technologies.
- **Security Initiatives:** Current initiatives include the expansion of centralized identity and access management and enhancing data security through privacy-by-design practices. The agency is also maturing incident response and continuity capabilities to safeguard mission critical services. Additional initiatives focus on improving network and communication security, configuration management, advancing vulnerability and threat surface reduction through automation, and reinforcing governance with updated security policies, compliance activities, and role-based workforce training.
- **Digital Services:** The IT Division collaborates with agency business partners to provide secure applications across devices, to meet the growing demands of citizens and its workforce. Expanding self-service options, collaboration

platforms, and mobile application development ensure customers have easy access to data and services. AI-enabled features, such as intelligent search and virtual assistants, are being considered to improve user experience and service delivery.

- **Emerging Technologies:** As technology evolves, so does demand for new tools and applications. The IT Division and executive leadership prioritize initiatives that incorporate smart devices, mobile applications, and cloud solutions. This includes evaluating responsible use of AI to enhance decision-making, automate routine processes, and improve operational efficiency.
- **Technology Refresh:** Refreshing hardware, network technology, operating systems, and applications is an ongoing process to reduce risks associated with outdated technologies. This is a multi-year, phased process and requires significant IT resources.
- **Managed Services Adoption:** Partnering with a managed service provider can shift routine maintenance and operational workloads to a team focused on reliability and performance, freeing internal staff to concentrate on strategic priorities. This will allow the agency to streamline operations, improve service consistency, and ensure that critical technology functions are supported by dedicated expertise. This model enhances scalability, strengthens cybersecurity posture, and provides predictable costs, ultimately supporting TPWD's mission with more resilient and efficient technology services.
- **Digital Accessibility:** Incorporating strong accessibility tools and practices ensures that all Texans can fully engage with TPWD's digital services, regardless of ability. By designing with accessibility in mind—early and consistently—user-friendly experiences are more inclusive and intuitive. Ensuring that services are responsive across devices further strengthens access, allowing the public and staff to seamlessly interact with TPWD resources from any location.

TPWD constantly strives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operations and business functions through adoption of new technologies and development of new business applications. Recent examples include:

- **Security Tools:** TPWD's IT Division has upgraded its vulnerability scanning software and is continuing to develop Privileged Access Management for credentials management. In collaboration with DIR, TPWD continues to utilize Managed Security Services (MSS) to supplement security capabilities with limited resources.
- **Endpoint Provisioning:** Leveraging cloud services allows an endpoint to be directly delivered and set up with all the user's required settings and applications. This approach allows users to receive their devices quicker and reduces human workflow to get tools delivered to staff.
- **Network Access Control:** This platform employs policy-based rules and customized security profiles to regulate network access and user privileges. With implementation of the tool, TPWD will utilize features such as Authentication, Authorization and Accounting (AAA) to link security threats and remediation actions.
- **Low Code:** Low code is a software development approach that requires little to no coding to build applications and workflows. It allows technical and non-technical users to build applications, increasing productivity, and speeding up service delivery for business users and constituents. TPWD has applied low-code tools to modernize legacy systems such as Wildsearch and Fish Hatcheries Data System.
- **Robotic Process Automation (RPA):** This tool is used to automate repetitive and manual tasks, saving both time and effort. Many processes that follow a logical workflow are potential candidates for RPA, as the technology can be easily scaled up or down to fit different workloads and requirements. Once a solution is built, the users should see increased productivity and accuracy.
- **Boat Titling and Registration (BTR):** The Boat Registration Information and Titling System (BRITS) had been in production since January 2006. The technology used was outdated and was considered a legacy system by DIR. Newer technologies allow for better scalability, enhance-ability, supportability, and increased security. Building a new platform also removes past struggles with recruitment and retention of key technology resources. A rewrite allows end-user staff the ability to make certain business rule changes without IT assistance, such as fee changes and managing user access, and additional functionalities such as the acceptance of in-person credit cards.
- **Network Architecture Improvements:** Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN) has been implemented across the agency. This allows for optimized traffic routing, improved application performance, and increased operational efficiency by ensuring reliable, high-quality connectivity for critical business functions. Enhanced core network and telephony redundancy strengthened disaster recovery capabilities and ensured business continuity by minimizing downtime and maintaining essential communications during disruptions.

- **Enhanced Connectivity:** The department has deployed enterprise-wide business intelligence tools that allow users to consume data live through interactive dashboards and reports to improve analytics capacity. The IT Data Management team works with business users on development, best practices, and training for these tools.

Looking forward, TPWD's future IT activities and initiatives regarding technology include:

- **Collaborative Solutions:** The agency continues to seek cloud and managed services that meet core business objectives. These services can offer automation where human interaction was previously required. IT is positioned to serve as a service broker and data integrator to manage the contracting and implementation aspects of these solutions.
- **Software and Hardware Lifecycle Management:** With the rapid advancement of technology, it is imperative that the agency revises best practices for software and hardware lifecycles. This will allow the agency to plan for future investments in technology without disrupting business continuity.
- **Security Modernization Efforts:** Implementation of improved authentication and authorization management tools to protect data and systems from unintended or malicious use is critical to reduce risk and to ensure that data is available to authorized users. Additional initiatives focus on improving network and communication security, configuration management, advancing vulnerability and threat surface reduction through automation, and reinforcing governance with updated security policies, compliance activities, and role-based workforce training.
- **Critical System Resilience:** TPWD will work to develop guidelines to guard vital infrastructure, operational technology, and physical equipment, and raise awareness and monitor these important functions for cyber threats. TPWD will also continue to implement mechanisms that provide redundancy for mission critical functions like data and voice communications.
- **Privacy and Data Program:** This project aims to establish and enhance privacy practices within our department to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations, protect personal data, and build trust with stakeholders. This comprehensive initiative will involve assessing current privacy practices, developing and implementing policies and procedures, and providing training to employees.
- **Data Management Program:** The IT Division plans to conduct a department-wide assessment of the agency data landscape to identify gaps and define the roles, responsibilities, and software needed to support the program. TPWD is also planning to implement a department-wide data management tool to classify, safeguard, and report on its data.
- **Artificial Intelligence Implementation:** TPWD will continue to work on responsible implementation for AI governance and frameworks while pursuing tools to support department goals.
- **Legacy Application Modernization:** TPWD must modernize legacy applications to maintain compliance with evolving state and federal requirements while ensuring systems remain secure against modern threats. Modernization also provides the scalability and reliability needed to support growing operational demands and deliver efficient, high-quality services to staff and the public.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE PLAN

1. PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Initiative/Strategy Name:

Cybersecurity and Enhanced Connectivity

Initiative Description:

TPWD is committed to ensuring that digital services and information are accessible to all Texans, enabling individuals to easily navigate and benefit from online resources. By strengthening secure identity and access management, and by maintaining reliable connectivity, the agency supports secure access to critical services. Ongoing improvements to network infrastructure and connectivity enable the agency to operate more efficiently by supporting faster data transfer, seamless communication, and streamlined processes. Investing in reliable and secure infrastructure ensures consistent service delivery, quicker response times, improved user experiences, protection of customers' data, and ultimately driving higher customer satisfaction.

Associated Project(s):

Identity and Data Protection
 Application Modernization
 Privileged Access Management
 Network Access Control Phase II: Endpoint Discovery & Cataloging
 Network Access Control Phase III: Network Endpoint Management
 Direct Internet Access
 Network Modernization
 Identify and Access Management
 BORA Texas By Texas (TxT)
 Domain Name System (DNS) Layer Security
 Managed Services (to include network and security)

Status:

Current
 Current
 Implemented
 Current
 Current
 Implemented
 Current
 Current
 Implemented
 Implemented
 Current

Agency Objective(s):

E.1 Indirect Administration

Statewide Technology Priority(ies):

- Continuous optimization of network performance, capacity, and resilience will ensure reliable, high-speed connectivity and minimize service disruptions across all operations, improving the customer experience.
- Ensure that online information and services are accessible to all Texans.
- Enable constituents to securely access and manage their digital government credentials, transactions, and services.
- Implement customer experience strategies to improve efficiency and enhance interactions with TPWD for all customers.

Anticipated Benefit(s):

- Aligning with statewide technology priorities provides greater opportunities to engage customers and internal business partners with better digital services using more efficient and secure data delivery systems.

Capabilities or Barriers:

- Ongoing challenges persist with costly network connectivity in remote areas.
- The cybersecurity risks TPWD faces range widely in sophistication and scope.
- Diverse technology solutions require different support skills and data management oversight methods.
- Lack of funding and resources poses challenges in fulfilling departmental needs.

2. MANAGE DATA RESPONSIBLY TO POWER AI AND TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION

Initiative/Strategy Name:

Data Management

Initiative Description:

Implementing data management best practices will provide an increase in efficiency across all programs, improve data quality and consistency, strengthen decision-making, and improve analytics throughout the department. TPWD continues to invest in data management tools, apply robust quality standards, and hire staff with data expertise to build a modern, sustainable data environment that supports operational efficiency and department-wide coordination.

TPWD is committed to protecting Texans' information through strong data security, privacy, and governance practices while ensuring that authorized users can reliably access the public data they need. By maintaining accurate, high-quality, and relevant data, the agency supports effective AI model development and trustworthy analytics that improve operations and decision-making.

Associated Project(s):

Open Data Program
Data Management Standards
Data Governance Program
Data Literacy Program
Privacy Program
Advanced Data Analytics Capacity
Automating Compliance
Data Stewards Workgroup

Status:

Implemented
Current
Current
Current
Current
Current
Current
Current

Agency Objective(s):

E.1 Indirect Administration

Statewide Technology Priority(ies):

- Implement data governance through consistent policies and processes and effective data management tools.
- Protect personal and confidential information by implementing strong data security and privacy practices.
- Develop a data-literate workforce by offering training emphasizing the importance of data-driven decisions.
- Ensure that data is accurate, high quality, and relevant for effective AI model training and trustworthy analytics.

Anticipated Benefit(s):

- Data governance policies will improve the privacy and security of agency data, establish procedures for data management, and cultivate a data-literate workforce.
- Data management provides the foundation that will improve data quality and accuracy, allowing for better data analytics as well as preparing the department for AI implementation.

Capabilities or Barriers:

- The department's decentralized structure and lack of dedicated resources is a challenge to implementing data governance procedures and maintaining ongoing compliance. Additional resources are required for investing in data management tools and hiring staff with data expertise.
- TPWD has a large volume of both structured and unstructured datasets, presenting a challenge in identifying, classifying, and managing them in an efficient manner.
- Relying on external vendor systems to secure customer data also provides potential challenges.

3. DEVELOP A SKILLED AND SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE

Initiative/Strategy Name:

Collaborative Solutions and Workforce Planning

Initiative Description:

TPWD is building a future-ready workforce by strengthening digital literacy and preparing staff to use emerging technologies responsibly and effectively. The agency promotes an engaging and supportive workplace culture while developing flexible teams that can adapt to evolving roles and continue delivering high-quality service to Texans. Through talent development, strategic partnerships, apprenticeships, internships, and a focus on skills-based growth, TPWD is creating a sustainable talent pipeline for the workforce of tomorrow.

Associated Projects(s):

Role-Based Trainings
IT Staff Outreach Initiatives
Apprenticeships
Internships
Innovative Platforms Adoption

Status:

Current
Current
Current
Current
Current

Agency Objective(s):

E.1 Indirect Administration

Statewide Technology Priority(ies):

- Investigate application development technologies that do not require highly specialized skills.
- Provide training and growth opportunities for staff.
- Work with junior colleges on an apprenticeship program and provide internship opportunities.
- Increase staff's digital literacy to enable the responsible use of AI, data, and emerging technologies to improve efficiency.
- Create a supportive workplace culture that increases employee engagement.

Anticipated Benefit(s):

- Flexible work will continue to accelerate collaborative solutions and digital capabilities.
- TPWD is positioned to take advantage of new, more innovative technologies throughout the enterprise.
- Implementing apprenticeships and continuing internships provide opportunities for hiring and growing junior staff.
- Training programs designed to improve staff skills in emerging technology tools such as generative AI will allow for increases in productivity and efficiencies.

Capabilities or Barriers:

- Limited funding for new programs and salaries to support new positions.
- Slow implementation due to resource constraints.

4. MODERNIZE GOVERNMENT SERVICES THROUGH EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Initiative/Strategy Name:

Modernization of Digital Services

Initiative Description:

TPWD's IT Division collaborates with business partners to prioritize initiatives, focusing on transforming systems that lack scalability and negatively impact business and security needs. The division is committed to improving digital services to meet growing customer demand for accessible, anytime, anywhere access. At the same time, TPWD is modernizing services through the responsible implementation of AI and other emerging technologies to enhance efficiency, security, and accountability. Prioritizing people, processes, and future-focused tools and fostering a culture adaptable to legislative and state leadership priorities strengthens its organizational readiness. Through these accelerated modernization efforts, TPWD delivers risk-based solutions that replace outdated systems and improve service delivery for Texans.

Associated Project(s):

Telecommunications Infrastructure

Robotic Process Automation: Accounts Payable Invoicing

Low-Code Platform

Self-Service Kiosks

Application Technology Refresh

Cybersecurity Performance Reporting System

Boat Titling and Registration System

Power BI Reporting and Development

Deployment of AI Agents

Status:

Current

Current

Current

Current

Current

Current

Implemented

Current

Current

Agency Objective(s):

E.1 Indirect Administration

Statewide Technology Priority(ies):

- Expand the adoption of business process automation and low-code development platforms.
- Work on several process improvements like optimizing procurement processes, and continuous evaluation of technology use policies, standards, and controls.
- Research and provide productivity and collaboration tools for the department and work with DIR on AI adoption and governance.
- Use modern technologies to implement risk-based solutions that replace outdated systems, devices, and applications.

Anticipated Benefit(s):

- Low-code platform simplifies application development, while modernizing legacy systems reduces security risk and boosts adaptability.
- Process automation lowers the time required for repeatable tasks and helps staff build optimized business workflows.
- Modernized networks allow organizations to adapt swiftly to changing demands, support flexible work, and stay competitive in a dynamic business environment.
- The implementation of AI tools will increase efficiency and productivity for staff.

Capabilities or Barriers:

- License cost and vendor dependencies make solution adoption challenging.
- Workforce and technology constraints make it difficult to perform enhancements and maintenance on legacy applications.
- Rapid AI advancements make it difficult to create and implement standards, while also creating new challenges that heighten the need to protect sensitive data and ensure security controls keep pace with evolving capabilities. Strong governance and clear protocols are essential to balance innovation with responsible, secure adoption.

REDUNDANCIES AND IMPEDIMENTS



REDUNDANCIES AND IMPEDIMENTS

Service, Statute, Rule, or Regulation	Why Results in Ineffective/Inefficient Operations	Recommendation for Modification or Elimination	Estimated Cost Savings or Other Benefit Associated with Change
Fund 9 Cash Available for Agency Needs	Projections indicate that general Fund 9 cash balances may be insufficient to support current appropriation levels beyond the 2026-27 biennium. Reduced levels of general Fund 9 will impede the department's ability to carry out core wildlife and fisheries conservation, management and enforcement functions in the future.	A range of regulatory (fee) and statutory changes would alleviate projected cash balance concerns by increasing revenue and/or changing restrictions on uses of existing statutorily dedicated funds and revenue streams. Examples of statutory changes could include modifying the amounts and allowable uses of existing revenue streams, as well as allowable uses of certain statutorily dedicated sub-accounts/appropriated funds.	Strategies undertaken now to improve the availability of general Fund 9 cash will ensure the department has the funding needed to fulfill core functions related to management, conservation and protection of the state's fish, wildlife, and other natural resources into the future.
Increased Road/Bridge Capital Construction Authority	While \$20 million per biennium in authority for road and bridge projects has been made available to the department through an interagency cooperation contract with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), this amount is inadequate to effectively address TPWD public access needs within state parks, wildlife management areas, state natural areas, fish hatcheries, and offices around the state. In total, TPWD estimates approximately \$235 million in outstanding road and bridge repair needs costs across the state. Less costly, preventive maintenance can slow or reverse the decline of roadways before expensive reconstruction is necessary. Additionally, recent natural disasters such as hurricanes, unprecedented flooding, and fires have caused accelerated deterioration and closings.	A modification to the TxDOT Rider to allow additional funding would allow effective repair, maintenance, and expansion of the road and bridge system.	An increase in funding would allow effective repair, maintenance, and expansion of the road and bridge system.
Treatment of Capital Transportation Appropriations for Non-Law Enforcement Related Functions	In recent appropriation cycles, the LBB and Governor's Office have treated TPWD's non-Law Enforcement capital transportation needs as one-time in nature, removing all related authority from initial base limit calculations as well as from LAR base requests and requiring these amounts to be requested as exceptional items. The TPWD vehicle fleet is critical to its ability to effectively carry out its mission and ongoing operations across the state, as vehicles are needed for activities such as conducting wildlife and aquatic biological studies, providing wildlife technical guidance to private landowners, operating WMAs, providing outreach and education services, managing construction projects, responding to violations and accidents involving natural resources, mail delivery, maintenance of facilities, and security. Agency vehicles are utilized heavily, wear accordingly, and must be replaced according to an ongoing/recurring replacement schedule. They are as integral to operations as computers and cell phones.	Stable and predictable capital transportation funding would allow for longer-term planning and would more reliably ensure service delivery.	Stable funding to increase aging transportation items on a regularly occurring schedule would increase employee safety and decrease repair and maintenance costs.

Service, Statute, Rule, or Regulation	Why Results in Ineffective/Inefficient Operations	Recommendation for Modification or Elimination	Estimated Cost Savings or Other Benefit Associated with Change
Commission Flexibility to Change Bird Regulations Multiple sections of Chapter 64, including Parks & Wildlife Code §64.001, §64.002, and §64.011	Parks and Wildlife Code §64.002, related to protection of non-game birds, specifically lists the bird species that may be taken at any time and in any number. By omission, non-game birds not included on that list are assumed to be protected. However, there is not a scientific basis to afford non-native species the same level of protections as indigenous species. As more non-native species will undoubtedly be introduced over time, leaving the statutory listing outdated, this list should be more flexible than statute currently allows.	The TPW Commission should be given authority to make additional changes to bird regulations, including for non-game birds, unprotected birds, etc.	Commission would need to establish regulations, and the agency impact would depend on the content of those regulations. Expected benefit would be regulatory clarity.
Field Trials Parks & Wildlife Code Chapter 43, §62.016	SB2801 (89th R) granted additional authority for the department to issue field trial permits for those wanting to conduct field trials on public and private lands for furbearers, non-game animals, and squirrels. There are now three different authorities that conduct field trials in Texas.	TPWD is seeking to simplify the regulatory structure of field trials in Texas by eliminating the need for both a hunting license and a department-issued permit on private lands, including Private Bird Hunting Areas, and only retaining field trial authority on public hunting lands managed by the department.	Decrease in permit fee revenue, but decrease in administration of field trial programs on private lands.
Certified Wildlife Biologists Parks & Wildlife Code §43.357(b)(6)	Certified Wildlife Biologist is a trademarked certification issued by The Wildlife Society (TWS). The definition of a Certified Wildlife Biologist was dropped from Texas Administrative Code for purposes of Deer Breeder Regulations (31 TAC §65.601) in March 2021. The reference to the Commission's ability to make regulations governing the endorsement of a deer breeder facility by a Certified Wildlife Biologist now needs to be removed from statute (PWC Sec. 43.357(b)(6)). TWS attorneys have contacted some biologists advertising their services who are TPWD-authorized but not technically TWS-certified.	In PWC Sec. 43.357(b)(6), change the phrase "the endorsement of a deer breeder facility by a certified wildlife biologist;" to "endorsement of a deer breeder facility by TPWD-authorized facility/fence inspector" as defined in 31 TAC 65.603.	No direct cost savings, but would avoid potential legal action by TWS.
Release Site Fences Parks & Wildlife Code §43.361	Current statute requires deer breeder release sites to be surrounded by a fence not less than seven feet in height capable of retaining deer at all times. However, the current law does not provide the landowners with an avenue to legally remove the fence surrounding the release site when changes in land ownership or land use purposes may necessitate the removal of that fence. The department has identified land use purposes that necessitate high fence removal, and has received requests over several years seeking removal of high fences surrounding deer breeder release sites, including for housing development, public landfill creation, etc. A proposed change to statute would address changes in land use regarding these requests.	This modification is necessary to provide a pathway for a landowner to remove a high fence, provided TPWD determines with sufficient confidence that CWD is not present on the property.	This change would allow the department more flexibility in addressing situations where owners of a deer breeder release site desire to remove a fence because land ownership or land use practices desired by the landowner have changed. No fiscal impact.

Service, Statute, Rule, or Regulation	Why Results in Ineffective/Inefficient Operations	Recommendation for Modification or Elimination	Estimated Cost Savings or Other Benefit Associated with Change
Coastal Fisheries Long-Term Marine Resource Monitoring Program	NOAA Fisheries' Office of Protected Resources review of permit applications related to rare and incidental takes of marine mammals and threatened or endangered species through gill net sets as part of the marine resource monitoring program can take years.	NOAA Fisheries' Office of Protected Resources' inability to review and process permit applications in a timely manner continues to put the long-term monitoring program at risk. It is recommended that TPWD and Governor's Office emphasize the importance of the long-term monitoring program and efficient science-based management of an estimated \$4.2B saltwater sportfish industry.	Resume long-term monitoring in a program in operation since 1975. Evaluation of sportfish trends in Texas Bays.
Project Connect Development Plans	Project Connect is a City of Austin project to expand transit options by adding light rail systems and commuter rail service through the City of Austin. The current plans will require TPWD staff, most of which are part of the State Parks Division, to relocate from the leased Airport Commerce Property to a new office building, due to the city's planned use of the site. The building relocation must include appropriate spaces to store museum quality archeological artifacts, historical collections and cultural collections. The new building space will also require significant storage for Texas Outdoor Family programming equipment.	This relocation will have financial impacts to TPWD. The Support Resources Division is working diligently to address this. The State Parks Division is prepared to support in space selection if said expertise is required.	This is listed informationally as a current endeavor. The benefit is having a new, suitable facility after the transition.
Exotic Reptiles Parks & Wildlife Code §43.851, and potentially other statutes, depending on how the Legislature chooses to address these problems)	Exotic reptile breeders and dealers are rapidly moving to Texas because other gulf states are prohibiting possession of these animals. Additional regulatory authority could help avoid the introduction of severely disruptive exotic species, such as pythons in the Florida Everglades. Agency strategic plans reference the need to control or prevent invasive species from establishing themselves in Texas, and tegus and pythons are a known ecological problem.	Give the Commission authority to regulate the possession of species that are known to cause ecological problems or represent a safety concern to the Texas public.	Addressing exotic/invasive reptiles in Texas would advance the mission of TPWD. Prohibiting the possession of these species would assist in addressing both the public safety and ecological problems related to certain exotic reptiles. Hobbyists/breeders would likely oppose the bill, whereas municipalities, law enforcement, and conservationists would likely support this change.
Turkey Management Units Parks & Wildlife Code §61.057	Currently, TPWD staff have the authority to issue hunting permits for antlerless deer and pronghorn (PWC 61.057) and desert bighorn sheep (PWC 61.205), but otherwise all other hunting regulations are subject to open seasons established by the TPW Commission. Wild turkey restoration has occurred across east Texas over the last decade. Limited self-sustaining populations have been re-established, but the department lacks the authority to issue a permit to offer hunting opportunities to the public where an open county season may jeopardize continued restoration.	Amend PWC 61.057 to include language for wild turkeys. Department staff feel that limited hunting opportunities should be able to occur, especially in areas where private landowners are committed to habitat restoration.	Feedback should be positive due to opening hunting opportunities.

Service, Statute, Rule, or Regulation	Why Results in Ineffective/Inefficient Operations	Recommendation for Modification or Elimination	Estimated Cost Savings or Other Benefit Associated with Change
Multi-Divisional Project Funding – Method of Finance Restrictions	The department’s Infrastructure Division utilizes a wide variety of funding appropriations to deliver projects. Several appropriations utilized by the department are restricted in nature to federal, state, or legislative guidelines. These guidelines dictate how the department may fund facilities that house multiple divisions designed to integrate staff into one facility and facilitate ease of access and service to the public. While one funding source (division) may be able to fund “their share” of the project, it often happens that the other division’s funding source cannot, which makes the holistic approach to planning, designing, and constructing these projects nearly impossible. As the department continues to develop holistic approaches for construction portfolio management, including the execution of multi-divisional projects, these funding restrictions present significant challenges.	A general revenue funding stream added to the agency’s bill funding pattern would be necessary to grant permission for flexibility when using funding for multi-divisional capital construction projects which utilize methods of funding such as General Fund 9 and Sporting Goods Sales Tax (SGST). This permission could apply to specific types of projects, such as multi-divisional complexes, including the Lubbock Regional Law Enforcement Headquarters project, which is similar to the recently GR-funded projects for the TPWD Headquarters campus. Such a mechanism would ensure funds could cross divisions as needed when proportionate contributions of funding is too complex or unachievable. Another funding mechanism could be in the form of a Rider allowing TPWD to fund multi-divisional projects that are not tied to specific division restrictions or available funds.	A method of finance available to fund multi-divisional projects would result in greater flexibility in the planning and execution of the capital construction portfolio. Reducing the funding complexity of multi-divisional projects would decrease administrative and procedural burdens and increase efficiencies. Additionally, such projects would allow divisions to strategically share resources more easily with one another and provide for greater economies of scale.
Bats in Structures Parks & Wildlife Code §63.101	SB1285 89R (Relating to the Protection of Bats) was prompted by a 2024 incident in San Antonio, when a bat colony was endangered after property management sealed a building with spray foam, trapping the bats inside. The bill was drafted in 2025 to prohibit intentional entombment of live bats. The bill passed the House but did not pass in the Senate. As originally introduced, SB1285 added Subsection b-1 to PWC Sec. 63.101, which would have required that any bat or bat colony may only be removed using nonlethal exclusion methods, and prohibiting exclusion between May 1st and August 31st to protect dependent young. The proposal added the authority for a person to rehabilitate a bat at a registered facility if the bat has had no known prior exposure to humans.	If such a bill is proposed in a future session, staff would like to collaborate with the sponsor to ensure the protection of bats while maintaining effective management options for situations that may affect public safety in urban communities.	No fiscal impact to TPWD. If a similar bill was proposed and passed, TPWD would be responsible for enforcing the new prohibitions and seasonal restrictions.

Issues Identified By TPWD Coordination with Texas Regulatory Efficiency Office (TREO)

Service, Statute, Rule, or Regulation	Why Results in Ineffective/Inefficient Operations	Recommendation for Modification or Elimination	Estimated Cost Savings or Other Benefit Associated with Change
Authorize Digital Verification Integration 31 TAC §55.1(a)(2)	The Commission should amend §55.1(a)(2) to explicitly authorize TPWD to satisfy residency verification through electronic integration with the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) driver's license and personal identification database, such that an applicant's valid Texas DPS record constitutes sufficient proof of residency without requiring the applicant to present any physical or digital document at the point of sale.	The amendment should specify that electronic DPS verification is an alternative pathway, not a replacement for document-based verification, so that applicants without DPS records retain access to the existing document list.	This provision would enable digital verification integration and would reduce both applicant burden and vendor verification time at 1,700 retail locations.
Documentation Requirements for Exceptions 31 TAC 65.171	Digital documentation is not currently listed in the documentation requirements related to the taking of threatened or endangered species.	Amend the specific documentation requirements in §65.171(c) (notarized affidavit, bill of sale, out-of-state permit) to allow digital documentation and streamlined verification processes.	These specific documentation types are agency-created compliance mechanisms, not prescribed by statute, and modernizing them to accept electronic records would reduce administrative burden without altering any mandatory element.
Federal Incorporation by Reference 31 TAC 65.310 Paragraphs 1-3, 6, 8, 9, 11	The specific enumeration of prohibited weapons (traps, snares, nets, rifles, pistols, airguns, swivel guns, punt guns, battery guns, machineguns, fish hooks), the 10-gauge maximum, the three-shell capacity and one-piece filler requirement, the sinkbox prohibition specifics, the live decoy prohibition, the recorded/amplified calls prohibition, the motor-driven conveyance prohibition for concentrating birds, and the non-toxic shot requirement all mirror or implement 50 CFR Part 20 (federal means and methods for migratory bird hunting).	Texas should amend these paragraphs to incorporate 50 CFR Part 20 by reference, with a savings clause stating that where Texas law is more restrictive, Texas law controls. The regulation must remain in the Texas Administrative Code as a formal rule — it cannot be replaced by guidance — but the substantive content can reference the federal standard directly.	This eliminates the administrative burden of maintaining parallel state text that must be updated each time federal regulations change, reduces rulemaking costs, and eliminates confusion from minor textual discrepancies.

Service, Statute, Rule, or Regulation	Why Results in Ineffective/Inefficient Operations	Recommendation for Modification or Elimination	Estimated Cost Savings or Other Benefit Associated with Change
Disability Accommodation Language 31 TAC 65.310 Paragraph 4	The exception for ‘paraplegics and persons missing one or both legs’ uses outdated medical and legal terminology that does not reflect current ADA standards or the full range of mobility disabilities.	The Commission should amend paragraph (4) to replace this language with a broader, ADA-consistent formulation such as ‘persons with mobility disabilities that substantially limit the ability to walk or stand, as documented by a licensed physician or as evidenced by a state-issued disability parking placard or license plate, may take migratory game birds from a stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance.’	This change is within Commission discretion — PWC § 62.003(a) contains no exception at the statutory level, meaning the Commission created this accommodation by regulation and may modernize its scope and language. This amendment does not expand the general vehicle-hunting prohibition; it merely updates the disability accommodation to be more inclusive and legally current.
10-Day Enclosure Requirement 31 TAC 65.310 Paragraph 7	The specific 10-consecutive-day confinement period and the dual requirements of audibility reduction and visual concealment for captive waterfowl are entirely agency discretion implementing federal standards.	The Commission should evaluate whether the 10-day period remains scientifically justified or whether a shorter period (consistent with any updated federal guidance) would achieve the same conservation objective with reduced burden on hunting operations that maintain captive birds for training purposes.	If federal standards have evolved, the regulation should be updated accordingly.
Coastal Waters Boundary 31 TAC 57.971 Paragraph 7	The road-by-road boundary description is extraordinarily lengthy and difficult to interpret from text alone.	The agency should amend this definition to incorporate by reference a map or GIS-based boundary document maintained by TPWD, with the map adopted by reference in the TAC. The specific named water bodies excluded from coastal waters (Spindletop Bayou, Lake Anahuac, Taylor Bayou, etc.) should be retained in a referenced appendix or table rather than embedded in the definition text.	This would dramatically reduce word count while improving clarity and usability for regulated parties.
Obsolete Provision – Flounder Transition Language 31 TAC 57.981 Subsection (c)(4)(H)(iv)	The clause stating ‘On September 1, 2021, the provisions of this clause cease effect’ and the preceding November/early-December transitional bag limit language are now obsolete. The transition date has passed.	This language should be removed entirely, retaining only subsection (c)(4)(H)(v) which establishes the current November 1–December 14 annual closure.	Removing the obsolete transitional text will reduce confusion and eliminate dead regulatory language.

Service, Statute, Rule, or Regulation	Why Results in Ineffective/Inefficient Operations	Recommendation for Modification or Elimination	Estimated Cost Savings or Other Benefit Associated with Change
Guided Fishing Party Bag Limit Formula Complexity 31 TAC 57.981 Subsection (c)(3)	The guided fishing party bag limit formula (total licensed persons minus guides and deckhands, multiplied by per-species limit) is a discretionary calculation method.	The agency should consider simplifying the regulatory text to provide a plain-language example or table illustrating how the formula applies in common scenarios (e.g., a party of 4 with 1 guide), without changing the underlying mathematical result.	The current formula language is technically complex and may create compliance confusion. This is a drafting modernization that reduces compliance burden without altering the substantive limit.
Harmonize BRD Specifications with Federal Standards 31 TAC 58.160 Subsection (e)(4)(B)	The extraordinarily detailed inside-water BRD construction specifications — specifying exact mesh counts (120 meshes around, 6-1/2 meshes deep front section; 120 meshes around, 23 meshes deep back section), webbing materials (No. 18 nylon, specific polyethylene grades), hoop diameters (24-inch), sewing patterns, and installation distances (8 inches behind TED posterior edge) — are duplicative of federal standards and create unnecessary compliance complexity.	Amend subsection (e)(4)(B) to adopt approved BRD devices by reference to 50 CFR Part 622 §622.41 for both inside and outside waters, eliminating the Texas-specific extended funnel construction specifications. The Commission retains authority under PWC §77.007(c) to prescribe means and manner of catching and can re-adopt specific designs by proclamation if federal standards prove inadequate for inside-water conditions.	This reduces the Gear Measurement and Specification Compliance Costs (\$920,000/year) and reduces duplicative regulatory burden for operators fishing both state and federal waters.
Subpermittee System 31 TAC 58.353 Subsection (p)	The subpermittee designation framework — including signed/dated paper forms, department review, and issuance of a subpermittee list — is entirely agency discretion. Digital options are available within the current subpermittee designation framework, which allows for digital forms, digital signatures, and submittal via e-mail. The authorized subpermittee list is also transmitted to the permittee via email.	The amendment should modernize this process by explicitly authorizing electronic submission and electronic issuance of subpermittee authorizations, reducing paperwork burden and processing time for both permittees and the department.	A review for possible improvements for clarity is appropriate.
24-Hour Safety Light Repair Requirement 31 TAC 58.353 Subsection (q)(2)	The 24-hour repair requirement for USCG-signal safety lights is agency discretion. While safety lighting is important, a 24-hour absolute deadline may be operationally infeasible in adverse weather or supply chain conditions.	The amendment should replace the 24-hour requirement with a 'prompt repair' standard with a defined outer limit (e.g., 72 hours) and a notification requirement to the department if repair cannot be completed within 24 hours, reducing strict liability exposure for permittees facing circumstances beyond their control.	This potential rule change idea would increase the navigation risk created by a missing safety light by extending the time period over which the risk persists. A review to consider a longer period with a defined and enforceable limit for the repair requirement is appropriate.

Service, Statute, Rule, or Regulation	Why Results in Ineffective/Inefficient Operations	Recommendation for Modification or Elimination	Estimated Cost Savings or Other Benefit Associated with Change
Oyster Transport Authorization 31 TAC 58.353 Subsection (v)	The transport authorization framework, including pre-transport form submission, is agency discretion. Oyster transport authorizations are only required when transporting for a reason other than tumbling or harvest and serve a role of maintaining biosecurity protocols. The oyster transport request forms are digital, allow for digital signatures, and are submitted via email. The authorization document is a digital, signed PDF that is also transmitted back to permittee via email. The permittee may possess the authorization either physically or electronically.	The amendment should explicitly authorize electronic submission and real-time digital tracking alternatives to paper-based transport authorizations, modernizing compliance and reducing paperwork.	A review for possible improvements for clarity is appropriate.
Manual Procedures Fallback 31 TAC §65.29(f) (6)	Retain this provision but amend it to reference the department's online system as the primary mechanism and clarify that manual procedures are a documented exception requiring department notification, not a routine alternative.	Retain this provision but amend it to reference the department's online system as the primary mechanism and clarify that manual procedures are a documented exception requiring department notification, not a routine alternative.	This preserves operational continuity while reinforcing digital-first administration.

SCHEDULE A

Budget Structure



TPWD GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND MEASURES

The goals, objectives, strategies and measures listed below comprise TPWD's official budget structure and establish the framework through which the agency will submit its request for legislative appropriations for the 2028-2029 biennium.

The letters and numbers in brackets represent linkages between objectives and strategies, and the primary operational goals and action plans that are associated with these objectives and strategies. These letters and numbers correspond to the schema detailed in the Operational Goals and Action Plans section.

GOAL A: CONSERVE FISH, WILDLIFE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Conserve fish, wildlife and other natural resources and enhance the quality of hunting and fishing and other recreational opportunities by using sound management practices and the best science available.

OBJECTIVE A.1.: CONSERVE WILDLIFE AND ENSURE QUALITY HUNTING

Conserve the function and biological diversity of Texas wildlife and habitat resources and ensure the continued availability of quality hunting. [Operational Goals 1, 2, 3]

Outcome:

Percent of Total Land Acreage in Texas Managed to Enhance Wildlife through TPWD-Approved Management Agreements

A.1.1. STRATEGY: WILDLIFE CONSERVATION, HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH

Implement programs and activities designed to conserve wildlife and manage habitats. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plans A, C, D, E, F, H, I; Operational Goal 2, Action Plans A, B, C; Operational Goal 3, Action Plans A, B]

Output:

Number of Wildlife-Related Environmental Documents Reviewed

Number of Wildlife Population Surveys Conducted

Number of Responses to Requests for Technical Guidance, Recommendations and Information Regarding Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species

Explanatory:

Number of Wildlife Management Areas Open to the Public

A.1.2. STRATEGY: TECHNICAL GUIDANCE TO PRIVATE LANDOWNERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Provide technical, educational and financial assistance/support to private landowners and conservation organizations to encourage development of wildlife and habitats on privately owned lands. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plans A, C, D, E, F, H; Operational Goal 3, Action Plans A, B]

Output:

Number of Active TPWD-Approved Wildlife Management Plans with Private Landowners

Number of Wildlife Resource Management and Enhancement Presentations and Consultations Conducted for the General Public

Number of Acres under Active TPWD-Approved Wildlife Management Plans with Private Landowners

Number of Wildlife Resource Management Presentations and Consultations Conducted for Private Landowners

Number of Active TPWD-Approved Management Agreements with Private Landowners

Number of Sites Participating in Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP) Harvest Option

Number of Acres Participating in Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP) Harvest Option

A.1.3. STRATEGY: ENHANCED HUNTING AND WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Provide enhanced hunting and wildlife-related recreational opportunities by educating and developing partnerships with private landowners to increase access to private lands; offering additional public lands for public hunts; and developing, promoting and implementing programs related to non-hunting forms of wildlife-related recreational opportunity. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plan C; Operational Goal 2, Action Plans A, B, C]

Output:

Acres of Public Hunting Lands Provided
Number of Hunter Opportunity Days Provided

OBJECTIVE A.2.: CONSERVE AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS AND FISHERIES

Conserve Texas aquatic and fisheries resources and ensure the continued availability of quality fishing. [Operational Goals 1, 2, 3]

Outcome:

Annual Percent Change in Recreational Saltwater Fishing Effort
Percent of Fish and Wildlife Kills or Pollution Cases Resolved Successfully
Percentage of Freshwater Fish and Mussel Species of Greatest Conservation Need with Conservation Actions Implemented to Recover, Restore, or Preserve Their Populations

A.2.1. STRATEGY: INLAND FISHERIES MANAGEMENT, HABITAT CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH

Implement programs and activities (such as water quality and quantity assessments, fishery assessment and enhancement, review of permitting activities to minimize impacts to aquatic ecosystems) designed to maintain, protect, restore and enhance the state's freshwater fisheries resources and aquatic ecosystems. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plans A, B, E, F, H; Operational Goal 3, Action Plan A]

Output:

Number of Hours Spent Managing, Treating, Surveying or Providing Public Education on Aquatic Invasive Species
Number of Freshwater Fish Research Studies Underway
Number of Surveys Conducted of Freshwater Fisheries Resources
Number of Fish Habitat and Angler Access Improvement Projects Completed or Underway on Public Waterways
Number of Project-Based Consultations Performed and Permits Issued to Conserve Aquatic Ecosystems and Fisheries

Explanatory:

Number of Pollution and Fish Kill Complaints Investigated (Inland)

A.2.2. STRATEGY: INLAND HATCHERIES OPERATIONS

Operate inland hatcheries and stock fish in the public waters of the state to maintain and enhance existing fish populations in freshwater habitats and provide quality fishing opportunities to the public. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plans A, E; Operational Goal 2, Action Plans A, B; Operational Goal 3, Action Plan A]

Output:

Number of Fingerlings Stocked – Inland Fisheries (in millions)

A.2.3. STRATEGY: COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT, HABITAT CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH

Implement programs and activities (such as marine fishery assessments, stock identification, involvement in water planning and permitting matters, and wetland restoration and protection) designed to maintain, protect, restore and enhance the state's marine fisheries resources and aquatic ecosystems. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plans A, B, E, F, H; Operational Goal 3, Action Plan A]

Output:

Number of Saltwater Fish Management Research Studies Underway
 Number of Saltwater Fish Population and Harvest Surveys Conducted
 Number of Water-Related Documents Reviewed (Coastal)
 Number of Commercial Fishing Licenses Bought Back

Explanatory:

Number of Pollution and Fish Kill Complaints Investigated (Coastal)

A.2.4. STRATEGY: COASTAL HATCHERIES OPERATIONS

Operate coastal hatcheries and stock fish in the public waters of the state to maintain and enhance existing fish populations in marine habitats and provide quality fishing opportunities to the public. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plans A, E; Operational Goal 2, Action Plans A, B; Operational Goal 3, Action Plan A]

Output:

Number of Fingerlings Stocked – Coastal Fisheries (in millions)

GOAL B: ACCESS TO STATE AND LOCAL PARKS

Ensure access to state parks, state historic sites and local parks by conserving and managing natural and cultural resources of state park properties and facilities, by improving the quality and safety of the visitor experience, and by supporting local parks and recreational needs.

OBJECTIVE B.1.: ENSURE SITES ARE OPEN AND SAFE

Ensure that TPWD sites and facilities are open to the public and safe for use. [Operational Goals 1, 2, 3, 4]

Outcome:

Percent of Funded State Parks Minor Repair Projects Completed
 Rate of Reported Incidents per 100,000 Park Visits Resulting in Injury or Death

B.1.1. STRATEGY: STATE PARKS, HISTORIC SITES AND STATE NATURAL AREA OPERATIONS

Provide for public use, visitor safety, conservation and operation of existing state parks, historic sites and state natural areas. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plans A, C, G; Operational Goal 2, Action Plans A, B, C; Operational Goal 3, Action Plan A; Operational Goal 4, Action Plan I]

Output:

Number of State Parks in Operation
 Number Served by Outdoor Skills Training and Interpretive Programs at State Parks and Historic Sites

Efficiency:

Percent of Operating Costs for State Parks Recovered from Revenues

Explanatory:

Number of Paid Park Visits (in millions)
 Amount of Fee Revenue Collected from State Park Users (in millions)
 Number of Park Visits Not Subject to Fees (in millions)

B.1.2. STRATEGY: PARKS MINOR REPAIR PROGRAM

Implement routine and cyclical minor repair and maintenance programs at state park properties to keep the system functioning in an efficient, clean and safe condition. [Operational Goal 2, Action Plan A]

Output:

Number of Funded State Parks Minor Repair Projects Completed
 Number of Minor Repair Projects Managed

B.1.3. STRATEGY: PARKS SUPPORT

Provide administrative management, business management, customer contact management, interpretive programming management, natural and cultural resource management, and historic site management services in support of state park field operations. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plans A, C, E; Operational Goal 2, Action Plans A, B, C; Operational Goal 3, Action Plans A, B; Operational Goal 4, Action Plans A, B, E, H, I]

Explanatory:

Value of Labor, Cash, and Service Contributions to State Parks Activities

OBJECTIVE B.2.: PROVIDE FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR LOCAL PARKS

Provide funding and support for local parks. [Operational Goals 2, 3, 4]

Outcome:

Local Grant Dollars Awarded as a Percent of Local Grant Dollars Requested

B.2.1. STRATEGY: PROVIDE LOCAL PARK GRANTS

Provide technical assistance and outdoor, indoor, regional and small community grants to local governments. [Operational Goal 2, Action Plan C; Operational Goal 4, Action Plan C]

Output:

Number of Grant Assisted Projects Completed

Efficiency:

Program Costs as a Percent of Total Grant Dollars Awarded

B.2.2. STRATEGY: PROVIDE BOATING ACCESS, TRAILS AND OTHER GRANTS

Provide recreational trails grants, Community Outdoor Outreach Program (COOP) grants and boating access grants to local governments and eligible non-profit entities. [Operational Goal 2, Action Plans B, C; Operational Goal 4, Action Plan C]

Output:

Number of Community Outdoor Outreach Grants Awarded
 Number of Recreational Trail Grants Awarded

Explanatory:

Boating Access Program Grant Dollars Awarded

GOAL C: INCREASE AWARENESS, PARTICIPATION, REVENUE AND COMPLIANCE

Inform and educate the public about the state's natural and cultural resources and recreational opportunities to increase participation and enhance revenue. Ensure compliance with state statutes, rules and licensing requirements.

OBJECTIVE C.1.: ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH AGENCY AND PROMOTE WATER SAFETY

Ensure public compliance with agency rules and regulations and promote safety on public waterways through education, contacts and patrols. [Operational Goals 1, 2, 3]

Outcome:

Percent of Public Compliance with Agency Rules and Regulations
Boating Fatality Rate

C.1.1. STRATEGY: WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND WATER SAFETY ENFORCEMENT / EDUCATION

Implement wildlife, fisheries and water safety law enforcement and education programs and activities to monitor users of natural resources and ensure public safety on state waterways. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plan A; Operational Goal 2, Action Plan B]

Output:

Miles Patrolled in Vehicles (in millions)
Number of Water Safety Hours
Hunting and Fishing Contacts
Water Safety Contacts
Number of Fisheries and Wildlife Hours
Number of Students Certified in Boater Education

Explanatory:

Conviction Rate for Hunting, Fishing and License Violators
Conviction Rate for Water Safety Violators

C.1.2. STRATEGY: TEXAS GAME WARDEN TRAINING CENTER

Provide mandated instruction to newly hired game warden cadets and continuing education and marine safety enforcement officer certification/training to licensed peace officers. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plan G]

C.1.3. STRATEGY: PROVIDE LAW ENFORCEMENT OVERSIGHT, MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Provide for the oversight, management and support of all law enforcement programs and activities. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plans A, G]

OBJECTIVE C.2.: INCREASE AWARENESS

Increase awareness of conserving natural and cultural resources, participation in nature-based recreational opportunities and revenue from these activities, and other department programs. Encourage safe, legal and ethical behavior among resource users. [Operational Goals 2, 3, 4]

Outcome:

Hunting Accident Rate

C.2.1. STRATEGY: OUTREACH AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Implement hunting and fishing programs and water safety programs to encourage safe, legal and ethical behavior among hunters, shooting sports enthusiasts and anglers. Design and implement outreach and education programs to reach Texas' diverse population, especially new users, with conservation and outdoor recreation knowledge and skills. Recruit, train and retain a corps of volunteer instructors. [Operational Goal 2, Action Plans A, B; Operational Goal 3, Action Plan A]

Output:

Number of Students Certified in Hunter Education
Number of People Reached by Other Outreach and Education Efforts

Efficiency:

Volunteer Labor as a Percent of Hunter Education Program Operating Costs
Volunteer Labor as a Percent of Other Outreach and Education Program Operating Costs

C.2.2. STRATEGY: PROVIDE COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Manage the full range of agency communication channels in order to increase awareness of and participation in conservation and nature-based recreation, and revenue from license sales, visitation and other department programs. [Operational Goal 2, Action Plans A, B, C; Operational Goal 3, Action Plan A; Operational Goal 4, Action Plans A, B, C, E]

Output:

Number of Visits to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Website
 Number of TPWD Online Video Views
 Number of Subscribers to the TPWD Email Subscription Service
 Number of Successfully Delivered Email and Text Messages

Efficiency:

Percent of Magazine Expenditures Recovered from Revenues

Explanatory:

Average Content Viewership of *Texas Parks & Wildlife* Magazine

OBJECTIVE C.3.: IMPLEMENT LICENSING AND REGISTRATION PROVISIONS

Ensure implementation of statutory provisions related to vessel and outboard motor registration and titling and to the issuance of hunting and fishing licenses, endorsements and permits. [Operational Goal 4]

C.3.1. STRATEGY: HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE ISSUANCE

Manage issuance of hunting and fishing licenses, endorsements and permits. [Operational Goal 4, Action Plans A, B]

Output:

Number of Hunting Licenses Sold
 Number of Fishing Licenses Sold
 Number of Combination Licenses Sold

Explanatory:

Total License Agent Costs

C.3.2. STRATEGY: BOAT REGISTRATION AND TITLING

Manage issuance of boat registrations, titles and marine industry licenses. [Operational Goal 4, Action Plans A, B]

Output:

Number of Boat Registration, Titling, and Marine Industry Licensing Transactions Processed

GOAL D: MANAGE CAPITAL PROGRAMS

Manage capital programs for TPWD lands and facilities efficiently and effectively, and in support of the conservation of natural and cultural resources of the state.

OBJECTIVE D.1.: ENSURE PROJECTS ARE COMPLETED ON TIME

Utilize sound project management practices to ensure that projects are completed on time and satisfy the agency's priority needs for outdoor recreational opportunities and resources in accordance with the *Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan*. [Operational Goals 1, 2, 4]

Outcome:

Percent of Major Repair/Construction Projects Completed

D.1.1. STRATEGY: IMPLEMENT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND MAJOR REPAIRS

Implement capital improvement and major repair projects needed to maintain and develop state parks, historic sites, natural areas, wildlife management areas, fish hatcheries and field offices. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plan G; Operational Goal 2, Action Plan A; Operational Goal 4, Action Plan F]

Output:

Number of Major Repair/Construction Projects Completed

Number of Major Repair/Construction Projects Managed

D.1.2. STRATEGY: LAND ACQUISITION

Acquire priority natural, cultural and recreational resources in accordance with the *Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan*. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plan C; Operational Goal 2, Action Plan A; Operational Goal 4, Action Plans A, C, F]

Output:

Number of Acres Acquired (net)

Number of Acres Transferred

Number of Expansions to State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas

Explanatory:

Number of Acres in Department's Public Lands System per 1,000 Texans

D.1.3. STRATEGY: INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Provide project management oversight and other services necessary to manage design and construction effectively and efficiently and to improve and repair TPWD facilities and develop TPWD lands. [Operational Goal 1, Action Plan G; Operational Goal 2, Action Plan A; Operational Goal 4, Action Plan F]

D.1.4. STRATEGY: MEET DEBT SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Meet ongoing debt service requirements associated with revenue bonds issued for repairs, maintenance and other projects. [Operational Goal 4, Action Plans A, C]

D.1.5. STRATEGY: CENTENNIAL PARKS CONSERVATION FUND

Creation and improvement of state parks. Purchasing and developing land for state parks. [Operational Goal 2, Action Plans A, B; Operational Goal 4, Action Plans B, C, G]

GOAL E: INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION**OBJECTIVE E.1.: INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION**

Indirect administration. [Operational Goal 4]

E.1.1 STRATEGY: CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Central administration. [Operational Goal 4, Action Plans A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I]

E.1.2. STRATEGY: INFORMATION RESOURCES

Information resources. [Operational Goal 4, Action Plans A, B, K]

E.1.3. STRATEGY: OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

Other support services. [Operational Goal 4, Action Plans A, B, C, F, G, H, I]

SCHEDULE B

Performance Measure Definitions



MEASURE DEFINITIONS

GOAL A: CONSERVE FISH, WILDLIFE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE A.1.: CONSERVE WILDLIFE AND ENSURE QUALITY HUNTING

Outcome:

Percent of Total Land Acreage in Texas Managed to Enhance Wildlife through TPWD-Approved Management Agreements

Definition: Measure is defined by the combined acreage of private land in Texas 1) that has an active, TPWD-approved wildlife management plan (WMP) in place with private landowners, or 2) participates in the Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP) Harvest Option (HO) for the corresponding annual enrollment period and does not also have an active, TPWD-approved WMP. WMPs represent partnerships between private landowners and TPWD to manage private lands for the benefit of wildlife resources. MLDP offers both the HO and the Conservation Option (CO). Acres under the MLDP CO are required to have a TPWD-approved WMP and are counted as acres under WMP. Acres under the MLDP HO are not required to have a TPWD-approved WMP, but participation fosters sound management of wildlife and habitat. Because participation in either of these agreements results in the implementation of beneficial habitat management practices on private lands, they are referred to collectively as TPWD-Approved Management Agreements.

Data Limitations: With the majority of Texas lands in private ownership, it remains a challenge for TPWD to successfully work with numerous, diverse landowners. Activity for this measure is primarily the result of requests from private landowners and the ability of TPWD to respond to these requests. TPWD does not have control over the number of landowners that request a TPWD-approved WMP or participate in MLDP Harvest Option. Factors that may influence landowners' decision to request a WMP include economic conditions, public attitudes, fluctuating funding and/or staffing availability, participation fees and general interest in other programs that require a WMP, and other options available to private landowners.

Data Source: Wildlife Division (Data for acreage under active TPWD-approved agreements is entered by field biologists and landowners into the Land Management Assistance (LMA) online database that supports the work of the Wildlife Division. Summary data is retrieved through a series of report queries). Total Texas land area is derived from the most recent Texas Almanac.

Methodology: Measure is calculated by adding 1) the acreage of private land for which there is an active TPWD-approved WMP to 2) the acreage of private land participating in the MLDP Harvest Option for the corresponding annual enrollment period, and dividing by 3) the total land area in Texas as reported in the most recent Texas Almanac. To avoid duplication, acres will only be counted under the MLDP Harvest Option if that land is also not managed under a WMP. Automated and manual tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure reflects the continued partnership between TPWD and private landowners to enhance and manage land for the benefit of wildlife resources.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

A.1.1. STRATEGY: WILDLIFE CONSERVATION, HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH

Output:

Number of Wildlife-Related Environmental Documents Reviewed

Definition: Measure counts the number of environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, environmental information documents, and other documents reviewed by Wildlife Division staff and for which a written response has been submitted or a decision not to respond is recorded in the project file. A review includes an assessment to determine a potential for adverse impacts to wildlife and their habitats. A division response can include any documented written communication (including email) that identifies and explains agency concerns regarding the project. Some reviews take

several years to resolve. Therefore, reviews are only counted after a written response is either submitted to a project proponent or a decision not to respond is recorded in the project file.

Data Limitations: Reviews are done in response to requests from outside sources. TPWD does not have full control over the number of requests received during any given reporting period. Factors beyond the agency's control include, but are not limited to, changes in regulations, economic conditions, weather and natural disasters.

Data Source: Wildlife Division (calculated from the Environmental Review and Coordination System (ERCS)).

Methodology: Manual and automated tabulation, which tallies and provides a total count of all items as identified within the definition, calculated from ERCS. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities that directly support the purpose of this strategy.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Wildlife Population Surveys Conducted

Definition: Population surveys are conducted to measure population trends of wildlife resources to ensure overall state-wide conservation of wildlife resources and to provide data with which to set bag limits and seasons for game species.

Data Limitations: Surveys are key to monitoring population trends. Population surveys are done in the field and can be affected by weather and other factors such as equipment, funding, and staff resources. Individual survey counts are only reported when all the surveys for the entire species have been conducted.

Data Source: Wildlife Division (program leaders responsible for the specific game species collect and summarize the data according to established written protocols. Summary data is submitted to the division coordinator by the program leaders responsible for each species).

Methodology: Automated and manual tabulation, which tallies the total number of surveys conducted, according to established protocols for each species. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reports on the number of surveys conducted to measure wildlife population trends. This data is key to developing regulations that ensure that wildlife resources are properly managed and conserved.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Responses to Requests for Technical Guidance, Recommendations and Information Regarding Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species

Definition: Measure counts the number of responses to rare, threatened, and endangered species technical guidance, recommendations, information and reviews. "Requests" include environmental assessment actions, research proposal reviews, study reviews, external environmental reviews (e.g., from TxDOT and TCEQ), public education, and media requests. A "response" includes any documented oral or written communication, enabling access to records in the Texas Natural Diversity Database from an online portal managed and updated by staff, and participation in meetings and/or field assessment activities which are necessary to adequately communicate concerns about impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitats. Some reviews take several years to resolve. Therefore, a response is only counted when it is completed within the current reporting period.

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is the result of requests from outside sources. TPWD does not have control over the number of requests received during any given reporting period. Factors beyond the agency's control include economic conditions and attitudes towards conservation/endangered species.

Data Source: Wildlife Division (manual files and Texas Natural Diversity database).

Methodology: Monthly counts from various sources (email, web, and other requests) are entered into a spreadsheet that tallies the data by month, quarter, and fiscal year. Cumulative.

Purpose: To increase awareness and education regarding rare, threatened, and endangered species and associated habitats.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** Yes **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Explanatory:

Number of Wildlife Management Areas Open to the Public

Definition: Measure counts the total number of wildlife management areas during the fiscal year that were open to the public for at least part of the year. Performance is expected to remain constant. An increase would only come from the opening of a newly acquired WMA.

Data Limitations: The number of WMAs is not expected to change significantly from year to year.

Data Source: Wildlife Division (Excel spreadsheet and online published list).

Methodology: Manual tabulation, which counts the total number of WMAs open to the public. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: To measure availability of public access to WMAs.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

A.1.2. STRATEGY: TECHNICAL GUIDANCE TO PRIVATE LANDOWNERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Output:

Number of Active TPWD-Approved Wildlife Management Plans with Private Landowners

Definition: Measure counts the number of active, TPWD-approved wildlife management plans (WMPs) in place with private landowners. WMPs represent voluntary partnerships between private landowners and TPWD to manage private (not state or federally owned) land for the benefit of wildlife resources. A TPWD-approved WMP is a prerequisite for participation in the MLDP Conservation Option (one of two MLDP options), which is a popular tool that encourages many landowners to engage TPWD for technical guidance. Many, though not all, WMPs are associated with MLDP Conservation Option enrollment.

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is primarily the result of requests from private landowners and the ability of TPWD to respond to these requests. TPWD does not have control over the number of landowners that request TPWD-approved WMPs. Factors beyond the agency's control include economic conditions, public attitudes, fluctuating funding and/or staffing availability, and other options available to private landowners.

Data Source: Wildlife Division. Data is entered by field biologists and landowners into the Land Management Assistance (LMA) online database. Summary data is retrieved through query report.

Methodology: Automated summary of the total number of active TPWD-approved WMPs for the reporting period. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure reflects the continued partnership between TPWD and private landowners to enhance and manage lands for the benefit of wildlife resources.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Wildlife Resource Management and Enhancement Presentations Conducted for the General Public

Definition: The agency makes presentations to and consults with wildlife and conservation professionals, sportsmen, students, civic groups, and others regarding proper management of wildlife resources and habitat and the various methods and practices used to manage populations and habitat. This measure counts the total number of presentations provided to the general public.

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is completed in response to requests from outside sources. TPWD does not have control over the number of requests received during any given reporting period.

Data Source: Wildlife Division. Data is entered by TPWD staff into the Land Management Assistance (LMA) online database. Summary data is retrieved through query report.

Methodology: Automated summary of the total number of management and enhancement presentations for the general public, retrieved through query report of the LMA online database. Cumulative.

Purpose: To continue education and awareness activities provided by TPWD staff to all constituents.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Acres Under Active TPWD-Approved Wildlife Management Plans with Private Landowners

Definition: Measure counts the number of acres being managed under active, TPWD-approved wildlife management plans (WMPs) with private landowners. WMPs represent voluntary partnerships between private landowners and TPWD to manage private (not state or federally owned) land for the benefit of wildlife resources. A TPWD-approved WMP is a prerequisite for participation in the MLDP Conservation Option (one of two MLDP options), which is a popular tool that encourages many landowners to engage TPWD for technical guidance. Therefore, acres under the MLDP Conservation Option are included in the count of acres under WMP. While participation in the MLDP Harvest Option does not require a WMP, some acres under this type of agreement may also have a TPWD-approved WMP, and in that case, those acres are counted exclusively as WMP.

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is primarily the result of requests from private landowners and the ability of field staff to service these requests. TPWD does not have full control over the number of landowners who request and implement TPWD-approved WMPs. Factors beyond the agency's control include economic conditions, public attitudes, fluctuating staffing and/or funding availability, and other options available to private landowners.

Data Source: Wildlife Division. Data is entered by field biologists and landowners into the Land Management Assistance (LMA) online database. Summary data is retrieved through various report queries.

Methodology: Automated summary of the total number of acres under active TPWD-approved WMPs for the reporting period in the LMA online database. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure reflects the continued partnership between TPWD and private landowners to enhance and manage lands for the benefit of wildlife resources.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Wildlife Resource Management and Enhancement Presentations and Consultations Conducted for Private Landowners

Definition: The agency conducts presentations and consults with private landowners regarding proper management of wildlife resources, habitat, and various methods and practices used to manage populations and habitat. This measure reflects number of presentations and consultations provided to private landowners.

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is completed in response to requests for technical assistance from private landowners. TPWD does not have control over the number of requests received during any given reporting period.

Data Source: Wildlife Division. Data is entered by TPWD staff into the Land Management Assistance (LMA) online database. Summary data is retrieved through a query report.

Methodology: Automated summary of the total number of management and enhancement presentations for private landowners, retrieved through query report of the LMA online database. Cumulative.

Purpose: To record private landowner outreach and consultation efforts provided by TPWD staff.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Active TPWD-Approved Management Agreements with Private Landowners

Definition: Measure counts the number of private land sites under agreement to 1) have an active, TPWD-approved wildlife management plan (WMP) in place with private landowners, or 2) participate in the MLDP Harvest Option (HO) for the corresponding annual enrollment period that do not also have an active, TPWD-approved WMP. WMPs represent partnerships between private landowners and TPWD to manage private land for the benefit of wildlife resources. MLDP offers both the HO and the Conservation Option (CO). Sites enrolled in the MLDP CO must have a TPWD-approved WMP in place with the landowner and are counted as having a WMP. A TPWD-approved WMP is not required for enrollment in the MLDP HO, but participation fosters sound management of wildlife and habitat. Because participation in either of these agreements results in the implementation of beneficial habitat management practices on private lands, they are referred to collectively as TPWD-Approved Management Agreements.

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is primarily the result of requests from private landowners and the ability of TPWD to respond to these requests. TPWD does not have control over the number of landowners that request TPWD-approved WMP or to participate in MLDP Harvest Option. Factors beyond the agency's control include economic conditions, public attitudes, fluctuating funding and/or staffing availability, and other options available to private landowners.

Data Source: Wildlife Division. Data for number of active, TPWD-approved WMPs is entered by field biologists and landowners into the Land Management Assistance (LMA) online database. Data for the number of properties participating in the MLDP Harvest Option is entered by landowners into the TWIMS LMA online database. Summary data is retrieved through various report queries.

Methodology: Measure is calculated by adding the 1) total number of active TPWD-approved WMPs for the reporting period and 2) the number of private lands sites participating in the MLDP Harvest Option for the corresponding annual enrollment period. To avoid duplication, agreements will only be counted under the MLDP Harvest Option if that land is not also managed under a WMP. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure reflects the continued partnership between TPWD and private landowners to enhance and manage lands for the benefit of wildlife resources.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Sites Participating in Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP) Harvest Option

Definition: Measure counts the number of private (not state or federally owned) land sites participating in the MLDP Harvest Option for the annual enrollment period for properties that do not also have an active, TPWD-approved wildlife management plan. The MLDP Harvest Option fosters sound management of native wildlife and habitat on private lands by providing landowners with a deer harvest recommendation, tag issuance, and general guidance about wildlife and wildlife habitat management. MLDP Harvest Option agreements are not required to have a TPWD-approved WMP. Any sites that participate in the MLDP Harvest Option and also have an active, TPWD-approved WMP are excluded from this count, but are included in the count of WMPs instead.

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is primarily the result of private landowners enrolling through an online system. TPWD does not have control over the number of landowners who request enrollment. Factors beyond the agency's control include economic conditions, public attitudes, and other options available to private landowners. This number may also fluctuate within a given fiscal year due to landowners moving from Harvest Option agreements to TPWD-approved wildlife management plans.

Data Source: Wildlife Division. Data are entered by landowners into the Land Management Assistance (LMA) online database. Summary data are retrieved through various report queries.

Methodology: Automated summary of the total number of agreements to participate in the MLDP Harvest Option for the annual enrollment period that do not also have an active, TPWD-approved wildlife management plan. Properties are cross-checked against tracts that have an active, TPWD-approved wildlife management plan on a quarterly basis to ensure that these tracts are not counted twice. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure reflects the continued partnership between TPWD and private landowners to enhance and manage lands for the benefit of wildlife resources.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Acres in Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP) Harvest Option

Definition: Measure counts the number of acres participating in the MLDP Harvest Option for the annual enrollment period that do not also have an active, TPWD-approved wildlife management plan. MLDP offers two options for participation: the Harvest Option and the Conservation Option. Although a TPWD-approved WMP is not required for Harvest Option participation (unlike the Conservation Option), this option fosters sound management of native wildlife and habitat on private lands by providing landowners with a deer harvest recommendation, tag issuance, and general guidance about wildlife and wildlife habitat management. Any acreage that participates in the MLDP Harvest Option and also has an active, TPWD-approved WMP is excluded from this count, as these would be counted as WMP acres.

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is primarily the result of private landowners enrolling through an online system. TPWD does not have control over the number of landowners who request enrollment. Factors beyond the agency's control include economic conditions, public attitudes, and other options available to private landowners. This number may also fluctuate within a fiscal year due to landowners moving from Harvest Option agreements to TPWD-approved wildlife management plans.

Data Source: Wildlife Division. Data is entered by landowners into the Land Management Assistance (LMA) online database. Summary data is retrieved through various report queries.

Methodology: Automated summary of the total number of acres participating in the MLDP Harvest Option for the annual enrollment period. Properties are cross-checked against tracts that have an active, TPWD-approved wildlife management plan on a quarterly basis to ensure that these tracts are not counted twice. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure reflects the continued partnership between TPWD and private landowners to enhance and manage lands for the benefit of wildlife resources.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

A.1.3. STRATEGY: ENHANCED HUNTING AND WILDLIFE-RELATED RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Output:

Acres of Public Hunting Lands Provided

Definition: Measure counts the total number of acres of land included in the TPWD public hunting program (leased and owned) that offer some type of public hunting during the year reported.

Data Limitations: Public hunts for specific species of game are held on various lands. Throughout the year, there will be overlap among acreage and species. Quarterly information cannot be summed to obtain the annual total, and ultimately, this measure best reflects performance on an annual basis. Lands included in the count include private lands and publicly owned land leased to TPWD as well as TPWD-owned wildlife management areas and state parks. The agency cannot fully control the decisions made by lessors to participate in the public hunting program.

Data Source: Wildlife Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet).

Methodology: Manual and automated tabulation of the total number of acres of land included in the TPWD public hunting program. Performance will be reported quarterly as shown on the Excel file by quarter, however the annual year-end total is derived by summing all acres provided by area for the fiscal year. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Providing public hunting lands is essential to providing hunting opportunities to the public. This measure tracks acres of lands provided for such activities.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Hunter Opportunity Days Provided

Definition: A public hunting day is defined as any day, or part of the day, in which hunting opportunity is provided on a public hunting area, i.e., a wildlife management area, state park, or leased private land. Data is cumulative for all public hunting areas and is collected from a compilation of calendar dates. This includes dates for hunts conducted under special drawing permits, regular (daily) permits, annual public hunting permits and “no permit required” hunts.

Data Limitations: Measure includes hunts held on leased private and public lands. This portion of the measure can vary from year to year, as private or public lessors decide to either limit or increase participation. The agency cannot fully control the decisions made by lessors to participate in the public hunting program.

Data Source: Data is extracted from hunt proposals for department owned lands and short- and long-term lease agreements for hunting days on private and public lands.

Methodology: Manual and automated tabulation totaling the number of public hunting days available at WMAs, state parks and leased properties.

Purpose: This measure reflects hunting opportunities provided to the public on an annual basis, which directly links to the goal and objective of ensuring the availability of quality hunting.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

OBJECTIVE A.2.: CONSERVE AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS AND FISHERIES

Outcome:

Annual Percent Change in Recreational Saltwater Fishing Effort

Definition: A unit of “fishing effort” is defined as one angler-hour of fishing. Freshwater fishing effort data is currently unavailable; therefore, the agency calculates total fishing effort based on saltwater finfish fishing only.

Data Limitations: Factors beyond the agency’s control include: severe weather factors that prevent anglers from fishing; red tide events; public health advisories; and the public’s perceptions about health issues in handling and eating seafood. Measure is calculated based on survey year data. Each survey year runs from May 15 through May 14 and is divided into two sampling seasons: High Use (May 15–November 20) and Low Use (November 21–May 14), and therefore spans multiple fiscal years.

Data Source: Coastal Fisheries Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet generated from division’s server database).

Methodology: Measure is calculated by summing all units of measured fishing effort coast-wide during a survey year then by dividing the change in recreational fishing effort (most recent survey year effort less the previous survey year effort) by the previous survey year’s recreational fishing effort (base level). Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure reflects fishing opportunities provided to the public on an annual basis, which is in direct support of the objective.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Percent of Fish and Wildlife Kills or Pollution Cases Resolved Successfully

Definition: This measure reflects the percent of fish and wildlife kills and pollution cases that are resolved successfully. A case is a fish/wildlife kill or pollution incident that is investigated by a TPWD biologist. A case is considered successfully resolved when a TPWD biologist and the PRISM database manager conclusively identify the cause of the case as reported to TPWD and/or determined at the site and time of the investigation.

Data Limitations: Factors beyond the agency’s control are that many cases take several years to resolve and ultimately the court system makes the decisions on these cases. The agency cannot control the number of incidents that occur naturally and that historically comprise a significant portion of this workload. The agency also cannot control the timeliness of reporting of incidents. Most incidents are reported by the public. Late notice of an incident affects ability to find causative factors.

Data Source: Coastal Fisheries and Inland Fisheries divisions. Data reside in the Pollution Response Inventory and Species Mortality (PRISM) database which is only accessible to restricted Investigation staff and supervisors. PRISM is managed by staff located at Headquarters. Once the PRISM manager, in consultation with the investigation biologist, review and verify the PRISM report of the event, including whether or not the cause was confirmed, the PRISM report is determined to be “completed” for that investigation. An Excel spreadsheet (located on an agency network drive) is used to initially document investigated cases and is used as confirmation of data entered into PRISM. Further, PDF copies of each field investigation form are placed on the same network drive as confirmation of the data entered onto PRISM.

Methodology: Calculations are based on the combined investigation reports (Coastal Fisheries and Inland Fisheries divisions) generated by PRISM and designated as “completed.” Measure is calculated by dividing the total number of fish and wildlife kills and pollution cases resolved successfully (i.e., cause confirmed) by the total number of kills and pollution cases completed. Automated tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities that directly support the goal and objective above.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Percentage of Freshwater Fish and Mussel Species of Greatest Conservation Need with Conservation Actions Implemented to Recover, Restore, or Preserve Their Populations

Definition: The Inland Fisheries Division is responsible for performing ecological research, conservation planning and assessments, species propagation, biological surveys and monitoring, habitat restoration, habitat protection, and other actions to ensure the continued ability of native freshwater fishes to perpetuate themselves. Such actions are prioritized by TPWD for freshwater fish and mussels recognized within the Texas State Wildlife Action Plan as SGCN. Status as a SGCN is afforded to species with low or declining populations in need of conservation action, including species at risk due to threats to their life history needs or habitats; species considered rare due to few, small or declining populations, abundance, or distribution; and species with declining trends in their habitats and populations. Conservation actions performed to conserve SGCN help avoid further imperilment, loss, and extinction of native species and reduce the need for their listing as threatened or endangered.

Data Limitations: The number of SGCN taxa could change based on taxonomic changes, listing or delisting decisions (federal and state), and/or changes in listing criteria for SGCN taxa. Project-based conservation actions, such as research, conservation planning and assessments, survey and monitoring, propagation, stocking, and habitat management, are key to conserving the diversity of Texas freshwater fish and mussel species and preventing further imperilment, loss, or extinction. Project-based conservation actions are primarily federally funded and the number underway is influenced by U.S. Congressional appropriations available to state fish and wildlife agencies through the State Wildlife Grants Program and the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund.

Data Source: Inland Fisheries Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet generated from project statements and reports submitted from field and regional offices). Each project statement and report identify the SGCN expected to benefit from the conservation actions implemented.

Methodology: Automated tabulation with manual count of the number of distinct SGCN that benefited from conservation actions implemented divided by the total number of freshwater fish and mussel SGCN, as identified in the Texas State Wildlife Action Plan (a.k.a., Texas Conservation Action Plan). Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities that directly support the objective.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

A.2.1. STRATEGY: INLAND FISHERIES MANAGEMENT, HABITAT CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH

Output:

Number of Hours Spent Managing, Treating, Surveying or Providing Public Education on Aquatic Invasive Species

Definition: Measure counts the total number of Inland Fisheries Division staff hours spent managing, treating, surveying or providing public education about aquatic invasive plant and animal species in Texas waters. TPWD conducts herbicide treatments and utilizes mechanical and biological controls to manage aquatic nuisance vegetation, and conducts outreach to inform the public of need for prevention and control of nuisance aquatic species infestations.

Data Limitations: Number of staff hours spent on these activities presents the best measure of effort and accomplishment as it encompasses all activities associated with treatment, surveys, and education and is the most comprehensive measure with minimal limitations (e.g., temporarily open positions). As the management needs for aquatic invasive species surveys and treatment/management are highly dependent upon a number of factors including the biology of the plant, climate, and weather, measures such as acres of plants treated are highly variable in addition to not fully representing the full breadth of activities.

Data Source: Inland Fisheries Division (tasks coded in the Employee Timesheet Module).

Methodology: Manual tabulation of total number of Inland Fisheries Division staff hours spent managing, treating, surveying or providing public education about aquatic invasive plant and animal species in Texas waters. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects aquatic invasive species management activities that directly support the conservation of fisheries and aquatic resources, and that provide access to angling, boating, and other water-based recreation in public waterbodies. Aquatic nuisance vegetation can impede access to angling, boating, and other water-based recreation in public waterbodies

and negatively affect fisheries and aquatic ecosystems. Additionally, dense mats of aquatic nuisance vegetation can exacerbate water loss through transpiration and negatively affect water conveyance for agricultural irrigation and municipal water supplies. Infestation of certain aquatic nuisance animals such as zebra mussels can impact the transfer and utilization of water by clogging intakes and colonizing the inside of pipes, as well as contributing to infrastructure degradation on bridges, piers and docks.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Freshwater Fish Research Studies Underway

Definition: Basic and applied research studies in fisheries management and aquatic conservation are designed to improve our understanding of ecology (e.g., fish population status and assemblage dynamics, habitat needs) and user groups (e.g., preferences and impacts), plus increase the effectiveness of resource management techniques. Measure counts the number of such studies in process within or overseen by the Inland Fisheries Division at the time of reporting.

Data Limitations: Research studies are key components to enhancement, restoration, and protection of aquatic resources. There are shifts in priorities that could impact completion of these studies. Many studies are field studies and can be impacted by weather and other natural occurrences.

Data Source: Inland Fisheries Division (Project tracking list coordinated and maintained by research program director).

Methodology: Manual tabulation counting the basic and applied research studies in fisheries management and aquatic conservation in process within or overseen by the Inland Fisheries Division at the time of reporting. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities that directly support the conservation of freshwater fisheries and aquatic ecosystems.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Surveys Conducted of Freshwater Fisheries Resources

Definition: Surveys of fish populations, fish habitat, aquatic vegetation, angler harvest and angler access are conducted by the Inland Fisheries Division to assess the status of Texas freshwater fisheries resources. Measure counts the total number of surveys conducted that constitute discrete units of an analysis for projecting overall population and harvest estimates and for characterizing the condition of fish habitats and angler access facilities.

Data Limitations: Surveys are key to monitoring populations and harvest and for guiding habitat management and angler access improvements. Many surveys are field-based and can be impacted by weather and other natural occurrences.

Data Source: Inland Fisheries Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet generated from data sheets and summaries submitted from field and regional offices).

Methodology: Automated tabulation of number of freshwater fisheries resources surveys conducted (manual count of survey data sheets/sets). Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reports effort by the Inland Fisheries Division to survey and monitor freshwater fisheries resources.

These data are key to maintaining and developing rules and regulations, conserving fish habitats, improving angler access facilities, and ensuring freshwater fisheries resources are managed and conserved.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Fish Habitat and Angler Access Improvement Projects Completed or Underway on Public Waterways

Definition: Inland Fisheries Division cooperates with local municipalities, river and reservoir controlling authorities and landowners to maintain, improve and expand angler access to public waterways. Access improvement projects include construction, installation, or maintenance of boat ramps, boating lanes, paddlecraft launches, shoreline and bank fishing access, piers, docks, parking areas, access trails, and leasing of private lands for public fishing access. The division also cooperates with these entities, angling clubs and other non-governmental organizations to perform projects around public waterways to enhance and restore fish habitats. Habitat projects include planting native aquatic and riparian vegetation, placing materials for erosion and sediment control, deploying habitat structures, dredging accumulated sediments, installation of pond aeration systems, application of water quality treatments, controlling invasive species, and assisting with design and recontouring of lake beds.

Data Limitations: Ensuring that Texas public waterways have sufficient quality habitat for freshwater fish populations to thrive is key to maintaining and enhancing public freshwater fishing opportunities. Maintaining and improving angler access is also critically important in maintaining and growing the sport of fishing. The number of projects completed or underway is contingent upon available funding. The ability to perform fish habitat and angler access projects is also impacted by rainfall patterns, river flows, and reservoir water levels.

Data Source: Inland Fisheries Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet generated from project statements, reports, and summaries submitted from field and regional offices).

Methodology: Manual tabulation of the total number of Fish Habitat and Angler Access Improvement Projects Completed or Underway on Public Waterways. Completed projects are defined as those projects that have accomplished all related work and close out of allocated funding including final payment of all invoices. Projects underway are defined as projects that have an approved project proposal including a defined scope of work and schedule and have been allocated funding during the fiscal year. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities that directly support the objective.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Project-Based Consultations Performed and Permits Issued to Conserve Aquatic Ecosystems and Fisheries

Definition: Measure counts the number of project-based consultations performed and permits issued to conserve aquatic ecosystems and fisheries in response to proposed projects with the potential to impact fisheries and other aquatic resources. Consultations and permitting activities occur in response to a variety of proposed projects such as management of nuisance aquatic vegetation, disturbances to state-owned streambeds, stream dewatering for construction projects, lowering of lake water levels to repair dams, hydropower licensing, urban development within stream corridors, lakefront development projects, and stormwater and wastewater management projects.

Data Limitations: Project-based consultations and permit issuance are performed in response to requests by responsible parties. TPWD does not have full control over the number of requests received during any given reporting period.

Data Source: Inland Fisheries Division files and reports on projects for which there is a written comment, permit, report, or other documentation produced.

Methodology: Manual and automated tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities that directly support the conservation of fish and aquatic resources.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Explanatory:

Number of Pollution and Fish Kill Complaints Investigated (Inland)

Definition: Measure counts the number of pollution and fish kill complaints affecting state resources, which are reported by the public and other governmental agencies and then investigated by TPWD Inland Fisheries Division staff. Regarding desired performance – measure reflects the number of pollution and fish kill investigations. While it would seem that higher than target performance would be desired (more investigations completed), it should be noted that it is just as desirable to have lower than target performance (fewer adverse activities occurred).

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is the result of requests from outside sources. TPWD does not have full control over the number of requests received during any given reporting period. Factors beyond the agency's control include natural disasters, severe weather, economic conditions, etc.

Data Source: Monthly report on Excel spreadsheet from Inland Fisheries Division Kills and Spills Team.

Methodology: Automated tabulation counting the total number of pollution and fish kill complaints affecting state resources. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities in direct support of conservation of fisheries and aquatic ecosystems.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

A.2.2. STRATEGY: INLAND HATCHERIES OPERATIONS

Output:

Number of Fingerlings Stocked – Inland Fisheries (in millions)

Definition: To enhance populations, TPWD raises and stocks fish in public waters across the state, including reservoirs, rivers, streams and ponds.

Data Limitations: New initiatives may include delayed release of fingerlings until they are larger. These types of initiatives may impact performance of this measure and should be considered when calculating future target numbers. This activity is seasonal by nature. Spring and summer months are the highest production months, while fall and winter months are lower production months. Environmental factors such as weather, incidence of golden algae, etc., can also influence performance.

Data Source: Inland Fisheries Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet generated from a summary of the division's trip sheets).

Methodology: Measure counts the estimated number of fingerlings stocked. Automated tabulation. Cumulative.

Purpose: This measure ties directly to providing fishing opportunities to the public.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

A.2.3. STRATEGY: COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT, HABITAT CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH

Output:

Number of Saltwater Fish Management Research Studies Underway

Definition: Fish management research studies are designed to improve our understanding of ecology and user group impacts, plus increase the effectiveness of resource management techniques. Measure counts the number of such studies in process within the Coastal Fisheries Division at the time of reporting.

Data Limitations: Research studies are key components to enhancement and protection of fish resources. There are shifts in priorities that could impact initiation or completion of these studies. Many studies are field studies and can be impacted by weather and other natural occurrences.

Data Source: Coastal Fisheries Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet).

Methodology: Manual tabulation counting the number of fish management research studies in process within the Coastal Fisheries Division at the time of reporting. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities that directly support the conservation of saltwater fisheries and aquatic ecosystems.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Saltwater Fish Population and Harvest Surveys Conducted

Definition: Population and harvest surveys are conducted by the Coastal Fisheries Division in order to measure population dynamics of saltwater fish resources and angler use of targeted species in targeted habitat. Measure counts the total number of samples taken that constitute discrete units of an analysis for projecting overall population and harvest estimates. The division's sampling program has been refined over the years to minimize the number of samples taken and still ensure the data collected are scientifically sound. The current sampling program has reached a level of efficiency whereby adding more samples to the routine sampling program will not increase statistical power of analyses.

Data Limitations: Surveys are key to monitoring populations and harvest. Many studies are field studies and can be impacted by weather and other natural occurrences.

Data Source: Coastal Fisheries Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet generated from data sheets and summaries submitted from field and regional offices).

Methodology: Staff manually tally the total number of samples taken per definition above. Those counts are then entered into an Excel data sheet located on the division's network drive which automatically tabulates total samples taken. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reports harvest and population surveys conducted by the Coastal Fisheries Division. These data are key to maintaining and developing rules and regulations that ensure that resources are managed and protected.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Water-Related Documents Reviewed (Coastal)

Definition: Measure counts the number of environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, environmental information documents, Section 404 permits, hazard mitigation grants, water plans and water rights permits reviewed by Coastal Fisheries Division staff and for which a written response has been submitted. A review includes an assessment to determine a potential for adverse impacts to fish and aquatic resources/habitats. Written responses include any written communication that identifies and explains agency concerns regarding the project. Many reviews take several years to resolve. Therefore, reviews are only counted when the written response is submitted.

Data Limitations: Reviews are done in response to requests from outside sources. TPWD does not have full control over the number of requests received during any given reporting period. Factors beyond the agency's control include changes in regulations, economic conditions, weather, natural disaster, etc.

Data Source: Coastal Fisheries Division and Water Resources (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet generated from response letters sent from field and regional offices).

Methodology: Coastal Fisheries Division and Water Resources staff review the documents and draft a letter of response regarding potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Each project/permit request is assigned a Permit Application Number. Staff at each office electronically saves the documents as PDF files in the Coastal Fisheries Division network database and logs the document number and date the response that was sent in an Excel file also located on the Coastal Fisheries Division network database. The Coastal Fisheries Division Excel file automatically tabulates the totals by quarter and year. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities that directly support the conservation of fish and aquatic resources.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Commercial Fishing Licenses Bought Back

Definition: Measure counts the number of licenses purchased by TPWD from commercial shrimp boat, crab and finfish fishermen, and oyster boats under the license buyback program.

Data Limitations: The number of licenses purchased could be impacted by a number of factors, including: (1) actual cost of licenses; (2) the number of buybacks conducted each year; (3) commercial license holders' willingness to sell.

Data Source: Coastal Fisheries Division (Austin Excel spreadsheet generated from the total number of licenses purchased, which is derived from the license buyback database located at Austin HQ). A transaction is considered complete when payment check and the current physical license are exchanged between the seller and TPWD personnel.

Methodology: Manual tabulation of the total number of commercial shrimp boat, crab and finfish fisherman's and oyster boat licenses purchased by TPWD during the reporting period.

Purpose: Purchase of commercial shrimp boat, crab and finfish fisherman's and oyster boat licenses by TPWD is an integral component of the buyback program, which is aimed at reducing the number of commercial fishermen, decreasing fishing effort and ultimately relieving pressure on finfish and other aquatic species. A count of the number of licenses purchased can provide important and useful information in assessing program implementation and success.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Explanatory:

Number of Pollution and Fish Kill Complaints Investigated (Coastal)

Definition: Measure counts the number of pollution and fish kill complaints affecting state resources, which are reported by the public and other governmental agencies and then investigated by TPWD Coastal Fisheries Division staff.

Regarding desired performance – measure reflects the number of pollution and fish kill investigations. While it would

seem that higher than target performance would be desired (more investigations completed), it should be noted that it is just as desirable to have lower than target performance (fewer adverse activities occurred).

Data Limitations: Activity for this measure is the result of requests from outside sources. TPWD does not have full control over the number of requests received during any given reporting period. Factors beyond the agency's control include natural disasters, severe weather, economic conditions, etc.

Data Source: Coastal Fisheries Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet generated by division's Kills and Spills Team).

Methodology: Automated tabulation counting the total number of pollution and fish kill complaints affecting state resources. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects activities in direct support of conservation of fisheries and aquatic ecosystems.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

A.2.4. STRATEGY: COASTAL HATCHERIES OPERATIONS

Output:

Number of Fingerlings Stocked – Coastal Fisheries (in millions)

Definition: To enhance populations, TPWD raises and stocks fish in public waters across the state, including bays, estuaries and state waters in the Gulf of America.

Data Limitations: New initiatives may include delayed release of fingerlings until they are larger or developing spawning procedures for other marine species of concern. These types of initiatives may impact performance of this measure and should be considered when calculating future target numbers. This activity is seasonal by nature. Late spring, summer and early fall are the highest production months, while late fall and winter are lower production months. Environmental factors such as weather, incidence of brown algae, red tide, etc., can also influence performance.

Data Source: Coastal Fisheries Division (Austin HQ Excel spreadsheet generated from a summary of the division's trip sheets entered into the stocking system database).

Methodology: Measure counts the estimated number of fingerlings stocked. Automated tabulation. Cumulative.

Purpose: This measure ties directly to providing fishing opportunities to the public.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

GOAL B: ACCESS TO STATE AND LOCAL PARKS

OBJECTIVE B.1.: ENSURE SITES ARE OPEN AND SAFE

Outcome:

Percent of Funded State Parks Minor Repair Projects Completed

Definition: Measures the completion rate of approved state parks minor repair/maintenance projects. These projects involve small-scale fixes or upkeep projects, not major renovations or replacements, targeted for completion during the current biennium (based on appropriated funding). In the current reporting system, a minor repair or maintenance project is considered approved once it is assigned a project number. Examples of minor repair projects include plumbing repairs, electrical repairs, painting, general facility maintenance such as minor roof repairs, etc. Measuring the completion rate of projects illustrates performance of the maintenance/minor repair program in state parks. When resources are provided to the department to address repair needs, it is important that the projects be completed in a timely manner.

Data Limitations: The accuracy of this performance measure is dependent on field employees across the state submitting information in a timely and accurate manner. Performance is also dependent on adequate staffing levels to develop and contract for services, perform oversight, and conduct maintenance tasks at park facilities. Performance may also be affected by the size (in terms of cost and complexity) of the various projects addressed. The count of projects completed during the

fiscal year reflects all projects completed, including priorities and projects that may have been approved and funded in a prior fiscal year (ties to the output measure, “Number of Funded State Park Minor Repair Projects Completed”). As such, it is possible that performance in any given fiscal year may exceed 100%.

Data Source: State Parks Division and TPWD Financial System.

Methodology: Measure is calculated by dividing the total number of completed minor repair projects (as determined by closeouts in the current minor repair reporting system and which ties to the output measure “Number of Funded State Park Minor Repair Projects Completed”) by the number of projects that are approved (approved is defined as when the project has been assigned a project number and funding identification is expected) and funded during the fiscal year.

Purpose: To measure the success of the state parks minor repair/maintenance program in completing approved and funded projects during the fiscal year. Conducting routine maintenance and minor repairs at park sites will prevent a reoccurrence of critical repairs on such a large scale.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Rate of Reported Incidents per 100,000 Park Visits Resulting in Injury or Death

Definition: Measure counts the number of reported incidents resulting in injury or death at state parks per 100,000 visitors. Incident reports are required from each site.

Data Limitations: The accuracy of this performance measure is dependent on visitors’ reports of accidents and field employees across the state completing all the required forms accurately and in a timely manner. Reports not received by reporting due dates will not be counted for the reporting year. Some accidents are not within full control of the agency. TPWD educates all visitors of potential risk and injury at each site. Park visits are estimated.

Data Source: State Parks Division Incident Reporting System (based on completed accident forms from each site sent annually to the TPWD Safety Officer, filtered by incidents coded as resulting in injury or death and State Parks visitation information).

Methodology: Measure is calculated by dividing the number of reported visitor incidents resulting in injury or death occurring at all state park sites by the estimated number of park visits in 100,000s. Manual tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure helps TPWD monitor accidents at state parks. TPWD must ensure the safety of both our visitors and employees. Corrective actions can be taken with information gained.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Lower than target.

B.1.1. STRATEGY: STATE PARKS, HISTORIC SITES AND STATE NATURAL AREA OPERATIONS

Output:

Number of State Parks in Operation

Definition: Measure counts the number of state parks that are operating and open to the public at the end of the period reported. State parks included in the count are all categories of parks, including state parks, natural areas and historic sites operated or maintained by the agency. An *operational park* is defined as a park where public access is available because amenities and areas are developed to a level that ensures: (1) safety for visitors; (2) resource protection for natural and cultural assets; (3) maintenance capability to sustain facilities and grounds; (4) adequate staffing to support operations and visitor services. An operational park may partially restrict access in certain areas or during specific periods due to operational best practices, such as habitat protection. These restrictions do not negate the park’s operational status, provided the core amenities and areas remain accessible under normal conditions.

Data Limitations: Legislative initiatives to transfer suitable sites to local governments may impact performance of this measure. This measure counts parks operating and open to the public as defined. As a result, the total number of park holdings may differ from the numbers reported for this measure at differing reporting times throughout a given year.

Data Source: State Parks Division (Austin HQ PC-based software). Internal list of state parks approved by the TPW Commission, adjusted to reflect only those parks operating and open to the public at the end of the reporting period as defined above.

Methodology: Manual tabulation counting the number of state parks that are operating and open to the public at the end of the period reported. Non-cumulative. Year-end performance will be equivalent to the number of state parks open to the public in the fourth quarter as defined above.

Purpose: Measure directly links to the goal, objective and strategy by providing a measure of state parks open to the public.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number Served by Outdoor Skills Training and Interpretive Programs at State Parks and Historic Sites

Definition: Measure counts the number of people reached through interpretive, educational, and skills training programs and events at, or associated with, state parks and historic sites. Events and programs may include: presentations to classrooms, civic organizations, conservation groups, formal and informal interpretive and educational activities as well as skill trainings such as Texas Outdoor Family events.

Data Limitations: Although participation at most programs and events is derived from actual counts of participants, not all education/interpretive programs or events require formal registration. As such, in some cases, participation is estimated. Participation in events and programs is seasonal in nature, and will fluctuate according to seasonal trends in park visitation. Numbers reported for this measure may represent a subset of Number of Park Visits.

Data Source: State Parks Division – data submitted to HQ from state parks, natural areas and historic sites statewide.

Methodology: The number of people served is derived from education, interpretive and skills training program participant numbers captured in state parks, historic sites and natural area monthly reports. Numbers from each park/site are added to obtain a total.

Purpose: TPWD strives to impart an understanding and appreciation for the natural and cultural resources of Texas to ensure the long-term stewardship of these resources. Interpretive programming, education, outreach and outdoor skills training increases the awareness of the state's natural and cultural resources and encourages greater participation, appreciation, and advocacy of the outdoors. This measure reflects the core function of the State Parks Division's programs/activities by capturing education, outreach, and training services provided at each state park, historic site and natural area.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Efficiency:

Percent of Operating Costs for State Parks Recovered from Revenues

Definition: State park revenue includes but is not limited to park entrance fees, camping and other use fees, concession and lease collections. State park operating costs include monies necessary to staff and operate all parks, historic sites, natural areas, plus costs and expenses for support personnel located at division and regional levels. Operation costs do not include expenditures for acquisition, development, construction, major repairs, capital improvements or grants.

Data Limitations: Revenue received from state parks varies during any given reporting period. Historically, spring and summer months have increased revenue, while winter months demonstrate reduced revenue. Additional factors beyond the agency's control include severe weather conditions, natural disasters, economic conditions, public attitudes, etc. Revenue and expenditure information used to calculate this measure may be estimated due to timing differences between measure reporting due dates and encumbrance reporting due dates.

Data Source: Financial Resources Division, from USAS and internal accounting system.

Methodology: Measure is calculated by dividing state park revenue by operating costs for state parks. State park revenue is defined as operational revenue recorded in 064. For the purpose of this measure, revenue derived from violations (3449), publications (3468 and 3752), insurance and damages (3773), interest (3851,3852,3854), federal funds and pass-through, allocations of SGST (3924), UBs (3975), and any other revenues that are not considered to be operational are excluded from the revenue total. The revenue figure does include interest available for specific parks and state park fees in the State Park Endowment (885). State park operating costs are defined as State Parks Division operating expenditures (not including the grants function or expenditures for acquisition, development, construction, major repairs or capital improvements). Automated tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: To review the revenue recovery percentage for operational costs at state parks.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Explanatory:

Number of Paid Park Visits (in millions)

Definition: Measure counts the number of persons paying to enter state parks, historic sites and natural areas per visit during the reporting period. Compiled totals include system generated counts of persons paying on-site entrance fees, persons entering with a prepaid annual Texas State Parks Pass, Save the Day Pass, qualifying holders of Parklands Passports and other discounted entry items.

Data Limitations: Park visitation is seasonal and therefore counts will reflect peak and valley periods during monthly reporting periods. Factors affecting visitation that are beyond the agency's control include extreme weather, natural disasters and economic conditions.

Data Source: Park visitation reports obtained by the Parks Point-of-Sale (POS) system.

Methodology: Measure is calculated for each site by adding the number of paying customers per visit (including day and overnight visitors), annual Texas State Parks Pass holders and guests, Save the Day Pass holders, qualifying holders of Parklands Passports and other discounted entry items. System generated reports provide an overall total.

Purpose: Park visitation is an important indicator of public use and pressures placed on TPWD facilities and staff by constituents. Paid visitation correlates with revenue generation for all sites.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Amount of Fee Revenue Collected from State Park Users (in millions)

Definition: Measure is calculated by totaling fee revenue collected from state park users. Fee revenue collected from state park users is defined as state park fees (appropriated fund 0064, comptroller/agency object 3461) and includes but is not limited to revenue derived from park entrance, campsite, facility use, concession, and other miscellaneous fees.

Data Limitations: Park revenue is based largely on visitation and associated entrance, campsite, and facility fees, which vary by season. Spring and summer months historically generate higher revenue than other times of the year. Factors affecting revenue collection that are beyond the agency's control include extreme weather conditions, natural disasters and economic conditions.

Data Source: Financial Resources Division compiles data from USAS, General Ledger Screen 56, for appropriated fund 0064, comptroller/agency object 3461, for the applicable quarter.

Methodology: Automated tabulation from USAS, Screen 56 for the appropriate fiscal year. Cumulative.

Purpose: Revenue derived from park entrance, campsite, facility, concessions, and other miscellaneous fees is an important source of funding for the agency.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Park Visits Not Subject to Fees (in millions)

Definition: Measure counts the number of persons entering state parks, historic sites and natural areas per visit during the reporting period that are not subject to entry fees. Includes system generated counts of child entrances (0-12 years old), persons entering with a Youth Group pass, student school groups, and other waived entry items.

Data Limitations: Counts of visitors not subject to entry fees may be estimated. Counts may also include persons entering the park outside normal hours that have prepaid through purchase of an annual State Parks pass. Park visitation is seasonal and therefore counts will reflect peak and valley periods during monthly reporting periods. Factors affecting visitation that are beyond the agency's control include extreme weather, natural disasters and economic conditions.

Data Source: State Park visitation reports obtained by the Parks Point-of-Sale system.

Methodology: Measure is calculated for each site by adding the number of non-paying customers per visit (child entrances, Youth Group pass holders, student school groups, and other waived entry items). System generated reports provide an overall total.

Purpose: Park visitation is an important indicator of public use and pressures placed on TPWD facilities and staff by constituents.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

B.1.2. STRATEGY: PARKS MINOR REPAIR PROGRAM

Output:

Number of Funded State Parks Minor Repair Projects Completed

Definition: Measure counts the total number of state parks minor repair projects completed within the fiscal year. In most cases, addressing minor repair/maintenance (typically small- to medium-scale repairs that address deferred maintenance, rather than comprehensive renovations or full replacements) needs results in enhancement of state park services, protection of public safety and/or the proper upkeep of park facilities.

Data Limitations: The accuracy of this measure is dependent on staff submitting information in a timely manner. Performance is also dependent on adequate staffing levels to develop and contract for services, perform oversight and conduct maintenance tasks at park facilities. Performance may also be affected by the size, cost and complexity of projects addressed.

Data Source: State Parks Division (the current minor repair reporting system) and TPWD Financial System.

Methodology: The total number of minor repair projects completed within the fiscal year, as reported in the current minor repair reporting system, will be summed. This count will include all projects completed during the fiscal year, including but not limited to priority projects and prior year funded projects.

Purpose: To measure the impact of the minor repair program in addressing maintenance and minor repair needs at state parks.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Minor Repair Projects Managed

Definition: Measure captures the number of approved Minor Repair projects (typically small- to medium-scale repairs that address deferred maintenance, rather than comprehensive renovations or full replacements) which are active and managed at any point during the reporting period. In most cases, addressing minor repair/maintenance needs results in enhancement of state park services, protection of public safety and/or the proper upkeep of park facilities. Examples include plumbing repairs, electrical repairs, painting, general facility maintenance such as minor roof repairs, etc.

Data Limitations: Factors beyond the agency's control, which could impact performance of this measure, include catastrophic weather events, natural disasters, and emergency repairs, which may necessitate reprioritization of projects based on emerging safety and/or business needs. As prioritization of projects takes place early in the fiscal year, and a significant percentage of minor repair resources are reserved for emergencies, the number of projects managed is expected to increase as a fiscal year proceeds. This does not include cyclical maintenance that occurs as part of operating.

Data Source: State Parks Division. Listing of active projects as reported in the current minor repair reporting system.

Methodology: Using the report from the current minor repair reporting system, tally all minor repair projects that were active at any point during the reporting period. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure directly supports the strategy, and indicates workload by providing a count of total number of minor repair/maintenance projects managed in the fiscal year.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

B.1.3. STRATEGY: PARKS SUPPORT

Explanatory:

Value of Labor, Cash and Service Contributions to State Parks Activities

Definition: Measure counts the estimated total dollar value of labor, cash, equipment, goods and services donated to State Parks Division programs, activities and operations. Contributions include equipment and material goods donations, and services such as facility and equipment repairs. Measure also includes value of community-based volunteer labor, as well as hours contributed by state prison and county jail inmates. Contribution values are calculated using the national standard of volunteer labor as determined by Independent Sector, or market value of goods and services.

Data Limitations: The accuracy of the performance measure is dependent on volunteers or volunteer coordinators entering hours correctly into the TPWD Volunteer Management System and for coordinators to verify and approve hours in a timely manner. In addition, economic factors could influence contribution levels. Finally, operational and other issues at TDCJ and county jail facilities could influence the inmate labor hours contributed.

Data Source: State Parks Division.

Methodology: Volunteer hours are manually entered into the TPWD Volunteer Management System (VMS) by the volunteer or volunteer coordinator. Reports are extracted from TPWD VMS. Donations of cash, equipment, goods, and services are provided to Budget Analysts for manual entry and calculation of the estimated total dollar value of labor, cash, equipment, goods and services donated to State Parks Division programs, activities and operations, as collected by the State Parks Division. Cumulative.

Purpose: TPWD utilizes the assistance of individual volunteers as a supplement to paid staff. The agency has also developed partnerships with state and county jails that allow selected inmates to perform services in parks. In addition, the division is the recipient of material and service donations from individuals and businesses that support the agency mission and goal. These programs aid the State Parks Division in carrying out its activities and services in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

OBJECTIVE B.2.: PROVIDE FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR LOCAL PARKS

Outcome:

Local Grant Dollars Awarded as a Percent of Local Grant Dollars Requested

Definition: Requests for grant dollars are usually more than double available grant dollars. This measure indicates the ability of the agency to meet requests for grant dollars needed to acquire and develop local parks, to provide outreach programs for underserved populations and other purposes included in strategies B.2.1. and B.2.2.

Data Limitations: TPWD does not have full control over the number or amount of requests received for grant dollars. Other factors beyond the agency's control include appropriation levels, economic conditions, and public attitudes.

Data Source: State Parks Division – from commission agenda items and other grant documentation.

Methodology: Measure is calculated by dividing the amount of grant dollars awarded by the amount of grant dollars requested. Manual tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: TPWD typically receives twice as many requests for grant dollars as there are dollars available. This measure indicates the relationship between dollars awarded and dollars requested.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

B.2.1. STRATEGY: PROVIDE LOCAL PARK GRANTS

Output:

Number of Grant-Assisted Projects Completed

Definition: Grant assisted projects are those construction-type projects that receive a matching grant from the Texas Recreation and Parks Account, the Large County and Municipality Recreation and Parks Account, or federal sources through the Recreation Grants Program. Measure counts the number of grant-assisted projects completed.

Data Limitations: Grant recipients may take longer to complete a project than originally anticipated due to weather delays, routine construction delays and other unforeseen factors.

Data Source: State Parks Division (Austin HQ PC-based software).

Methodology: Manual tabulation tallying the total number of grant-assisted projects completed. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure directly supports the strategy of providing assistance to local governments and the goal of supporting local parks and recreational needs.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Efficiency:

Program Costs as a Percent of Total Grant Dollars Awarded

Definition: This measure is calculated by dividing Recreation Grants Program costs for strategy B.2.1. by the total grant dollars awarded under the Recreation Grants Program for strategy B.2.1. Recreation Grants Program costs include salaries and operating expenses for agency personnel responsible for providing technical assistance to local governments and for recommending and administering these grants.

Data Limitations: TPWD does not have full control over the amounts appropriated for grant awards.

Data Source: State Parks Division (from TPWD internal accounting system for program costs and commission agenda items for grant awards).

Methodology: Manual tabulation calculated by dividing Recreation Grants Program costs for strategy B.2.1. by the total grant dollars awarded under the Recreation Grants Program for strategy B.2.1. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: TPWD supports local government and other efforts to provide recreational opportunities. Given relatively constant operating costs over a few years, this measure can be used to measure success in providing more local grant dollars.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Lower than target.

B.2.2. STRATEGY: PROVIDE BOATING ACCESS, TRAILS AND OTHER GRANTS

Output:

Number of Community Outdoor Outreach Grants Awarded

Definition: TPWD is authorized to provide COOP grants to nonprofits, local governments and other tax-exempt groups to help introduce underserved constituents to the services, programs and facilities of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Grant funding may be used for outdoor education, recreational programs, recreational safety, historical/ cultural heritage and related projects. This measure captures the number of COOP grants awarded in each year.

Data Limitations: Factors outside TPWD control include the actual dollar amount of grant requests received and the amount of funding appropriated for the program, both of which can directly impact the number of grants awarded.

Data Source: State Parks Division (from priority scoring list).

Methodology: Manual tabulation counting the total number of COOP grants awarded in each fiscal year. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure directly supports the strategy of providing assistance to local governments and other entities to strengthen their ability to provide recreational opportunities.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Recreational Trail Grants Awarded

Definition: The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department administers the National Recreational Trail Fund under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration. Eligible grant projects include construction of new recreation trails on public or private lands, trail restoration or rehabilitation, Americans with Disabilities Act upgrades, acquisition of easements, acquisition of property, maintenance of existing trails, environmental mitigation and the development of trail-side and trail-head facilities. This measure reflects the number recreational trail grants awarded during the fiscal year.

Data Limitations: Factors outside TPWD control include the actual dollar amount of grant requests received and the amount of funding appropriated for the program, both of which can directly impact the number of grants awarded.

Data Source: State Parks Division (from commission agenda items).

Methodology: Manual tabulation counting the number of recreational trail grants awarded during the fiscal year. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure directly supports the strategy of providing assistance to local governments and other entities and the goal of supporting local parks and recreational needs.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Explanatory:

Boating Access Program Grant Dollars Awarded

Definition: Measure indicates the amount of Boating Access Program grant dollars awarded to political subdivisions or used for the rehabilitation of existing boat ramps. Target numbers for dollars to be awarded are parallel to appropriated dollars. New initiatives under this program include rehabilitation of existing boat ramps.

Data Limitations: Historically, requests for boat ramp dollars have not been as high as local park dollars. Grant dollars are awarded as funds are available. This measure will be reported on an annual basis only.

Data Source: State Parks Division, from CAPPS.

Methodology: Automated tabulation counting the amount of Boating Access Program grant dollars awarded to political subdivisions or used for the rehabilitation of existing boat ramps. Cumulative.

Purpose: TPWD administers a Recreation Grants Program. Measure reports dollars awarded under the boating access portion of this program.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

GOAL C: INCREASE AWARENESS, PARTICIPATION, REVENUE AND COMPLIANCE

OBJECTIVE C.1.: ENSURE COMPLIANCE AND WATER SAFETY

Outcome:

Percent of Public Compliance with Agency Rules and Regulations

Definition: Law Enforcement personnel check hunters, boaters, anglers and other persons in the field for compliance with all relevant rules and regulations governing fish and wildlife resources and safe boating. Of those persons participating in outdoor activities supervised by the agency, a percentage will be in compliance.

Data Limitations: TPWD game wardens do not have full control over how many individuals will be in compliance when checked. Percent will be calculated based on contacts made by staff. This percent does not reflect overall compliance – it reflects observed compliance. This measure relies on extrapolation factors to derive total number of contacts.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (Game wardens complete Contact Data Reports each month that show number of contacts with hunters, boaters, anglers and other persons. Wardens submit the data in MS FORMS; then the data are compiled at Austin HQ in master contact data spreadsheets.) Number of people not in compliance is acquired from HQ Law Enforcement LES Citation System database.

Methodology: This measure is calculated by dividing the total number of fishing, hunting, water safety and other contacts (field only) into the total number of persons found to be non-compliant (total number of arrests and warnings). This calculation provides the percentage of persons who are non-compliant, which is then subtracted from 100% to provide the percentage of persons in compliance. Manual tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: To determine observed constituent compliance with statutes and regulations that TPWD is charged with implementing and enforcing.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Boating Fatality Rate

Definition: Measure reports the number of boating fatalities in Texas per 100,000 registered boats.

Data Limitations: Factors beyond the agency's control include the number of boating accidents and the number of fatalities associated with those accidents. One accident can include several fatalities.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (automated query from data from Boat Accident Report Data Web and automated query of the FR Boat Registration System at Austin HQ).

Methodology: Calculate as follows: number of fatalities/(number of registered boats/100,000). Manual tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects efforts to educate boaters and prevent fatalities on Texas waterways.

Calculation Type: Non-Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Lower than target.

C.1.1. STRATEGY: WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND WATER SAFETY ENFORCEMENT / EDUCATION

Output:

Miles Patrolled in Vehicles (in millions)

Definition: Measure counts the number of miles patrolled in state vehicles by game wardens across the state. Patrols serve to apprehend violators of fish and wildlife rules and regulations and the visible presence of game wardens serves as a deterrent.

Data Limitations: This activity is ongoing, but during peak boating season (spring and summer months) patrol activity is shifted toward boating law enforcement, therefore “miles patrolled” will fluctuate depending on the season. Note: sustained increases in performance for both “# of miles patrolled in vehicles” and “# of water safety hours” are not feasible without increases in the number of game wardens and other resources. In order to increase miles patrolled, for example, a game warden would shift focus to vehicle patrols, thereby limiting the number of hours on boat patrols.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (monthly vehicle reports).

Methodology: Automated – Fleet Management System, with manual verification and adjustment, generated at Austin HQ.

Purpose: Measure reports routine patrol activity for game wardens.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Water Safety Hours

Definition: Measure counts the number of hours game wardens spend performing water safety activities. The purpose of water safety is to educate and apprehend violators of water safety rules and regulations and enforce the Texas Water Safety Act including Boating While Intoxicated statutes.

Data Limitations: This activity is ongoing, but during peak boating season (spring and summer months) patrol activity is shifted toward water safety law enforcement, therefore performance will fluctuate depending on the season. Note: sustained increases in performance in water safety hours are not feasible without increases in the number of game wardens and other resources.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (employee time sheets).

Methodology: Automated – Query of water safety hours from the employee time database, with manual verification and adjustment, generated at Austin HQ.

Purpose: Measure reports hours related to water safety throughout Texas by game wardens.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Hunting and Fishing Contacts

Definition: Law Enforcement personnel check hunters and anglers in the field for compliance with, and through telephone and personal contacts provide information about, all relevant rules and regulations governing fish and wildlife resources, including licensing requirements. This measure reports the number of these contacts.

Data Limitations: Participation in these activities is historically seasonal, thus impacting the performance of this measure. The measure relies on extrapolation factors to derive totals.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (summaries submitted by wardens in MS FORMS; then data compiled at Austin HQ in master contact data spreadsheets).

Methodology: Data from contact data spreadsheets are tabulated to provide total hunting and fishing info and field contacts. Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects ongoing efforts of Law Enforcement personnel to contact hunting and fishing constituents. These contacts improve relationships with these constituents and may encourage and enhance compliance with regulations and statutes.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Water Safety Contacts

Definition: Law Enforcement personnel check boat operators on public waterways for compliance with, and through telephone and personal contacts provide information about, all relevant TPWD rules and regulations and the Texas Water Safety Act, including Boating While Intoxicated statutes. This measure reports the number of these contacts.

Data Limitations: Participation in boating activity is highly seasonal and can be affected by weather and other conditions; as such the number of contacts will fluctuate during the year. The measure relies on extrapolation factors to derive totals.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (summaries submitted by wardens in MS FORMS; then data compiled at Austin HQ in master contact data spreadsheets).

Methodology: Data from contact data spreadsheets are tabulated to provide total water safety contacts (info and field). Cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects ongoing efforts of Law Enforcement personnel to contact boating constituents. These contacts improve relationships with these constituents and may encourage and enhance compliance with regulations and statutes and may reduce incidence of violations, boating accidents, fatalities and BWIs.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Fisheries and Wildlife Hours

Definition: Measure counts the number of hours game wardens spend performing fisheries and wildlife activities, both commercial and recreational. The purpose of fisheries (aquatic) and wildlife hours is to educate and apprehend violators of fisheries and wildlife rules and regulations (commercial and recreational).

Data Limitations: These activities are ongoing year-round but will fluctuate depending on open and closed seasons for both recreational and commercial activities for fisheries and wildlife. Note: sustained increases in performance in wildlife hours are not feasible without increases in the number of game wardens and other resources.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (employee time sheets).

Methodology: Automated – Query of fisheries and wildlife hours from the employee time database, with manual verification and adjustment, generated at Austin HQ.

Purpose: Measure reports hours related to fisheries and wildlife throughout Texas by game wardens.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Students Certified in Boater Education

Definition: Measure counts the number of students enrolled and trained in boater education programs presented by staff and other qualified, agency-approved modes of instruction. Boater education courses are required for all persons born on or after September 1, 1993, who wish to operate certain motorboats and sailboats in Texas (proof of course completion must be carried by persons boating).

Data Limitations: Factors beyond the agency's control include population increases as well as an overall increase in participation in boating activities. Courses are offered online and in-person year-round to meet the demand for this activity. Historically, this activity is seasonal with increases occurring during the boating season and decreases during the remainder of the year.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (Instructors' reports; Hunter and Boater Education record database).

Methodology: Automated tabulation. Online Registration System (ORS) LBB Report Template pulls information based on date of certification, which is completed upon receipt of payment, i.e., count of all students who successfully passed the course and exam and payment is completed between September 1 and August 31 of each fiscal year. Cumulative.

Purpose: This measure reflects the number of students trained in boater education.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Explanatory:

Conviction Rate for Hunting, Fishing and License Violators

Definition: Measure reports the rate of conviction of those individuals contacted who were not in compliance with all relevant rules and regulations governing fish and wildlife resources, including licensing requirements.

Data Limitations: TPWD game wardens file cases. The actual conviction rates are determined in the court/justice system. Courts are completely independent in rendering judgment on these cases.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (Query of the LE Contact Data master spreadsheet and automated query of the LES Citation System database).

Methodology: Conviction rate is derived by dividing total hunting, fishing and license related convictions (including deferred adjudications) by total hunting, fishing and license related adjudicated arrests. Manual tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects conviction rate of violators.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Conviction Rate for Water Safety Violators

Definition: Measure reports the rate of conviction of those individuals contacted who were not in compliance with provisions of the Texas Water Safety Act, including Boating While Intoxicated statutes.

Data Limitations: TPWD game wardens file cases. The actual conviction rates are determined in the court/justice system. Courts are completely independent in rendering judgment on these cases.

Data Source: Law Enforcement Division (Query of the LE Contact Data master spreadsheet and automated query of the LES Citation System database).

Methodology: Conviction rate is derived by dividing total water safety related convictions (including deferred adjudications) by total water safety related adjudicated arrests. Manual tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects conviction rate of violators.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

OBJECTIVE C.2.: INCREASE AWARENESS

Outcome:

Hunting Accident Rate

Definition: Measure is the number of hunting accidents, including fatalities, in Texas per 100,000 licensed participants. Both hunting accidents and licensed participants are tabulated on a calendar year basis.

Data Limitations: Factors beyond the agency's control include the number of accidents that occur each year. One year of data is not a true reflection of success in reducing accidents. If several years of data are compared, an overall reduction in the number of hunting accidents should be seen.

Data Source: Hunter Education Program, as collected from game warden-generated hunting incident reports routed through Law Enforcement to Education. License information used for this measure is from the automated license sales system.

Methodology: Hunting accident and licensed participant information used for this measure is from the most recent, completed calendar year. Divide the number of hunting accidents by the number of licensed participants/100,000. Manual tabulation. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects efforts to reduce and prevent hunting accidents in Texas.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Lower than target.

C.2.1. STRATEGY: OUTREACH AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Output:

Number of Students Certified in Hunter Education

Definition: Measure counts the number of students enrolled and certified in hunter education programs (including hunter and bowhunter education) presented by staff and other qualified, agency-approved modes of instruction. Hunter education courses are required for all Texas hunters born after September 1, 1971 (proof of course completion must be carried by persons hunting).

Data Limitations: Factors beyond the agency's control include population increases and overall participation in hunting. Courses are offered online and in-person year-round to meet the demand for this activity. Historically, this activity is seasonal with increases occurring during hunting season and decreases during the remainder of the year. TPWD is also dependent on volunteer instructors for timely and accurate submission of data. Due to issues with timely submission and entry of data, quarterly and annual performance will be updated on a periodic basis to ensure that ABEST reflects the most up-to-date and accurate information.

Data Source: Communications Division (Outreach and Education Group – Instructors' reports; Hunter and Boater Education record database).

Methodology: Automated tabulation. Online Registration System (ORS). Access query report pulls information based on date of certification, which is completed upon receipt of payment, i.e., count of all students who successfully pass the course, the exam, and payment for their course is completed between September 1 and August 31 of each fiscal year. Cumulative.

Purpose: This measure reflects the number of students certified in hunter education by certification date.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of People Reached by Other Outreach and Education Efforts

Definition: Measure counts the number of estimated people reached by Outreach and Education events and programs. These would include all instances where contact is made to introduce the public to Texas' natural and cultural resources and engage them in outdoor learning and recreation through these events and programs.

Data Limitations: Performance for Aquatic Education and Project WILD efforts is dependent upon timely completion and submission of information by certified volunteer instructors. In addition, some event tabulations are estimates.

Data Source: Program staff and volunteers complete and submit forms for Outreach and Education Programs, including but not limited to Get Outside® and outdoor skills trainer workshops, Nature Tourism Programs, education curriculum uses with audiences, Hunter Education classes, and outreach events. Additional data are reported online through partner volunteer and instructor management systems hosted internally or by affiliated partners. For reports of reach made through outreach and education conservation themed newsletters, email marketing software will provide subscriber data. For manual reports, data are compiled by program managers from the event or program via forms which are stored with respective programs. Data from the forms are entered into measures trackers and software specific to each program, where applicable.

Methodology: Data are tabulated for each program or event, based on program/event date or the date resources are accessed or date of newsletters being sent. Tabulations are made by adding the number of participants at outreach and education events, curriculum users, newsletter subscribers reached by each of the Outreach and Education programs, and workshops. Actual class attendance at Aquatic Education and Project WILD training workshops and estimates at outreach events are derived from participant forms and sign-up rosters, in accordance with Federal Aid protocols. For other programs and events, estimates are derived from various sources including head counts, random counts, participant forms, sign-up rosters, car counts, numbers provided by third party event producers, capacity of venues, block grid methods, etc.

Purpose: TPWD strives to inform and educate as many Texans as possible about land and water conservation, outdoor recreation opportunities, skills and safety, and state parks and state historic sites. This measure serves as an indicator of TPWD success in achieving the objective of increasing awareness and the goal of informing and educating the public about natural and cultural resources and recreational opportunities.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Efficiency:

Volunteer Labor as a Percent of Hunter Education Program Operating Costs

Definition: Measure is the value of volunteer labor divided by the total adjusted operating budget (expressed as a percentage) for Hunter Education program.

Data Limitations: Value of volunteer labor typically includes preparation hours or hours of service outside of the service performed actually delivering the in-kind services. TPWD is also dependent on volunteer instructors for timely and accurate submission of data.

Data Source: Hunter Education program maintains electronic records based on the agency's approved Education Online Registration System (ORS) or hard copy data reports received from staff or certified program volunteers. Preparation/teaching/training hours will be submitted for hunter education program volunteers. Hours are computed monthly, quarterly and annually depending on the report being filed. Source for budget data is the agency's financial system.

Methodology: Value of volunteer labor for Hunter Education program is calculated at the rate approved for the federal aid programs. Value of volunteer labor is divided by the total adjusted operating budget for Hunter Education program then converted to a percent.

Purpose: Measure reflects cost savings and efficiencies gained by TPWD through the use of volunteers to conduct educational programs.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Volunteer Labor as a Percent of Other Outreach and Education Program Operating Costs

Definition: Measure is the value of volunteer labor divided by the total adjusted operating budget (expressed as a percentage) for non-mandatory Outreach and Education programs.

Data Limitations: Value of volunteer labor for all other Outreach and Education programs typically includes preparation hours, and actual class, workshops, or outreach hours. Value of volunteer labor for other programs may not necessarily include preparation hours. TPWD relies upon timely and accurate submission of all Outreach and Education Program data reports with documented volunteer labor from staff and certified volunteer instructors.

Data Source: Each outreach and education program maintains electronic records based on the agency's approved volunteer management system or hard-copy data reports received from staff or certified program volunteers. Source for budget data is the agency's financial system.

Methodology: Manual tabulations of volunteer data; value of volunteer labor for all programs is calculated based on the federally approved rate for Aquatic Education volunteers, as work done by other outreach volunteers is comparable to AE volunteers. Volunteer hours are calculated as of actual class date. Value of volunteer labor is divided by the total adjusted operating budget for non-mandatory Outreach and Education Programs, then converted to a percent.

Purpose: Measure reflects cost savings and efficiencies gained by TPWD through the use of volunteers to conduct outreach programs.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

C.2.2. STRATEGY: PROVIDE COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Output:

Number of Visits to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Website

Definition: The visits metric shows the number of times users viewed at least one page on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's main website: www.tpwd.texas.gov.

Data Limitations: This number is calculated by Matomo Analytics software; limitations are dictated by hardware failures, potential software limitations or errors within Matomo Analytics.

Data Source: Matomo Analytics application.

Methodology: Matomo Analytics data compilation software. Visits metrics are provided for previous years so that year-over-year comparisons can be made.

Purpose: To reflect interest and interactions with this important communications tool for TPWD. This measure reports the number of website visits, which includes audiences reached by all facets of TPWD communication efforts.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of TPWD Online Video Views

Definition: Texas Parks and Wildlife produces videos that inform the public about natural and cultural resource conservation and recreational opportunities. This content is increasingly viewed online. Measure counts the cumulative number of times videos are viewed online.

Data Limitations: Online viewing information is not calculated by TPWD, therefore the calculation of this measure relies on information provided by an outside entity (e.g., YouTube Analytics). Data reports number of video views, not the number of unique viewers.

Data Source: Communications Division, based on online data from YouTube.

Methodology: Data are derived from YouTube Analytics, and the number of online views is reported.

Purpose: Texas Parks and Wildlife increasingly relies on web video distribution as a way to disseminate information to the public. Online video is a fast-growing outlet for TPWD, and measuring this channel serves as an indicator of TPWD success in informing the public.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Subscribers to the TPWD Email Subscription Service

Definition: The Texas Parks and Wildlife email subscription service provides ongoing updates and email newsletters at minimal cost, while also driving visitation to the Texas Parks and Wildlife website. Measure counts the total unique number of subscribers to the publicly listed topics of Texas Parks and Wildlife email subscription service for the fiscal year.

Data Limitations: The number is calculated and reported to TPWD by a third-party email service provider and a TPWD database analyst. Limitations are dictated by potential software limitations or errors within the vendor's database management and analysis.

Data Source: Communications Division, based on data provided by a third-party email service provider.

Methodology: The third-party email service provider provides a summary report for the period of reporting in question to Communications Division.

Purpose: To reflect people reached by an increasingly important communications and marketing tool for TPWD. Email includes e-newsletters and email blasts which increase awareness of recreational opportunities as well as conservation issues.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Successfully Delivered Email and Text Messages

Definition: The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department uses an email and text message subscription service to provide ongoing updates and newsletters at minimal cost, while also driving visitation to the Texas Parks and Wildlife website. Measure counts the total number of email and text messages successfully delivered for the fiscal year.

Data Limitations: The number is reported by a third-party service provider. Limitations are dictated by potential software limitations or errors within the vendor's database management and analysis.

Data Source: Communications Division, based on data provided by the current third-party service provider.

Methodology: The utilization of the current third-party service provider's digital communication management platform and its capabilities to pull reports and data on the total number of delivered email and text messages during a specified period. Platform capabilities may also provide details of breaking the total down by each message sent during a specified time period.

Purpose: To reflect the reach of this increasingly important communications and marketing tool for TPWD. Messages sent through this platform include customer communication, internal communication, and e-newsletters and email blasts which increase awareness of recreational opportunities as well as conservation issues.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Efficiency:

Percent of Magazine Expenditures Recovered from Revenues

Definition: Measure is calculated by dividing the department's total revenue from the *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine (including subscription sales, newsstand and single copy sales, advertising, and ancillary products and services) by the total cost of producing the magazine (including staff salaries, employee benefits, printing, postage, promotions, etc.).

Data Limitations: Magazine sales and subscriptions rates can vary from month to month and year to year. Expenditures for postage, employee benefits, etc. can also vary thus impacting performance of this measure. Expenditure information used to calculate this measure may not be complete at the time of reporting.

Data Source: Communications Division. Source for revenue and expense data is the agency's financial system.

Methodology: Divide total revenue by total cost, convert to a percentage. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reports the percent of expenditures recovered from magazine revenues.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Explanatory:Average Content Viewership of the *Texas Parks & Wildlife* Magazine

Definition: The *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine is a valuable tool the agency uses to communicate its conservation messages, educate the public about Texas' natural resources and promote its facilities and services. Measure counts the average total number of *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazines in circulation per issue (including paid and non-paid) plus visitors to the app and magazine website during the reporting period.

Data Limitations: Factors beyond the agency's control include an overall decline in the industry, limited money for promotion to solicit new subscribers and Internet sites providing similar information. Information on August newsstands sales and storage copies may be estimated since it may take several months for this information to be fully reported for TPWD.

Data Source: Communications Division. Monthly and annual reports from various vendors and service providers are the source of the data. For example, USPS Form 3541, fulfillment vendor online reports, newsstand distributor monthly sales reports, public place monthly distribution contract, retailers' monthly sales tracked internally, printing vendor shipping and inventory reports and office copy physical inventory. App usage tracked based on Apple and Google dashboards. Magazine website visits tracked by Matomo Analytics application.

Methodology: Several vehicles are used to distribute the magazine: paid and promotional copies sent by the U.S. Postal Service, newsstand distribution by a contract vendor, retail distribution by U.S. mail, waiting room copies distributed by a contract vendor, over-the-counter sales mailed directly from the office, electronic circulation, copies distributed at various events and trade shows, and copies drop-shipped to headquarters. Copy counts by distribution method are tabulated each month and balanced against the press run counts. An average is derived on an annual basis. Circulation count is audited twice a year by the Audit Bureau of Circulation. App and website visits tracked using Apple and Google dashboards and Matomo Analytics data compilation software. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects the number of magazine subscribers. This is another component of outreach and awareness activities by the agency.

Calculation Type: Non cumulative **New Measure:** Yes **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

OBJECTIVE C.3.: IMPLEMENT LICENSING AND REGISTRATION PROVISIONS

C.3.1. STRATEGY: HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE ISSUANCE

Output:

Number of Hunting Licenses Sold

Definition: Measure counts the number of hunting licenses sold during the license year (a license year is almost parallel to a fiscal year). A license is counted when actually sold. This measure counts only those license items for which a fee is paid. Items issued at no cost are not included.

Data Limitations: An external vendor provides this data. In the event they have down time, the reporting of data may be delayed. TPWD continues to market new licenses to encourage the purchase of licenses, however, ultimately, TPWD does not have full control over the decision by an individual to purchase a license. Other factors beyond the agency's control, such as economic conditions, changing attitudes towards hunting, and severe weather, may also impact performance of this measure.

Data Source: Financial Resources Division (license contractor automated computer reports).

Methodology: Manual tabulation of selected hunting licenses sold using computer generated report data. Cumulative.

Purpose: The sale of hunting licenses is a direct indicator of TPWD efforts regarding managing license issuance and ensuring implementation of statutory provisions regarding licensing requirements. Revenue from these sales is critical to the funding of TPWD.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Fishing Licenses Sold

Definition: Measure counts the number of fishing licenses sold during the license year (a license year is almost parallel to a fiscal year). A license is counted when actually sold. This measure counts only those license items for which a fee is paid. Items issued at no cost are not included.

Data Limitations: An external vendor provides this data. In the event they have down time, the reporting of data may be delayed. TPWD continues to market new licenses to encourage the purchase of licenses, however, ultimately, TPWD does not have full control over the decision by an individual to purchase a license. Other factors beyond the agency's control, such as economic conditions, changing attitudes towards fishing, and severe weather, may also impact performance of this measure.

Data Source: Financial Resources Division (license contractor automated computer reports).

Methodology: Manual tabulation of selected fishing packages/licenses sold using computer generated report data. Cumulative.

Purpose: The sale of fishing licenses is a direct indicator of TPWD efforts regarding managing license issuance and ensuring implementation of statutory provisions regarding licensing requirements. Revenue from these sales is critical to the funding of TPWD.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Combination Licenses Sold

Definition: Measure counts the number of combination type licenses sold during the license year (a license year is almost parallel to a fiscal year). A license is counted when actually sold. This measure counts only those license items for which a fee is paid. Items issued at no cost are not included.

Data Limitations: An external vendor provides this data. In the event they have down time, the reporting of data may be delayed. TPWD continues to market new licenses and offer special license packages (SuperCombo). These efforts are to encourage the purchase of licenses, however, ultimately TPWD does not have full control over the decision by an individual to purchase a license. Other factors beyond the agency's control, such as economic conditions, changing attitudes towards hunting, and severe weather, may also impact performance of this measure.

Data Source: Financial Resources Division (license contractor automated computer reports).

Methodology: Manual tabulation of selected combination packages/licenses sold using computer generated report data. Cumulative.

Purpose: The sale of combination licenses is a direct indicator of TPWD efforts regarding managing license issuance and ensuring implementation of statutory provisions regarding licensing requirements. Revenue from these sales is critical to the funding of TPWD.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Explanatory:

Total License Agent Costs

Definition: TPWD contracts with license agents (generally retail businesses that sell outdoor gear and supplies) to sell hunting, fishing and other licenses at various locations statewide. In exchange for provision of this service, license agents are authorized to retain approximately 5% of the selling price of each license sold. This measure reflects the total dollar amounts retained by license agents in each license year.

Data Limitations: TPWD does not have full control over the decision by an individual to purchase a license. The total amounts retained by license agents will vary depending on the total license sales within each year. Other factors beyond the agency's control, such as economic conditions, changing attitudes towards hunting, and severe weather, may also impact performance of this measure.

Data Source: Financial Resources Division, automated reports from the POS system.

Methodology: The POS system automatically tabulates the total amounts retained by all license agents. The total amounts retained by retail license agents (from the "commission" column of the Volume by License Agent report) for the most recent license year is reported on an annual basis.

Purpose: To reflect costs to TPWD associated with the commissions retained by license agents for issuance of hunting, fishing and other licenses sold through the POS system.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

C.3.2. STRATEGY: BOAT REGISTRATION AND TITLING

Output:

Number of Boat Registration and Titling, and Marine Industry Licensing Transactions Processed

Definition: Chapter 31 of the Parks and Wildlife Code authorizes TPWD to issue boat registrations, certificates of title, and marine dealer's, distributor's, and manufacturer's licenses. This measure counts the number of boating transactions, including originals, renewals, transfers, duplicates, replacements, corrections and other transactions related to boat and boat motor registration and titling, and the number of marine industry licenses processed during the reporting period.

Data Limitations: Economic and weather conditions outside TPWD control can impact the number of boat registrations and boat purchases. During slow economic times, the public generally spends less on discretionary activities (i.e., renewing registration, paying for boat fuel, etc.). In addition, sales of boats also tend to slow down, resulting in declines in the number of boat titles processed. Poor weather conditions, such as sustained drought or flooding, can also influence registration and titling figures.

Data Source: Financial Resources Division – Boat Titling & Registration System (BTR).

Methodology: Automatically tabulated by BTR by summing the total number of boat registration, boat and motor title, and marine industry licensing transactions (including originals, renewals, transfers, duplicates, replacements, corrections and other transactions) processed during the reporting period.

Purpose: This measure reflects TPWD workload associated with issuance of boat registration, titling, marine industry licenses, and related documents.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

GOAL D: MANAGE CAPITAL PROGRAMS**OBJECTIVE D.1.: ENSURE PROJECTS ARE COMPLETED ON TIME****Outcome:****Percent of Major Repair/Construction Projects Completed**

Definition: Projects managed by Infrastructure Division are reported in the Capital Construction Management System. Projects are construction, renovation or major repairs that require engineering or architectural services.

Project completion is completion of the division's administrative closeout process in the Centralized Accounting and Payroll/Personnel System. "Complete(d)" should be read as "administratively complete(d)" throughout this definition. Scheduled Projects are originally forecasted to be completed during the upcoming FY. A list of projects forecasted to complete within the upcoming FY is published the first day of every FY.

Unscheduled Projects begin and complete during the FY yet were not on the scheduled list of projects. Examples include emergencies and/or unexpected health, safety or regulatory issues.

The measure is derived by dividing the sum of the # of scheduled projects and unscheduled projects completed by the # of projects originally forecasted to complete in that FY.

Data Limitations: Measure counts only administratively completed projects and does not include projects granted contractual final completion. Unpredictable emergencies and catastrophic weather repairs are often a higher priority than scheduled and unscheduled repairs and may result in cancelled projects. Scheduled projects that are cancelled in the FY remain in the denominator and negatively impact this measure's performance. Factors beyond TPWD's control may impact performance, such as permit delays and required studies. Design-only projects are not included in this measure. Some projects take several years to complete. The numerator for this measure includes unscheduled projects that are completed within the FY while the denominator includes all projects originally forecasted to complete during the FY. As such, it is possible that performance may exceed 100%. There is not a direct link between amounts appropriated for a given FY and the percent of scheduled projects completed within that FY.

Data Source: Infrastructure Division and TPWD Financial System.

Denominator: Number of scheduled projects originally forecasted to complete during the fiscal year. Cancelled projects are included in the denominator.

Numerator: Number of all scheduled and unscheduled projects with actual completion dates between September 1 and August 31 of the given fiscal year. Information for both the numerator and denominator is derived from the CCMS and compiled on an Excel spreadsheet at HQ to obtain the percentage.

Methodology: Divide # of scheduled and unscheduled projects completed during the FY by the # of projects originally forecasted to complete that FY.

$$\# \text{ of scheduled projects completed} + \# \text{ unscheduled projects completed} / \# \text{ originally forecasted projects}$$

Completed projects are cross-checked by project # against list of projects originally forecasted to complete during the FY to obtain "# of scheduled projects completed." This count is added to number of unscheduled projects started and completed in the fiscal year to obtain this measure's numerator. Cancelled projects remain a part of "number of scheduled projects" (denominator) but will not be reflected in the numerator. Design-only projects are not included in either the numerator or the denominator.

Purpose: TPWD continues to face a backlog of repairs at our aging sites. It is critical that these repairs are completed in a timely manner.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

D.1.1. STRATEGY: IMPLEMENT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND MAJOR REPAIRS

Output:

Number of Major Repair/Construction Projects Completed

Definition: Projects managed by the Infrastructure Division are tracked and reported in TPWD's Financial System and/or are tracked via other means. Projects are construction, renovation or major repairs that require engineering or architectural services. Completed projects are those that have been administratively closed in the Centralized Accounting and Payroll/Personnel System. "Complete(d)" should be read as "administratively complete(d)" throughout this measure definition.

Measure counts the number of projects completed and is reported on a quarterly basis. All projects reported in this measure for a fiscal year include those completed on schedule, ahead of schedule, behind schedule, and emergencies. This measure will not correlate to numbers used to calculate the outcome measure "Percent of Major Repair/Construction Projects Completed," as this reflects ALL projects completed minus cancelled projects which were forecasted to complete.

Data Limitations: Measure counts only completed projects and does not consider a project's final completion. Design-only projects are not included in this measure regardless of completion date. Factors beyond the agency's control, which could impact performance of this measure, include catastrophic weather events, natural disasters, permit requirements taking longer than reasonably anticipated, unanticipated studies, and emergency repairs, which may cancel or delay completion of several other projects depending on nature and scope of the emergency. Some projects take several years to complete. There is not a direct link between amounts appropriated for a given fiscal year and the number of projects completed within that fiscal year.

Data Source: Infrastructure Division and TPWD's Financial System. Report of all projects with actual completion date between September 1 and August 31 of the given fiscal year is derived from the Capital Construction Management System (CCMS). This will include emergency or other unscheduled projects.

Methodology: Using the CCMS, tally all projects administratively completed on a quarterly basis. Cumulative.

Purpose: This measure directly supports the strategy and indicates workload by providing a count of total number of projects completed in the fiscal year. Existing facilities will always need repairs. This measure tracks the number of projects completed.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Major Repair/Construction Projects Managed

Definition: Measure captures the number of active projects (including design-only projects) which, during the current fiscal quarter, are active in TPWD's Financial System and managed by the Infrastructure Division.

Data Limitations: Factors beyond the agency's control, which could impact performance of this measure, include catastrophic weather events, natural disasters, and emergency repairs, which may necessitate reprioritization and/or cancellation of projects based on emerging safety and/or business needs. Because projects can vary in duration and scope, it is possible that these reprioritizations may shift resources from a large number of projects to a smaller number, or vice versa. This measure does not capture work done on Minor Construction and Donation projects, which potentially represent a significant amount of effort by the Infrastructure Division.

Data Source: Infrastructure Division and the Capital Construction Management System (CCMS). Report includes data between September 1 and August 31 of the given fiscal year and is derived from the CCMS. For the purpose of this measure, active projects are those that are currently set up in TPWD's Financial System. This will include emergency, unscheduled, and design-only projects.

Methodology: Using the report from the CCMS, tally all active projects managed by Infrastructure at the end of a fiscal quarter. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: This measure directly supports the strategy and indicates workload by providing a count of total number of major repair/construction projects managed in the fiscal year.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

D.1.2 STRATEGY: LAND ACQUISITION

Output:

Number of Acres Acquired (net)

Definition: Measure counts the net number of acres gained and lost during the fiscal year through purchase, long-term lease, donation, or other means and subsequently protected, for all purposes (parks, historic sites, wildlife areas, etc.).

Data Limitations: The acquisition process can be lengthy. Funding limitations, as well as the availability of suitable acreage, directly impact the performance of this measure.

Data Source: Land Acquisition Summary.

Methodology: Manual tabulation counting the net number of acres gained and lost during the fiscal year. Cumulative.

Purpose: To provide more recreation opportunities to the public and protect important sites, TPWD must acquire suitable acreage.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Acres Transferred

Definition: Measure counts the actual number of acres of TPWD lands transferred to another entity to operate for conservation or public recreation purposes in each fiscal year. As used in this measure, “transfer” means either (1) transfer of property to another entity; (2) a long-term lease with another entity; or (3) sale of property to another entity. Transfers will occur only for those properties that the TPW Commission has determined would be better suited for operation by another entity.

Data Limitations: Market conditions and the state of the economy could impact TPWD’s ability to transfer properties. Additional factors influencing performance include the willingness of local governments or other entities/agencies to accept/agree to transfers.

Data Source: Actual acres transferred is derived from the fiscal year Acquisition Summary file showing all additions, deletions and corrections to property acreage in a given fiscal year, maintained by Land Conservation Program staff.

Methodology: Land Conservation Program staff track all additions, deletions and corrections to acreage throughout the fiscal year and record on the Acquisition Summary. Transfers of acreage will be recorded and summed.

Purpose: To track TPWD’s progress in divestiture of sites determined by the TPW Commission to be better suited for operation by another entity.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Number of Expansions to State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas

Definition: Measure counts the actual number of expansions to state parks and wildlife management areas that were enlarged by the addition of adjacent acreage or inholdings. As used in this measure, acreage acquired by purchase, donation, or compensation for impacts to TPWD property would be included. Adjacent would be defined as physically contiguous with or close enough to be managed as a unit of an established TPWD site.

Data Limitations: The acquisition process can be lengthy. Funding limitations, as well as the availability of strategic/desirable lands from willing sellers, directly impact the performance of this measure.

Data Source: Land Acquisition Summary taken from the Land Conservation Program Records System (LCPRS).

Methodology: Manual query of database to count the number of expansions to state parks and wildlife management areas that were enlarged by the addition of adjacent acreage or inholdings. Cumulative.

Purpose: To improve the operational and management efficacy of existing TPWD sites, resulting in better conservation and better visitor experiences for present and future generations.

Calculation Type: Cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

Explanatory:

Number of Acres in Department's Public Lands System per 1,000 Texans

Definition: Measure is calculated by dividing the total number of acres in the agency's Public Lands System (including state parks, natural areas, historic sites, and wildlife acreage owned and leased by the agency) by the current population estimate of Texas, as provided by the State Comptroller's Office, divided by 1,000. Data reported is not a measure of park acreage alone, which is often used in state-by-state comparisons. This measure includes all lands owned and leased by the agency.

Data Limitations: One factor beyond the agency's control is the population of Texas. Availability of funding for acquisition purposes can also impact performance.

Data Source: Comptroller's Office (population figures) and TPWD Land Acquisition Summary.

Methodology: Manual tabulation. Non-cumulative. Divide total acres by population estimate in thousands.

Purpose: This measure reflects the ratio of public lands in TPWD's system to the current population of Texas. The population is increasing at a rapid pace. It is important in the long term for TPWD to increase land acreage available for public use and enjoyment as well.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative **New Measure:** No **Desired Performance:** Higher than target.

SCHEDULE C

Historically Underutilized Business Plan



GOAL: VETERAN HEROES UNITED IN BUSINESS HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESS (VetHUB)

To strive to ensure that contract opportunities for VetHUB vendors exist throughout all divisions within the department, to establish and implement policies governing purchasing that promote the use of VetHUBs in all procurement activities.

TPWD established agency specific VetHUB goals by determining average VetHUB expenditures over the prior five-year period. These goals will be reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted based on prior year purchasing history and future year projects and budget.

VetHUB OBJECTIVE:

To include VetHUB vendors in the contracts and subcontracts awarded annually by the agency in purchasing and public works contracting for Expenditure (Object) Code Categories designated by the Texas Comptroller. In accordance with the Texas Administrative Code, TPWD has established agency-specific VetHUB goals for fiscal year 2026, as follows:

1.00%	Heavy Construction
0.02%	Building Construction
2.00%	Special Trade Construction
0.05%	Professional Services
0.05%	Other Services
0.10%	Commodity Purchasing

Outcome:

Percentage of total dollar value of purchasing and public works contracts and subcontracts awarded and paid to VetHUBs certified by the Texas Comptroller in the designated Expenditure (Object) Codes specified for each of the six procurement categories.

VetHUB STRATEGY:

Continue to develop and implement a program to identify and recruit VetHUBs, identify subcontracting opportunities, and provide education and assistance to service-disabled veterans in the bidding process.

Output:

Number of Bid Proposals Received from VetHUB Vendors

Number of Contracts Awarded to VetHUB Vendors

Dollar Value of Contracts Awarded to VetHUB Contractors and Subcontractors in Each of the Six Procurement Categories

TPWD VetHUB PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is committed to supporting and promoting the VetHUB program. The department strives to ensure that contracting opportunities for service-disabled veterans exist throughout all divisions and to promote the use of VetHUB vendors in all purchasing and contracting activities.

TPWD's VetHUB program is administered by the Procurement Director/VetHUB Coordinator. The VetHUB Coordinator maintains open communication with agency leadership and purchasing personnel regarding established TPWD VetHUB policy and the status of the agency's progress toward achievement of VetHUB goals. TPWD monitors its performance against the agency-specific goals, as well as the statewide VetHUB goals and reports VetHUB information to the Executive Office on a quarterly basis. TPWD will continue to positively impact future VetHUB participation in the following ways:

- Increase efforts to identify VetHUBs to educate on the benefits of participation in state programs such as the Centralized Master Bidders List (CMBL) and becoming VetHUB certified.

- Participate in economic opportunity forums sponsored by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, the Texas Legislature and other governmental, civic and professional organizations across the state.
- Attend the “Doing Business Texas Style” Spot Bid Fair.
- Improve tracking and reporting of VetHUB subcontracting expenditures through monthly Progress Assessment Reports (PARs).
- Seek VetHUB subcontract opportunities in contracts that are less than \$100,000 when possible.
- Include VetHUB Subcontracting Plans (HSP) in all agency contracts in excess of \$100,000 wherein subcontracting opportunities are determined to exist and monitor Contractor compliance with HSPs after contract award.
- Target specific categories of items for VetHUB purchases such as office equipment/supplies, maintenance, repair and operating equipment/supplies and computer/telecommunications equipment/supplies.
- Maintain the Mentor–Protégé agreement(s) to foster long-term relationships between TPWD prime contractors and VetHUBs in an effort to increase the ability of VetHUBs to contract directly with TPWD or subcontract with a TPWD prime contractor.
- Compile quarterly reports tracking the use of VetHUBs by each operating division.
- Supplement the Centralized Master Bidders List (CMBL) with non-CMBL VetHUBs for solicitation of formal and informal bids.

CONTRACT MANAGER TRAINING

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is working to ensure that agency contract managers are trained in accordance with Texas Government Code §2262.053. Contract managers with significant contract management responsibilities and/or who administer high risk contracts will attend required training provided by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. Contract managers are also encouraged to seek additional training in contract law, construction law, negotiations and ethics.

FY26 VetHUB BUSINESS POLICY COMPLIANCE

Pursuant to Article IX, Sec. 7.07 of the General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature), this information is included for reference.

1. TPWD VETHUB GOALS

Procurement Category	Heavy Construction	Building Construction	Special Trade Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	Commodities
Goal	1.00%	0.02%	2.00%	0.05%	0.05%	0.10%
Performance	9.30%	26.80%	40.81%	29.92%	15.84%	20.78%

2. PRIME CONTRACT ACTIVITIES

2a. Prime Contract: Total expenditure during this FY

Procurement Category	Heavy Construction	Building Construction	Special Trade Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	Commodities	Total
VetHUB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-HUB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

3. SUBCONTRACT ACTIVITIES**3a. Subcontract: Total expenditure during this FY**

Procurement Category	Heavy Construction	Building Construction	Special Trade Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	Commodities	Total
VetHUB	\$0	\$126,936.44	\$870,456.00	\$529,788.25	\$0	\$0	\$1,527,180.69
Non-HUB	\$2,507,953.45	\$5,825,887.49	\$3,696,982.61	\$2,454,386.52	\$1,175,603.33	\$0	\$26,242,813.40

4. SPONSORED OR PARTICIPATED IN LOCAL AND STATEWIDE SETTINGS TO ENCOURAGE HUB PARTICIPATION IN STATE PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES

Event/Activity	Number of Events Hosted or Attended	
	Hosted	Attended
Economic Opportunity Forum	1	13
Annual Meeting/Setting	0	10
VetHUB Discussion Workgroup, Other	0	2

5. MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ PROGRAM

Active Mentor-Protégé Program	Ongoing	Added Current Fiscal Year
Number of Programs	1	0

6. HUB PROGRAM STAFF AND WORK-RELATED ACTIVITIES

HUB Staff	% of Weekly Hours with VetHUB	% of Weekly Hours with Purchasing	% of Weekly Hours with Contracts
Staff 1	40	40	20
Staff 2	70	20	10

PLAN FOR MAINTAINING FUTURE COMPLIANCE

VetHUB and Purchasing staff attend economic outreach forums to help educate vendors on how to find state business opportunities and submit effective proposals. TPWD is making an effort to recruit VetHUBs that are able to serve in our remote locations. TPWD plans to continue these efforts in the future to ensure compliance with the VetHUB requirements.

SCHEDULE D

Statewide Capital Plan

[PLAN SUBMITTED SEPARATELY TO BOND REVIEW
BOARD IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS.]



SCHEDULE E

Health and Human Services Strategic Planning

[TPWD IS NOT INCLUDED IN AGENCIES REQUIRED
BY GOVERNMENT CODE CHAPTER 531 TO
DEVELOP A HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PLAN.]



SCHEDULE F

Workforce Plan



TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Workforce Plan

Fiscal Years 2027-2033

Hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation have long been part of the fabric of Texas. People flock to Texas to enjoy rich hunting and fishing traditions in the state’s bountiful forests, prairies, and waters. However, the natural landscape is changing. The state faces many challenges in its efforts to protect, conserve and manage its precious natural resources. It is essential that land and waters in Texas are managed for the conservation of its wild things and wild places; Texans depend on it. The need for outdoor recreation has been evident with increased visitation at TPWD sites. Throughout its history, the dedicated employees of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) have worked diligently to ensure that present and future generations can enjoy Texas’ great cultural and natural heritage.

To be effective in the execution of the agency’s mission, TPWD’s workforce must be supported throughout the employee life cycle. This includes:

- effective recruitment, selection, and talent retention;
- development, implementation, and integration of comprehensive Human Resources (HR) policies, systems, and services that promote an agency-shared culture of professional growth;
- promotion of an environment of continuous learning and professional development; and
- fostering a culture of employee engagement, well-being, and organizational effectiveness.

This Workforce Plan aims to assess current and future workforce needs at all levels of the organization. TPWD seeks to provide a workforce with the tools and skillsets to be successful and create balance in their professional and personal lives.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE

The governing body of TPWD includes a nine-member governor-appointed Commission and two former members holding the title of Chairman-Emeritus. The Commission is responsible for adopting policies and rules related to agency programs and activities.

Day-to-day oversight responsibilities rest with the Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer. Division Directors provide leadership and oversight to their respective areas of responsibility. The agency is organized into 13 divisions:

• Coastal Fisheries	• Information Technology	• State Parks
• Communications	• Infrastructure	• Support Resources
• Executive Office	• Inland Fisheries	• Wildlife
• Financial Resources	• Law Enforcement	
• Human Resources	• Legal	

In the General Appropriations Act, the Legislature categorizes agencies broadly by their function. This structure allows funding information to be organized and presented by Article, or function, of government spending and enables comparisons between agencies within the same function. TPWD is categorized under Article VI, which includes Natural Resources agencies. The comparisons of TPWD to other Article VI agencies in the charts herein are intended to provide more targeted and meaningful points of comparison than those based on statewide averages.

CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE

The TPWD Headquarters is located in Austin, with regional and field offices located throughout the state. Approximately 73% of agency staff work at field locations. The agency has legislative authority for a Full-time Equivalent (FTE) cap of 3,269.9 in

FY26. Year-to-date through January of FY2026, the agency's average workforce headcount is 3,188.4 regular full- and part-time employees. TPWD's staffing increases significantly during the summer months with the addition of seasonal temporary staff and interns.

The agency manages 90 state parks and historic sites, 50 wildlife management areas, eight fish hatcheries, and a law enforcement training academy, collectively comprising more than 1.4 million acres managed in the public trust for recreation and conservation.

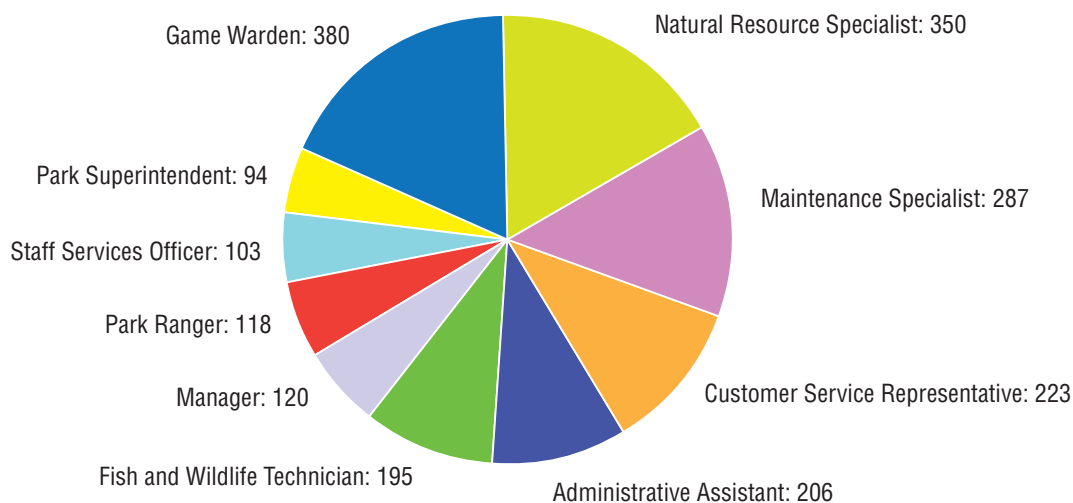
At the end of January 2026, TPWD's workforce consisted of:

- 3,205 classified regular full-time (CRF) and part-time employees (CRP)
- 43 classified temporary full-time (CTF) and classified temporary part-time (CTP) employees
- 5 contingent workers aiding short-term projects and other temporary work assignments
- 373 military employment preference (FY26 Q2 report)
- 9,671 active volunteers (FY25 totals)
- 162 paid and unpaid interns (FY25 totals)

TPWD's workforce possesses specialized skills and abilities aligned with the agency's strategies and core functions. As of January 2026, of its CRF and CRP employees, five of the top ten job classifications make up 45% of the agency's total workforce, representing 1,446 employees. Employees in the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) "Professional" categories comprise the largest portion of the TPWD workforce, with the following distributions:

Professionals, 34%
 Protective Service Workers, 22%
 Administrative Support, 19%
 Service Maintenance, 13%
 Technicians, 8%
 Paraprofessionals, 2%
 Officials & Administrators, 1%
 Skilled Craft Workers, 1%

Top Ten Classifications Used by TPWD



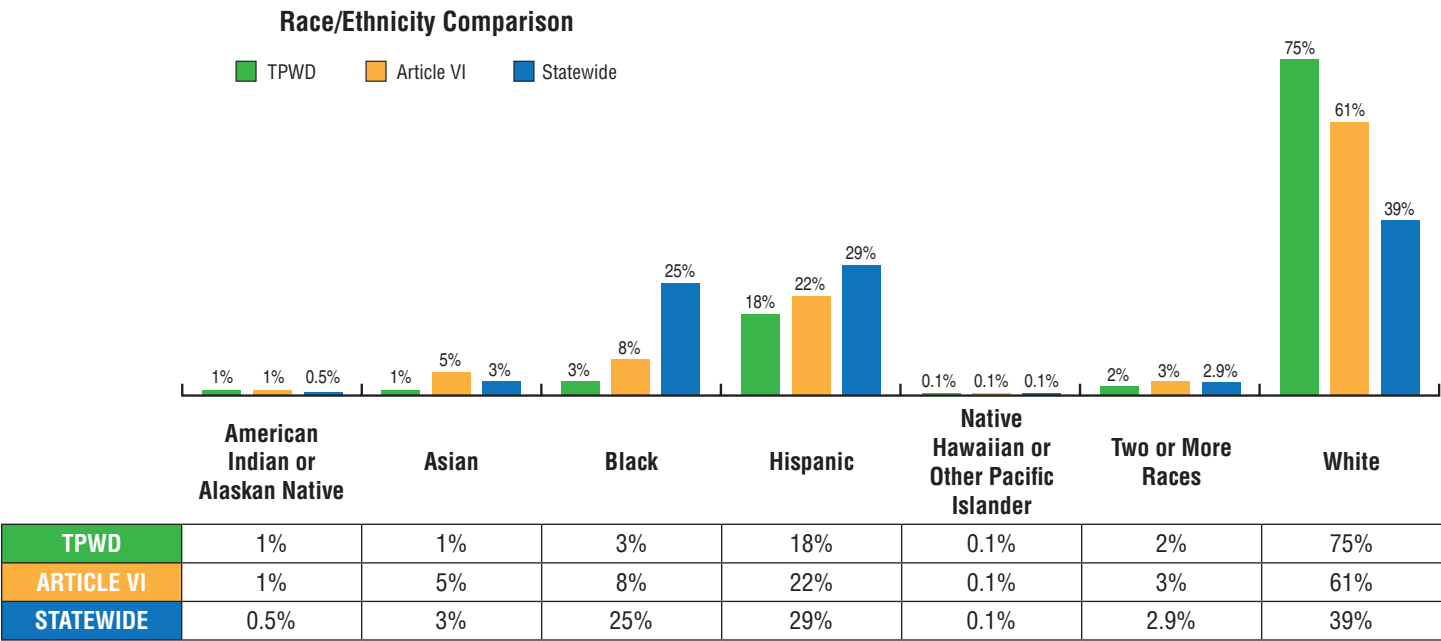
Most divisions supplement their workforce with TPWD-paid and externally paid interns. Externally paid internships are funded by partnerships outside of TPWD such as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and the Coastal Conservation Association. This seasonal and temporary workforce is essential to the agency, particularly during periods of increased activity and visitor demands at TPWD's facilities. In addition, interns support ongoing programs, events, maintenance, and overall agency operations.

RACE/ETHNICITY

TPWD’s workforce is composed of the following race and ethnicity groups:

- 75% White
- 18% Hispanic
- 3% Black
- 2% Two or More Races
- 1% or less each: Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (NHPI)

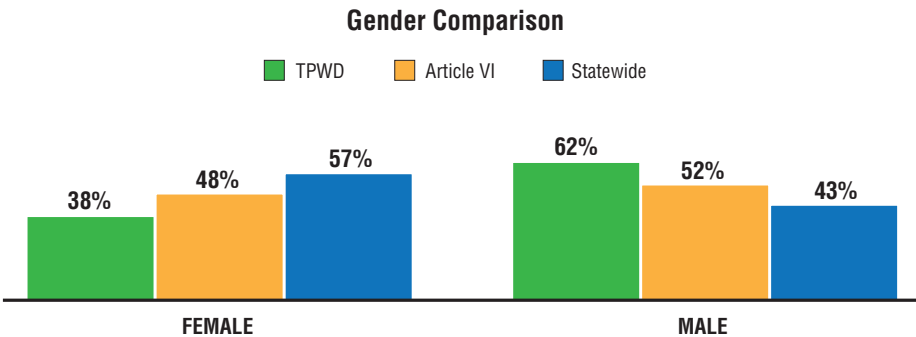
Due to rounding, overall totals may not equal 100%. All values over 1% were rounded to the closest whole number.
Source: Comparisons from State Auditor’s Office (SAO) eClass reports.



GENDER

TPWD’s workforce is 62% male and 38% female. In the first quarter of FY26, TPWD experienced an increase in female hiring across the agency. An examination of turnover data for the first two quarters of FY26 has shown that females are leaving the agency at a lower rate than their overall representation in the workforce.

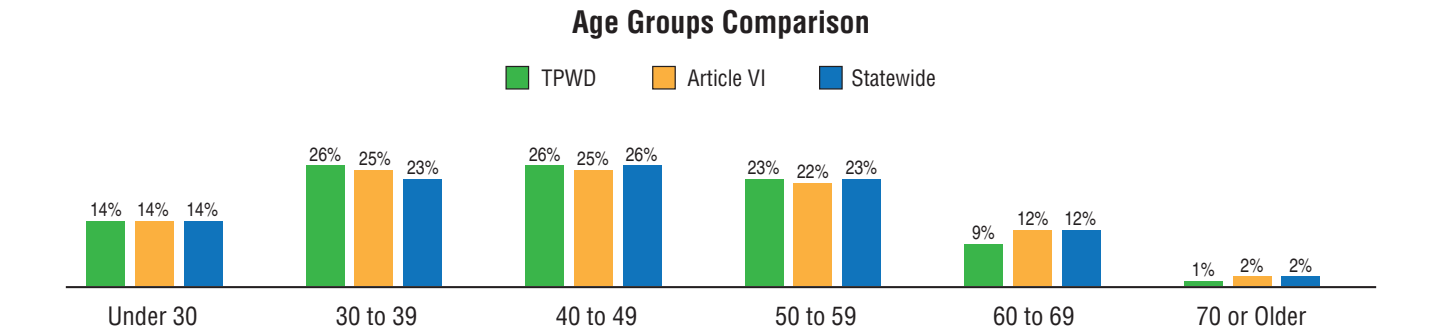
Source: Comparisons from SAO eClass reports.



The agency has also seen an increase of females in executive and management positions. Women now occupy several significant leadership roles in TPWD, serving as directors of Communications, Human Resources, Infrastructure, Internal Audit, and Information Technology.

AGE

The graph below shows that 75% of the agency’s workforce is between the ages of 30 and 60. Eleven percent are approaching or already at retirement age. As more individuals choose to work beyond traditional retirement age, TPWD and many other organizations are experiencing the dynamics of a multi-generational workforce. Currently, TPWD employees range in age from 19 to 79 years old.



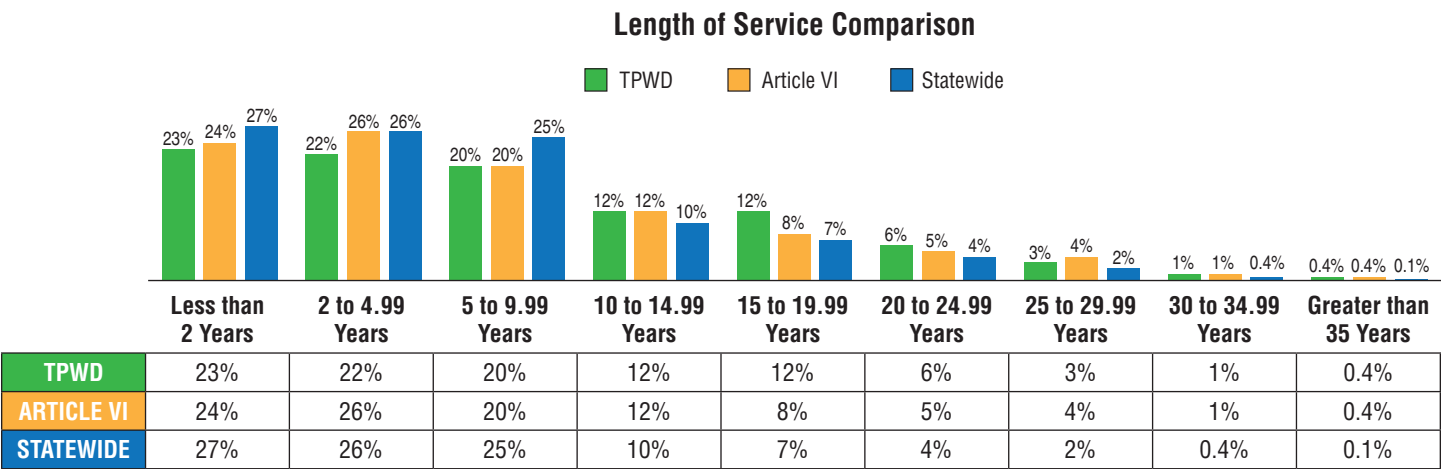
Source: Comparisons from SAO eClass reports.

VETERANS

Texas Government Code Section 657.004 specifies that veterans should comprise 20% of an agency’s workforce. TPWD has made concerted efforts to meet this standard by dedicating a Military Employment Liaison position within the Human Resources Division to focus on veteran hiring. The agency’s current percentage of military employment preference employee in the workforce is 11.38%, up from 9.77% in the last two years. TPWD actively participates in veteran recruiting events and the SkillBridge Program to help create a pipeline of veteran candidates for agency vacancies.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

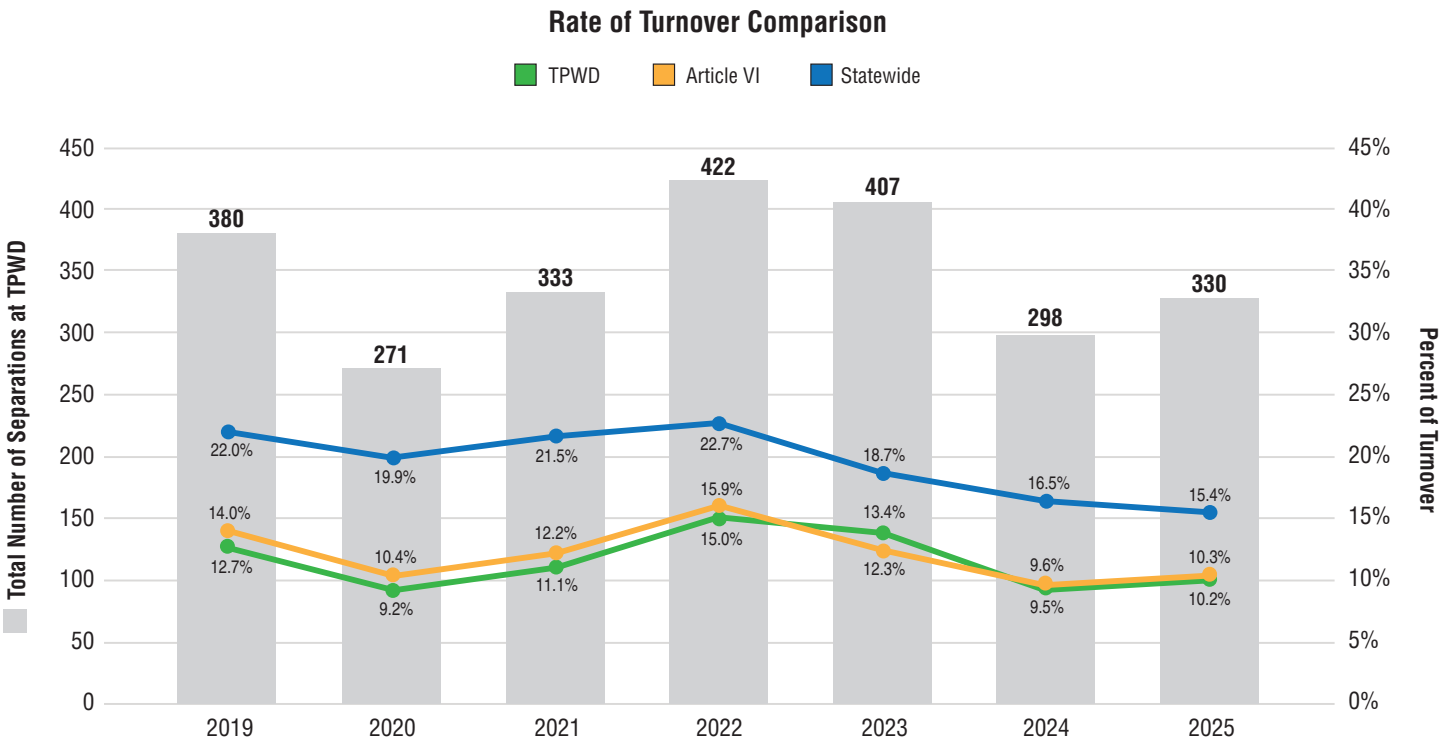
As of April 2026, approximately 45% of TPWD employees have five or fewer years of service with the agency; 24% have between 10 and 20 years or service; and about 11% have 20 years or more. While 65% of TPWD’s workforce has less than 10 years of service, the agency has a larger proportion of employees with 10–20 years of service compared to other state agencies.



TURNOVER

TPWD is known for recruiting and retaining quality employees who are dedicated to the agency’s mission. This commitment is reflected in the relatively low and consistent turnover rate the agency has maintained compared to statewide and Article VI

agencies. In FY25, TPWD experienced a turnover rate of 10.2%, compared to a 15.4% turnover rate for state agencies overall. Despite consistently low turnover, the agency continues to face challenges related to the loss of institutional knowledge and expertise resulting from retirements and resignations.



TPWD has seen turnover rates decrease and stabilize over the past four years. For the first two quarters of FY26, the agency’s turnover rate was 4.0%.

During FY25, the most commonly reported reasons for voluntary separations from TPWD were:

- Retirement
- Better pay/benefits
- Relocation of self or spouse
- Personal or family health
- Issues with supervisor/issues with employees supervised
- No or little career advancement opportunities

RETIREMENT ELIGIBILITY

The agency estimates that 28% of its staff will be eligible for retirement by the end of FY30. By that time, five of TPWD’s 13 divisions will have 35% or more of their employees eligible to retire. Currently, the agency employs 59 return-to-work retirees and has 559 employees who are eligible to retire at the end of FY26. As employees retire, effective knowledge-transfer or knowledge-sharing practices will be essential to ensuring continuity of operations.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

TPWD pay lags behind the average salaries of Article VI agencies. State salaries have historically lagged behind the private sector for comparable work. Although the approval of exceptional items in the last LAR helped narrow this gap slightly, significant disparities remain. While state employees received a legislatively appropriated salary increase in September 2024 and targeted salary adjustments were distributed in early FY26, pay continues to contribute to employee turnover because it

has not kept pace with inflation or labor market trends. Although pay has previously been identified as a primary reason for employee separations, more recent data indicate that limited opportunities for advancement have become a leading factor. TPWD continues to examine pay and related classification issues in the following areas:

- Comparison of classifications within TPWD to the labor market;
- Comparison of classifications within TPWD to other state agencies;
- Comparison of average salaries by division;
- Comparison of agency's average salaries to other state agencies; and
- Pay as it relates to turnover.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

TPWD's workforce is significantly augmented by its volunteer program. Volunteers play a crucial role in the agency's mission and provide a wide range of services across nearly every division. State Parks volunteers serve as ambassadors to the public and assist staff in day-to-day park operations including providing interpretive programs. Texas Master Naturalists provide education, outreach, and services to help manage natural resources and natural areas within all communities. Hunter, angler, and boater education instructors teach outdoor enthusiasts how to hunt, fish, and boat safely, responsibly, lawfully, and ethically.

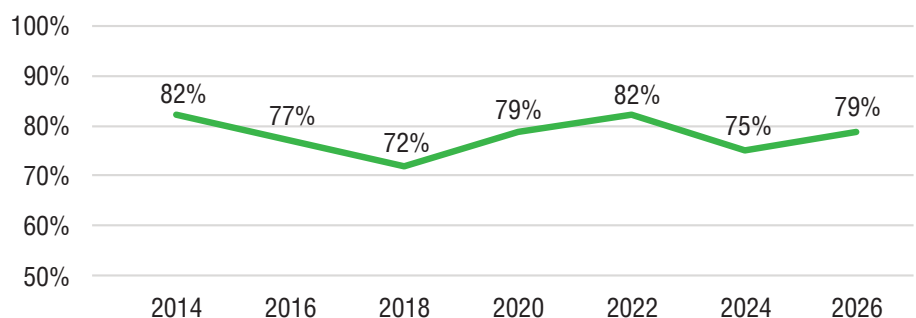
In FY25, TPWD had more than 9,671 active volunteers working across the agency. These volunteers contributed over 1,149,729 hours of service for the agency. These services are equivalent to 552 FTEs, valued at more than \$40 million based on the dollar value of volunteer time at \$34.79 per hour (Independent Sector). TPWD continues to seek opportunities to expand its volunteer program and increase the variety of skills represented among its volunteers.

SURVEY OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

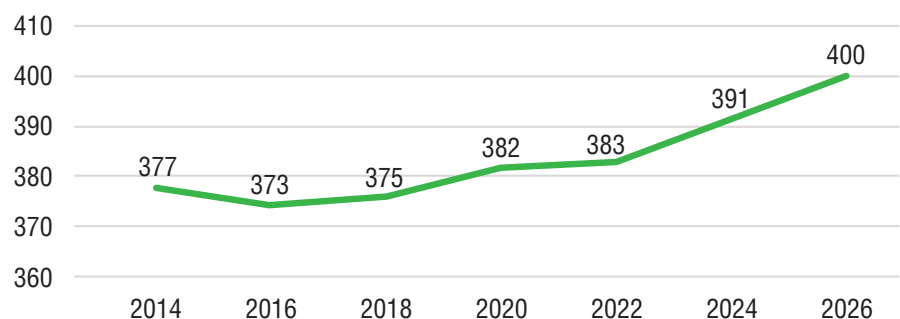
The Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) is administered biennially to employees throughout state government by the Institute of Organizational Excellence at The University of Texas at Austin. Employees are asked to anonymously provide feedback on multiple aspects of their agency through the SEE, including internal communication, pay, supervision, and strategic vision. TPWD generally receives high response rates and strong scores across the survey constructs.

Employees respond to 48 primary items designed to assess essential and fundamental aspects of organizational functioning using a Likert scale that ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scale is converted into corresponding scores ranging from 100 to 500 points, and the results of the survey responses are calculated within the framework of this point scale. Generally, scores between 350 and 500 points are considered very strong to excellent results and are interpreted to be a strength for the agency.

TPWD Survey Response Rate



TPWD Overall Score



Over the past several SEE iterations, TPWD's scores have had some minor fluctuations. While the agency's strongest and weakest constructs have remained fairly consistent in the past, the 2026 results showed a shift in the agency's strengths. For the last completed survey, the highest scoring constructs for the agency were Workgroup, Strategic, and Supervision. TPWD's lowest-scoring constructs were Pay, Benefits, and Internal Communication. To provide context, the only score below 350 points that the agency consistently receives is on the construct of Pay, and in 2026, eight of the 12 construct scores were above 400 points.

TPWD will continue to utilize the SEE results to address employee concerns, support strategic workforce planning, and develop appropriate actions that boost engagement and retention throughout the agency. It is vital that the agency uses organizational tools like the SEE to protect one of its most valued resources, its human resources.

II. FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE (DEMAND ANALYSIS)

The world is rapidly evolving with the development and use of AI. Today's workplace is a flexible, tech-driven environment where work happens anywhere via digital tools, focusing on agility, collaboration, and employee well-being. It is moving beyond rigid physical locations to embrace hybrid models, teams in multiple geographical locations, and greater work-life integration for increased productivity and innovation. Although there is some resistance in the use and implementation of AI, AI can offer greater productivity and efficiencies by supporting the current workforce and their business processes.

Collaboration no longer requires employees working in proximity to one another. Technologies that were quickly put in place years ago have become efficient collaboration tools for headquarters and field staff, replacing some in-person meetings and eliminating productivity barriers. Now, discussions and collaboration occur through quick, virtual meetings that are less demanding on time and fiscal resources, with AI providing immediate support to reshape strategies. Although fear persists regarding the possibility of AI replacing workers, to date the Texas unemployment rate has not seen significant changes, remaining between 3.8% and 4.1% at most recent reporting.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. economy is projected to add 5.2 million jobs between 2024 and 2034. Total employment is projected to grow 3.1% to a total of 175.2 million, which is slower than the 13.0% growth recorded over the previous decade (2014–24). Demand for AI-based systems, data processing, software development, research services, and associated consulting services are expected to drive the need for workers in both the professional, scientific, and technical services sector (+7.5%) and the information sector (+6.5%).

There are shifts occurring in many industries, driven in part by the adoption of these emerging technologies:

- The increase in demand for electricity is one of the top fastest growing industries, primarily related to AI integrations and the electric vehicle industry. As a result, new data centers are emerging across Texas, with more on the horizon.
- Occupational employment sectors like healthcare, social assistance, and technical occupations are projected to be among the fastest growing.
- Employment in mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction may continue being phased out as robotics and drones are increasingly utilized.
- The fastest job market sector decline is expected in retail, as automation, consolidation, and e-commerce are likely to continue growing.

Population growth is expected to slow over the next 30 years, averaging 0.4% from 2025–2035 and 0.1% from 2036–2055. As a result, the average age of the population is expected to continue to rise.

The computer and mathematical occupational sector continues to experience much faster than average employment growth. The expansion into the AI integration for businesses and consumers will produce a massive amount of data for these workers to collect, organize, analyze, and protect. Data science, statistics, and information security represent the second fastest growing occupational sector.

TPWD has established the following overlay initiatives to guide the strategic planning that sets forth the work of the agency. These overlay initiatives have established working groups within the agency that are tasked with the following:

- Accelerate the modernization of the department.
 - Unlock potential efficiency gains and cost reductions that can be deployed to support the core mission of the department.
 - Improve customer and stakeholder experiences both internally and externally.
 - Create efficiencies where savings can be put towards advancing TPWD’s conservation and recreational mission.
 - Continue to stay relevant with Texans and connect them with outdoor experiences.
- Elevate the science enterprise.
 - Anticipate changes and address emerging issues.
 - Maintain the highest level of scientific validity and credibility.
 - Be proactive on emerging issues and reactive on issues of importance to stakeholders.
- Strengthen the TPWD brand and capitalize on its equity.
 - Focus on relevancy strategies that explain the “why” of our work.
 - Seek opportunities to increase our brand reach.
 - Modernize the customer relationship management system.

Additionally, the agency has benefited from various legislative actions and partnership opportunities that promise to expand the reach of the department’s mission. These initiatives will lead to significant land acquisitions and the development of many new public use spaces across Texas. All of these exciting endeavors for the agency will require an expansion of the workforce and the skills/competencies needed to carry out these duties.

CRITICAL JOB COMPETENCIES

As discussed, TPWD employs a variety of positions to carry out its mission. The Human Resources Division follows the guidelines provided by the State of Texas Classifications Plan of the State Auditor’s Office and works closely with agency supervisors/managers to identify the basic and advanced technical skills and competencies required for each job classification. TPWD will continue to identify critical positions and competencies that significantly impact the agency and the execution of its mission. There is a continuing need for TPWD employees with:

Technical and Job-Specific Skills

- Math and information technology skills
- Water and wastewater licensed operators
- Maintenance and repair (equipment and facilities)
- Toxicology expertise
- Support skills (ADA compliance, sustainability, safety, and risk and emergency management)
- Fabrication
- Artificial Intelligence

Soft Skills

- Problem-solving
- Communication
- Public speaking
- Analytical thinking
- Conflict resolution
- Influence and presence
- Leadership

Several high-level cross-divisional, agency-wide competencies were identified and deemed critical for organizational success. These competencies include:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • change management | • influencing/negotiating | • Spanish language skills |
| • coaching/mentoring | • information management | • technology management |
| • conflict management | • project management | • digital content development |
| • fiscal management | • public speaking | • real estate expertise |

PAY

For many years, pay has been the lowest-scoring construct in the TPWD SEE. Through exit interviews, employees continue to communicate that pay is not keeping pace with the rising cost of living or with other similar jobs outside of state employment.

TPWD employees often drive significant distances to perform their job duties. This is due to a lack of affordable housing close to designated worksites and/or the presence of remote worksite locations, requiring significant travel. SAO exit surveys also reveal that pay and benefits continue to be among the top reasons for leaving employment with TPWD. With predictions of increasing inflation, concerns that pay will not keep pace with rising costs are real. The 2024 Texas annual cost of living rose 6.1%, making it an average of \$55,489 a year. TPWD has some positions that pay less than entry-level retail positions.

III. GAP ANALYSIS

AGING WORKFORCE AND ATTRITION

With approximately 60% of TPWD employees at or above age 40, and 30% at or above age 50, experience is undoubtedly an asset for day-to-day operations and helps to provide continuity. However, the fact that approximately 28% of agency employees are at/or nearing retirement eligibility over the next five years raises significant concern. Special attention to recruitment, succession planning, and training will be necessary to fill potential gaps in the workforce. This potential loss of valued experience and institutional knowledge from pending retirements must be managed through mentoring, technical training, leadership programs, and succession planning efforts.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, 40% of employees are under 40 years old. These employees bring a wealth of differing perspectives and newer ways of doing business into the organization. They tend to seek continuous challenges and higher salaries with more rapid upward mobility than older employees. As a result, they may change employers frequently due to the scarcity of opportunities to increase their income. They also value non-traditional work arrangements such as telework, project-based pay, and flex-time schedules that may not fit the paradigm of many traditional positions in the agency. These types of arrangements require different management techniques, training, and increased flexibility with benefits, morale, and retention programs. With multiple generations overlapping in the workforce, research reveals that each generation typically wants significantly different things out of their careers. Younger workers tend to prioritize purpose and personal development, whereas tenured employees seek security and stability.

NON-COMPETITIVE SALARY STRUCTURE

TPWD performs external and internal classification salary comparisons with other state agencies to target pay disparity and to reduce internal compression issues between divisions. The SEE results confirm that salary remains the number one issue related to job satisfaction. However, the turnover rate of the agency is at its lowest it has been in the last five years. Other noted staffing challenges related to recent external changes and competition for talent include:

- Competition from other state agencies and the private sector significantly impact the agency in retention and quality of applicant pools. TPWD struggles to offer competitive pay for its employees.
- Challenges remain filling entry-level positions, particularly at state parks. When these gaps are unfilled, staff take on more responsibilities with only small pay increases when available. Entry-level salaries in other job markets continue to rise, creating additional challenges.

OPERATIONAL EXPANSION AND FTE LIMITATIONS

Over the past several years, TPWD has faced newly emerging challenges in the conservation landscape and encountered fortuitous opportunities with new, mission-specific funding sources. The natural resources of Texas continue to face threats in various forms such as wildlife disease, land-use conversion, and invasive species. However, the agency mission has benefited

from several funding sources, including the dedication of Sporting Goods Sales Tax and the establishment of the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund. Collectively, these emerging challenges and opportunities require TPWD to adapt, develop, and expand various agency programs.

To meet this evolving demand without sacrificing current initiatives, TPWD will have to increase the rate and quantity of land acquisitions, design and build new facilities, and establish and expand programs aimed at wildlife disease response and species of greatest conservation need. The agency will need additional FTEs to appropriately staff these efforts. Positions such as park rangers/superintendents, natural resource specialists, project/construction managers, engineers, architects, and law enforcement will need to be a primary focus. However, an effort to meaningfully bridge this projected workforce gap must also focus on positions necessary to support operational expansion (human resources, finance and purchasing, information technology, legal, communications, and other support resources).

During FY26, TPWD's average FTE count was approximately 2.5% lower than its FTE appropriation. This rate fell below the average rate for all state agencies over the previous two fiscal years. While TPWD can successfully maintain current business operations within its current FTE limitations, process efficiencies and workload capacities have been maximized. To properly steward these public investments and responsibly expand programmatic operations, TPWD will require an increase in its appropriation of FTEs.

IV. HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

TPWD utilizes a values-based human resources strategy in an effort to attract and retain high-quality staff and to ensure effective human resources management across the agency. TPWD's core values of stewardship, service, excellence, integrity, and teamwork serve as the foundation for designing the agency's policies and practices, which are developed in coordination with other support divisions. These fundamental values are embedded into the organization's culture. This HR strategy is based on research that demonstrates that people want to work for an organization they trust and respect, where they feel valued and welcomed, where they are enriched and connected to the community, and, most importantly, where they can make a positive difference.

The Human Resources Division supports all divisions in the execution of the agency's mission and works to achieve excellent customer service based on four HR-specific strategic goals:

Goal 1: Recruitment and Talent Management – Attract, employ, develop, and retain a qualified employee workforce that includes veterans and volunteers to meet current and future business needs.

Goal 2: Personnel Administration – Develop, implement, and integrate effective HR policies, business processes, and data systems by leveraging industry best practices.

Goal 3: Shared Culture – Leverage the agency's shared culture and core values to distinguish TPWD as a welcoming and engaging employer of choice.

Goal 4: Learning and Development – Ensure mission success by providing TPWD employees with access to learning and development programs geared toward promoting competencies related to teamwork, supervision, and leadership.

TPWD is committed to addressing the gaps identified in its workforce. These efforts include increasing outreach and recruitment, addressing pay inequities, and continuing employee leadership development. The agency has built a reputation for providing employees with training and development opportunities and must continue to do so to maintain a high-quality workforce. As TPWD's current workforce retires and years of valuable institutional knowledge and experience are lost, the agency is already working to implement a succession plan and to develop a more broadly experienced workforce to avoid losing the competencies needed to accomplish the TPWD mission.

COMPREHENSIVE RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS

Recruitment programs are a top priority for TPWD, as these are key to hiring the best-qualified individuals and are crucial as the agency strives to be an employer of choice.

Given that 18% of employees are currently eligible to retire and a total of 28% of employees will be eligible within the next five years, a strong recruitment effort is essential to help the agency secure the talent needed to continue operations. Specific opportunities for future agency recruitment include the following components:

- Soliciting, training, and supporting agency employees to represent TPWD at events virtually, across the state, and in their local communities through the Recruitment Representatives Program.
- Conducting informational sessions with various groups to educate them on how to complete the state application. Developing and executing recruitment strategies to reach educational institutions with conservation-relevant degree programs within and outside of Texas.
- Increasing investment in K-12 students by conducting visits and creating contacts to promote TPWD employment and professional growth opportunities.
- Building relationships with community and technical colleges to recruit top talent in the skills trade, particularly information technology careers associated with the passage of HB 584 (88th Legislature) and HB 2768 (89th Legislature).
- Collaborating on Military Employment Preference program development with local and statewide Texas Veterans Commission representatives and support organizations, leveraging the SkillBridge Program to target veterans.
- Increasing outreach to veterans by expanding existing partnerships among TPWD divisions.
- Creating collaborative learning outcomes for all interns, highlighting the agency's mission and key themes to prepare students for a future in conservation.

COMPETITIVE SALARY STRUCTURE

TPWD will continue to address the issues of competitive compensation and pay inequities within TPWD and in comparison to other state agencies, the private sector, and the overall labor market. The agency's long-term goal is to develop comprehensive compensation packages that are competitive enough to attract, motivate, and retain quality employees.

While the agency will not be able to directly compete with all private entities, this total compensation package will emphasize non-salary compensation such as retirement plans, health benefits, 401K/457 plans, wellness/fitness programs, tuition reimbursement, telecommuting, flexible working arrangements, and employee assistance programs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Leadership and management education provide key professional development and supports formal succession plans by ensuring capable leaders at all levels of the organization can ensure that the agency can complete its mission and take care of its most valuable resource, its people. TPWD recognizes the need to consider all generations in the workforce when developing and delivering training and leadership programs so that all learning styles and preferences are considered. TPWD will continue to develop effective leaders throughout the organization by:

- Participating in executive leadership programs, including the Governor's Executive Development Program, the National Conservation Leadership Institute, and TPWD's Senior Leadership Development Program (SLDP).
- Continuing to develop first-line managers and team leaders through the Successful First Line Management program (SFLM) that covers self-reflection, nature of management, nature of teams, communication, conflict management, and coaching.
- Continuing the ongoing development of a Middle Management Development Program for leaders who are seeking development and growth between SFLM and SLDP.
- Deploying a new manager training program that provides managers entering a supervisory role at TPWD with the tools needed to manage, lead, and develop the operations of their teams.

- Building upon the agency's various Mentoring Programs that are tailored to serve several levels of the organization, including:
 - Mentoring for Growth – This program targets employees in their first three to six years of tenure at the agency and provides the opportunity to be mentored by seasoned employees for knowledge management/transfer, career development, and staff retention.
 - New Manager Mentoring – This program is intended for supervisors who are new at a managerial role to be mentored by tenured, experienced managers.
 - Informal Mentoring – The Human Resources Training and Organization Development team offers a suite of resources and tools for employees who may not qualify for one of the formal mentoring programs the agency offers.
 - Peer-to-peer Mentoring – Currently under development, this program aims to provide formal mentoring partnerships for employees at the same level of the organization.
- Providing learning opportunities for individual contributors across the agency through programs like the *There's a Leader in Every Seat* collection, which is offered to all employees and includes highly participatory training focused on self-reflection and core knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors critical to attaining leadership success as an employee in a non-supervisory role.
- Engaging employees through various statewide training programs covering customer service, conflict management, communication, dealing with difficult people, high-performing teams, coaching, managing up, personality differences, work styles, multi-generational workforce, facilitation skills, team-building, time management, and other topics as requested.

EMPLOYEE RETENTION STRATEGIES

The agency will continue to use a variety of strategies to influence retention, including:

- Encouraging the use of performance-based merit pay increases, one-time merits, and paid administrative leave to recognize employees' significant contributions to the agency's mission.
- Furthering the agency's commitment to a comprehensive employee recognition program that honors highest performing individuals and team accomplishments.
- Promoting participative management strategies that allow individual contributors to take an active role in decision-making, which increases employee engagement and sense of value.
- Creating opportunities for individual development and training.
- Providing tuition assistance to supplement student-employee educational endeavors.
- Leveraging flexible work arrangements.
- Engaging the use of various collaboration tools that further enable employees to make meaningful contributions within and outside their workgroups.
- Utilizing the employee wellness program to enhance employee engagement and productivity.
- Continuing TPWD's participation in the biennial SEE and ensuring executive commitment to appropriately address areas of concern.
- Maintaining an affirming culture for nursing mothers as a designated Mother-Friendly Worksite.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER BEST PRACTICES

The following are active strategies for divisions to consider in order to retain institutional knowledge that may be lost in the wake of resignations and retirements:

- Documenting internal procedures
- Cross-training
- Mentoring programs
- Training programs
- Developing leaders
- Succession planning

SUMMARY

This workforce plan is based on the agency's strategic plan and considers the organization's mission, vision, core values, and goals.

The analysis was conducted by examining the agency's demographics, length of service, attrition, workforce contributions from volunteers and interns, employee engagement, and organizational climate. These factors and criteria provide a holistic perspective and support the agency's strategic direction. Data was extracted from the agency's system of record (the Centralized Accounting Payroll/Personnel System), the SAO online database systems, and research from industry-leading resources.

The labor market profile is in constant flux, and it is critical for the agency's operational success to have a thorough, comprehensive workforce plan. As new technologies continue to emerge, organizations are faced with increasing obligations to advance the effective modernization of communication mediums, collaboration tools, and product delivery. To meet this need, the agency has determined what it believes to be the most critical workforce needs and challenges over the next five years. The various human resource strategies and organizational goals outlined in this workforce plan contain a strategic focus on recruitment and talent management, personnel administration, shared culture, and learning and development.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department continues to build upon a strong reputation as an industry leader in natural and cultural resource conservation, and outdoor recreation. The future of the agency's mission and subsequent contributions to the State of Texas are only as strong as the workforce dedicated to that purpose.

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SCHEDULE G

Workforce Development System Strategic Planning

[TPWD IS NOT INCLUDED IN AGENCIES REQUIRED
BY GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS 2308.104
AND 2308.1015 TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR THE TEXAS WORKFORCE SYSTEM.]



SCHEDULE H

Report on Customer Service



CUSTOMER INVENTORY

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) serves a wide array of customers. We consider the citizens of Texas our most important “customer” group – it is our mission to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Each of the strategies in the General Appropriations Act directs an effort to provide or enhance a facility, program, activity or service that benefits our customers directly and all Texans indirectly:

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	CUSTOMERS SERVED
A.1.1.	Wildlife conservation, habitat management and research	Hunters, non-consumptive users, Wildlife Management Area (WMA) visitors
A.1.2.	Technical guidance to private landowners and general public	Hunters, non-consumptive users, private landowners
A.1.3.	Enhanced hunting and wildlife-related recreational opportunities	Hunters, anglers, non-consumptive users, private landowners
A.2.1	Inland fisheries management, habitat conservation and research	Anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
A.2.2	Inland hatcheries operations	Anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
A.2.3.	Coastal fisheries management, habitat conservation and research	Anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users, commercial fishermen
A.2.4.	Coastal hatcheries operations	Anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
B.1.1.	State parks, historic sites and state natural area operations	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
B.1.2.	Parks minor repair program	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
B.1.3.	Parks support	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
B.2.1.	Provide local park grants	Local governments and their park visitors
B.2.2.	Provide boating access, trails and other grants	Local governments and their park visitors, boaters, anglers, physically challenged and disadvantaged populations
C.1.1.	Wildlife, fisheries and water safety enforcement/education	Hunters, anglers, boaters, commercial fishermen, private landowners, general public
C.1.2.	Texas game warden training center	Hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users, commercial fishermen, private landowners

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	CUSTOMERS SERVED
C.1.3.	Provide law enforcement oversight, management and support	Hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users, commercial fishermen, private landowners
C.2.1.	Provide outreach and education programs	Hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users, educators, youth, women, physically challenged, with focus on minorities
C.2.2.	Provide communication products and services	Hunters, anglers, private landowners, boaters, state park, historic site and state natural area visitors, non-consumptive users, educators
C.3.1.	Hunting and fishing license issuance	Hunters, anglers, commercial fishermen, license deputies
C.3.2.	Boat registration and titling	Boaters and county tax assessor-collectors
D.1.1.	Implement capital improvements and major repairs	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
D.1.2.	Land acquisition	State park, historic site, state natural area, wildlife management area and hatchery visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
D.1.3.	Infrastructure program administration	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
D.1.4.	Meet debt service requirements	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
D.1.5.	Centennial Parks Conservation Fund	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT'S CUSTOMER SERVICE COMPLAINT-HANDLING PROCESS

As prescribed by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Operations Policy OP-02-03, Complaint Investigation and Resolution Policy and Guidelines, customer service complaints are submitted to the Office of Internal Affairs for review, tracking and determination of proper follow-up action. Information on the complaint-handling process, as well as instructions on how to file a complaint can be found at tpwd.texas.gov/business/feedback/complaints/file_a_complaint.phtml. This information is also available on the TPWD website's Office of Internal Affairs page.

Correspondence containing non-formal complaints received at the department through the Executive Office are logged into the Department Mail Tracking System and assigned to the appropriate division director for a timely response that appropriately addresses the concerns raised.

Correspondence containing non-formal complaints received at the department through individual divisions are logged into division tracking systems and assigned to the appropriate division personnel for a timely response that appropriately addresses the concerns raised.

COMPACT WITH TEXANS

A Customer Compact is an agreement made with the customers of an institution to provide services that follow a predetermined set of guiding principles. Simply stated, it defines the standards that customers should expect. The following compact is provided to the many diverse customers of the department.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department provides outdoor recreational opportunities; manages state parks, historic sites, state natural areas, wildlife management areas and fish hatcheries; and protects fish, wildlife, historical and cultural resources for present and future generations.

Over the years it has inherited the functions of other state entities created to protect Texas' natural and cultural resources. More information about the history of TPWD can be found at tpwd.texas.gov/about/history.

TPWD has 13 internal divisions: Executive Office, Wildlife, Coastal Fisheries, Inland Fisheries, Law Enforcement, State Parks, Infrastructure, Information Technology, Communications, Financial Resources, Legal, Support Resources and Human Resources. Intergovernmental Affairs and Internal Audit are housed within the Executive Office. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department headquarters is located at 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas, 78744. State parks, historic sites, state natural areas, wildlife management areas, fish hatcheries, and field offices are located across the state.

TPWD is largely user funded. As a result, the department works diligently to listen to its current customers, anticipate future customers' needs and adjust TPWD programs and services to deliver the greatest benefit to Texans, while protecting natural and cultural resources for future generations.

Our Customer Service Philosophy is:

We affirm that excellent customer service is essential to our mission of managing and conserving natural and cultural resources and providing hunting, fishing and outdoor recreational opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Our goal is to provide highly responsive service to our customers. We will achieve exemplary customer service through:

- Listening to our internal and external customers to better understand them and provide opportunities for them to submit comments
- Courtesy
- Personal responsibility
- Professionalism
- Problem-solving
- Respect
- Being open, friendly, flexible and caring
- Being responsive, and
- Working to resolve conflicts with different user groups.

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT'S SERVICE STANDARDS

In serving our customers, TPWD employees will strive to do the following:

1. Answer correspondence (including faxes and e-mails) quickly and clearly.
2. See people as promptly as possible in all of our offices.
3. Provide current information about services on the Internet and at field offices across the state. TPWD's home page is tpwd.texas.gov. Frequently asked questions can be found at tpwd.texas.gov/faq/.
4. Answer telephone calls quickly and helpfully. Our toll-free number is (800) 792-1112. More information on specific TPWD contacts can be found at tpwd.texas.gov/about/.
5. Respond to inquiries typically within 10 working days of receipt.
6. Do everything within reason to make services available to everyone, including those with disabilities.
7. Provide information about TPWD sites and programs to Texans statewide.

The Director of Communications serves as the agency's customer service representative.

FY 2025-2026 CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT

TPWD provides products and services to a wide range of external customer groups and individual customers. A solid customer service orientation and ongoing efforts to solicit feedback regarding preferences and satisfaction are vital to our ability to effectively meet the needs of these customers. Recent/ongoing examples of these survey/customer assessment efforts include:

- Annual public scoping meetings – conducted to obtain customer feedback regarding management direction on specific issues of interest
- Meetings with advisory committees and boards – to help guide programmatic decisions and development of proposed regulations and other recommendations
- Annual angler creel surveys – conducted on water bodies throughout the state to determine angler impact on aquatic resources and overall angler satisfaction with management efforts
- Statewide angler surveys – conducted every four years to determine general attitudes and opinions regarding statewide management efforts, angler preferences, and specific resource management issues
- Department website – TPWD routinely solicits and responds to public comment and inquiries through the agency website
- TPWD online customer satisfaction survey (discussed below)

TPWD ONLINE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Executive Summary

The TPWD online customer satisfaction survey was available from January–February 2026. A total of 1,855 customers responded to the survey. These customers were asked questions to ascertain which parts of the agency they have interfaced with, and asked follow-up questions that are relevant to them as detailed in the table below.

Sampling method:

During the collection period, the agency invited 12,126 customers to participate across two channels: TPWD website intercepts (10,826 sessions) and randomly sampled cohorts of license customers and State Parks Pass holders (1,300 sessions). Between the two, the completion rate was 16.5%, resulting in 1,855 responses that are analyzed below.

Question structure:

Respondents evaluated their experiences using a 5-point scale (ranging from 1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied). The survey utilized Likert matrices to capture feedback on specific metrics, such as facility cleanliness, signage, and timely service across both physical locations and digital platforms.

Behavioral segmentation:

In a departure from a previous focus on demographic tracking (e.g., age and income), this survey segmented feedback based on how customers interact with the agency. In addition to questions that were required for completion related to facilities, staff, communications, complaints, timeliness, printed materials, and overall agency satisfaction, the survey asked for site-specific feedback (State Historic Sites, TPWD Headquarters, Law Enforcement Offices, State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas) where applicable, as well as asking specific questions about TPWD applications (Texas Hunt & Fish, Texas Outdoor Annual, ShareLunker, Texas State Parks Official Guide, Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine application, Gov QA). This approach seeks to understand how specific constituent activities relate to satisfaction, since this type of feedback is essential towards making any needed improvements.

Overall satisfaction:

Baseline customer satisfaction remains high at an agency level. Among the 1,855 valid responses, 87.7% reported being either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the agency overall, while only 2.3% reported being “Very Dissatisfied.”

TPWD ONLINE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

An online customer satisfaction survey of key TPWD constituents was conducted in the spring of 2026, drawn from a sample of license holders, state park visitors, magazine subscribers, educational course participants, and boat owners. The survey measured the following customer service quality elements:

- Overall satisfaction with TPWD;
- Satisfaction with TPWD facilities;
- Satisfaction with TPWD staff;
- Satisfaction with TPWD communications;
- Satisfaction with the TPWD website;
- Satisfaction with TPWD complaint-handling processes;
- Satisfaction with TPWD service timeliness;
- Satisfaction with TPWD printed information;
- Satisfaction with hours of operation of TPWD business offices;
- Satisfaction with TPWD text messaging and mobile applications;
- Satisfaction with mobile phone website access.

Components and Features

TIMEFRAME

The survey was accessible from Tuesday, January 20 to Friday, February 27, 2026.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY EVOLUTION

Updated Sampling Methodology

In the 2024 Natural Agenda, the agency transitioned away from convenience sampling (customers could choose to opt-in to a survey via a webpage pop-up) towards a randomized sample drawn exclusively from the LURES (License Utilization and Revenue Enhancement System) customer database. While this verified that those taking the survey were current customers, relying solely on active customers may not have captured the full scope of customer sentiment. Potentially, people who engaged with TPWD but who were dissatisfied might choose to no longer engage.

To generate a more accurate representation of the public's satisfaction, the 2026 survey uses a dual approach. The randomized LURES and State Parks cohorts were retained, but a primary website intercept was re-introduced to capture a broader audience. This approach captures both known customers as well as broader website traffic that can capture the voices of prospective users, casual browsers, and individuals who may have experienced a broader range of experiences or engagement levels than LURES/State Park sourced customers.

To streamline the completion process, the 2026 survey relied heavily on conditional display logic. Respondents were only given questions directly related to their specific visitation/usage. For example, a respondent was only asked about staff interactions at WMAs or app usability if they previously confirmed visiting those locations/using those tools. This targeted approach significantly reduced survey length for individual respondents and minimized "N/A" responses and the resulting messiness of interpreting the overall numbers.

Similarly, the number of demographic questions asked in the 2026 survey was shortened to encourage more people to finish it. Age and income questions were dropped, while other demographic questions were retained, allowing the agency to track customer experience across constituent groups.

LIMITATIONS

While the findings in this report highlight important trends for the agency, the data have structural limitations due to current funding and software constraints. This survey should be viewed as a pulse-check of TPWD's most engaged constituents rather than a holistically representative study.

To ensure these findings are used correctly, the reader should keep the following limitations in mind:

- **The Limits of the Sample (Self-Selection Bias):** While license and state park cohorts were randomized, the website intercept was completely open. Given that the demographic makeup and relationship with TPWD of everyday website visitors is unknown overall, it's impossible to tell what factors went into an individual's decision to participate in the survey or to ignore it and how this may have affected the data. As a result, we cannot extrapolate the findings across the entire TPWD customer base.
- **Non-Response Bias and Affinity Skew:** Because there was no particular incentive associated with completing the survey, the results are subject to Non-Response Bias. Constituents were therefore less likely to volunteer their time unless they had strong feelings about the agency that they wanted to communicate. This dynamic could increase either heavily positive or heavily negative feedback while underrepresenting results that are less polarized. While the results are largely positive, there may be a number of customers who did not feel strongly enough to participate.
- **Tooling Constraints (Recall Bias):** The way the survey was designed, respondents are responsible for affirming which activities they participated in. Activities that they did not remember or questions that they may have misinterpreted may create their own biases in the results.

Results Breakdown

Outcome Measure

PERCENTAGE OF SURVEYED CUSTOMERS EXPRESSING OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES RECEIVED

The percentage of surveyed customers expressing overall satisfaction with TPWD continues to be very high. 87.7% of customers reported themselves as being either "very satisfied" or "satisfied," with only 3.5% selecting "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied"; the remaining 8.7% selected "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied."

Output Measure

NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SURVEYED

A total of 1,855 customers responded to the survey. The goal was to gather at least 1,000 responses.

NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SERVED

TPWD serves the entire population of the state of Texas by managing and conserving the natural and cultural resources of Texas and offering outdoor recreation opportunities to its residents.

Efficiency Measure

COST PER CUSTOMER SURVEYED

There were no out-of-pocket costs for conducting this survey. All costs were for staff time in designing the survey instrument, defining the methodology, and analyzing and reporting the results. Staff time costs are estimated at \$1,600 (40 hours). This results in a cost of \$0.86 per completed survey.

Explanatory Measures**NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS IDENTIFIED**

The survey was accessed by 12,126 customers across the two channels: TPWD website intercepts (10,826 sessions) and randomly sampled cohorts of license customers and State Parks Pass holders (1,300 sessions). The blended completion rate was 16.5%, resulting in 1,855 valid responses for analysis.

NUMBER OF CUSTOMER GROUPS INVENTORIED

The responses reflect customers across the following cohorts (which are not mutually exclusive):

- License Holders
- State Parks and Historic Site Visitors
- TPWD Magazine Subscribers
- Mobile Application and Website Users
- Customers Engaged with TPWD Social Media

	Number	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Facilities	6506	2.6%	2.0%	10.9%	35.0%	49.4%
Relative to your expectations, please rate your level of satisfaction with the cleanliness of the _____ facilities you visited:						
Overall average	2288	2.8%	1.6%	4.9%	28.0%	62.6%
State Historic Sites	496	1.2%	1.2%	3.4%	29.4%	64.7%
TPWD Headquarters	29	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	17.2%	72.4%
Law Enforcement Offices	100	5.0%	0.0%	7.0%	28.0%	60.0%
State Parks	1328	2.5%	1.4%	3.4%	28.3%	64.4%
WMA	335	1.8%	2.1%	7.5%	37.0%	51.6%
Relative to your expectations, please rate your level of satisfaction with the signage (physical maps/visual aids used to reach your destination) of the _____ facilities you visited:						
Overall average	1959	2.8%	1.8%	12.6%	39.9%	42.9%
State Historic Site	492	1.0%	2.2%	7.3%	38.8%	50.6%
TPWD Headquarters	26	3.8%	3.8%	26.9%	30.8%	34.6%
Law Enforcement Office	98	3.1%	1.0%	13.3%	44.9%	37.8%
State Parks	1320	1.7%	1.8%	6.6%	37.3%	52.6%
WMA	23	4.3%	0.0%	8.7%	47.8%	39.1%

	Number	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Relative to your expectations, please rate your level of satisfaction with the hours and operations (opening/closing times, availability of staff and services) of the _____ facilities you visited:						
Overall average	2259	2.3%	2.6%	15.2%	37.2%	42.7%
State Historic Site	488	0.4%	2.9%	9.0%	40.4%	47.3%
TPWD Headquarters	24	4.2%	0.0%	29.2%	29.2%	37.5%
Law Enforcement Office	98	4.1%	3.1%	13.3%	41.8%	37.8%
State Parks	1317	1.4%	3.7%	9.5%	36.4%	49.0%
WMA	332	1.5%	3.3%	15.1%	38.3%	41.9%
Staff	2226	8.4%	0.9%	3.3%	19.4%	68.0%
Based on your most recent visit to a _____ facility, please rate your satisfaction with TPWD staff courtesy and friendliness:						
State Historic Site	171	5.8%	0.6%	1.2%	15.8%	76.6%
TPWD Headquarters	15	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	26.7%	66.7%
Law Enforcement Office	69	13.0%	1.4%	4.3%	24.6%	56.5%
State Park	790	8.7%	1.3%	2.3%	14.1%	73.7%
WMA	78	7.7%	0.0%	6.4%	19.2%	66.7%
Based on your most recent visit to a _____ facility, please rate your satisfaction with the knowledgeability of TPWD staff:						
State Historic Site	170	5.9%	0.6%	1.8%	17.6%	74.1%
Law Enforcement Office	15	6.7%	0.0%	6.7%	20.0%	66.7%
TPWD Headquarters	66	13.6%	3.0%	3.0%	22.7%	57.6%
State Park	775	7.9%	1.0%	3.7%	16.5%	70.8%
WMA	77	7.8%	1.3%	3.9%	16.9%	70.1%
Communications	1980	2.4%	3.4%	12.7%	31.5%	50.1%
Please rate your satisfaction with the call transfer process, if applicable of your most recent phone call with TPWD support:	153	3.9%	2.0%	13.1%	32.7%	48.4%
Please rate your satisfaction with the hold time of your most recent phone call with TPWD support:	226	3.5%	4.4%	10.6%	28.8%	52.7%
Please rate your satisfaction with the ease of reaching a life representative of your most recent phone call with TPWD support:	241	6.2%	5.8%	7.5%	25.7%	54.8%
Please rate your satisfaction with the representative's knowledge of your most recent phone call with TPWD support:	234	3.4%	2.6%	6.8%	21.4%	65.8%
How satisfied are you with emails from TPWD?	256	1.9%	4.4%	17.1%	33.1%	43.5%
How satisfied are you with mail from TPWD?	77	1.3%	3.8%	16.2%	32.5%	46.2%

	Number	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
How satisfied are you with TPWD social media posts (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)?	289	1.3%	3.6%	14.2%	37.4%	43.5%
How satisfied are you with text messages from TPWD?	95	1.3%	1.8%	12.5%	36.1%	48.3%
How satisfied are you with the TPW Magazine?	361	0.6%	3.2%	13.5%	34.9%	47.8%
How satisfied are you with the TPWD PBS show?	48	0.5%	2.3%	15.3%	32.4%	49.5%
Website	5322	3.8%	3.9%	11.4%	39.8%	41.1%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the TPWD website in terms of how easy it is to navigate:	1124	3.4%	5.0%	10.8%	42.3%	38.6%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the TPWD website in terms of how useful the information is:	1117	4.0%	2.6%	7.1%	40.0%	46.3%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the TPWD website in terms of how mobile friendly it is:	1029	4.5%	6.1%	12.1%	37.6%	39.7%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the TPWD website in terms of how easy it is to find services and programs:	1089	3.7%	4.0%	12.7%	41.8%	37.8%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the TPWD website in terms of how easy it is to find office locations:	963	3.4%	1.7%	14.2%	37.5%	43.2%
Complaints	48	22.9%	16.6%	16.7%	25.0%	18.8%
Please rate your satisfaction with the TPWD complaint process in terms of ease of filing a complaint:	16	18.8%	12.5%	18.8%	25.0%	25.0%
Please rate your satisfaction with the TPWD complaint process in terms of the ability of TPWD to resolve your complaint:	16	25.0%	31.2%	12.5%	12.5%	18.8%
Please rate your satisfaction with the TPWD complaint process in terms of response timeliness:	16	25.0%	6.2%	18.8%	37.5%	12.5%
Timeliness	1076	8.2%	0.6%	4.2%	19.7%	67.4%
Based on your most recent visit to a _____ facility, please rate your satisfaction with the TPWD staff timeliness of service:						
State Historic Site	163	5.5%	0.6%	1.8%	18.4%	73.6%
TPWD Headquarters	15	6.7%	0.0%	6.7%	20.0%	66.7%
Law Enforcement Office	64	14.1%	0.0%	1.6%	23.4%	60.9%
State Park	759	7.8%	0.9%	4.2%	16.5%	70.6%
WMA	75	6.7%	1.3%	6.7%	20.0%	65.3%
Printed Materials	619	1.2%	1.4%	13.0%	37.4%	47.1%
How satisfied are you with the access to TPWD printed materials?	219	1.5%	1.3%	13.5%	39.6%	44.1%
How satisfied are you with the accuracy of TPWD printed materials?	197	1.1%	1.5%	11.9%	37.4%	48.1%
How satisfied are you with the usefulness of TPWD printed materials?	203	0.9%	1.3%	13.6%	35.1%	49.1%

	Number	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall Agency Satisfaction	1855	2.3%	1.2%	8.7%	36.2%	51.5%
Mobile Applications	1792	1.4%	2.1%	6.7%	40.3%	49.5%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the Texas Hunt & Fish mobile application:	609	1.6%	2.0%	7.9%	41.5%	47.0%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the Texas Outdoor Annual mobile application:	568	1.6%	1.4%	4.9%	41.2%	50.9%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the ShareLunker mobile application:	48	0.0%	2.1%	4.2%	45.8%	47.9%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the Texas State Parks Official Guide mobile application:	442	2.0%	3.2%	10.2%	40.3%	44.3%
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine mobile application:	125	1.6%	1.6%	6.4%	32.8%	57.6%
Gov QA	239	10.9%	6.6%	10.5%	22.5%	49.4%
Please rate your satisfaction with your experience using Gov QA in terms of the variety of category options:	50	10.0%	6.0%	12.0%	26.0%	46.0%
Please rate your satisfaction with your experience using Gov QA in terms of ease of navigating the page:	51	7.8%	9.8%	7.8%	23.5%	51.0%
Please rate your satisfaction with your experience using Gov QA in terms of quality of the response:	46	13.0%	4.3%	10.9%	19.6%	52.2%
Please rate your satisfaction with your experience using Gov QA in terms of response speed:	47	12.8%	6.4%	10.6%	21.3%	48.9%
Please rate your satisfaction with your experience using Gov QA in terms of tracking question status:	45	11.1%	6.7%	11.1%	22.2%	48.9%

Survey Result Measures

RESPONSE RATE

A total of 12,126 customers received the survey and of those, 1,855 responded. The response rate for the entire group is 16.5%, which is relatively high compared to the response rate seen in previous surveys.

RESULT BREAKDOWN AND ANALYSIS

Customer Source Consistency

Public perception remains consistently high across constituent groups. Overall satisfaction scores (ratings of 4 or 5) show marginal variance between the customer cohorts:

- License Database (90.6% positive)
- State Parks Pass Holders (87.7% positive)
- Website Visitors (87.0% positive)

The results show the customer experience remains stable across types of users.

Physical Facility Engagement Levels

The survey measured visitation across five facility types: State Parks, State Historic Sites, Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), Law Enforcement Offices, and TPWD Headquarters. The data indicate a strong relationship between physical facility visitation and elevated satisfaction scores.

- Digital-Only (0 Visits): 79.5% overall satisfaction, with a 3.8% Very Dissatisfied rate.
- Casual Visitors (1 Facility): 91.3% overall satisfaction, with a 2.0% Very Dissatisfied rate.
- Highly Engaged (2+ Facilities): 91.9% overall satisfaction, with a 0.9% Very Dissatisfied rate.

State Parks function as the primary physical anchor and gateway for the agency. The cross-visitation data reveal that a constituent rarely visits secondary locations (such as Historic Sites or WMAs) without also identifying as an active State Park visitor. Interestingly, a user who has reported experience with the State Parks App correlates more strongly with overall positive agency perception than those who have reported physical staff interactions at State Parks. While further research is necessary to understand these results, this suggests that the quality of the digital ecosystem is highly impactful on positive agency perception.

The Digital Ecosystem

Analysis of mobile application usage demonstrates an interconnected digital environment rather than a fragmented audience. As an example, the high cross-visitation rate (54%) between the Outdoor Annual and Hunt & Fish applications suggests that constituents view them as a unified ecosystem. Additionally, the highly rated TPW Magazine app possesses the smallest audience reach, but it acts as a hub for highly engaged users, with 56% of its active users also using the State Parks Guide app.

The Intersection of Physical and Digital Engagement

While physical visitation and digital adoption independently drive satisfaction, cross-tabulating these behaviors reveals a compounding effect. The data indicates that high digital adoption can effectively bridge the satisfaction gap for constituents who do not visit physical facilities. As shown in the matrix below, digital-only constituents who utilize 2+ mobile applications report a 92.2% satisfaction rate, mirroring the satisfaction levels of the most highly engaged physical facility visitors.

	0 Apps Used	1 App Used	2+ Apps Used
0 Facilities Visited	72.2% (N=299)	82.9% (N=210)	92.2% (N=115)
1 Facility Visited	90.1% (N=333)	93.0% (N=230)	94.3% (N=140)
2+ Facilities Visited	90.9% (N=165)	94.0% (N=166)	90.9% (N=197)

Law Enforcement Sensitivity

Law Enforcement interactions are the most sensitive touchpoint in terms of in-person interactions, revealing a strong correlation between timely service and overall satisfaction. However, due to the limited sample size of respondents who reported interactions with Law Enforcement (62), this remains an indicator of public sensitivity in high-touch environments rather than a widely demonstrated result.

Recommendations for 2028

Creating an even more statistically robust report will require a dedicated budget to incentivize respondents, upgraded survey software, and verifiable random sampling.

FY2028 Estimated Performance

The TPWD Online Customer Satisfaction Survey is conducted approximately every two years and reported in the Customer Service Report. The updated methodology that was used in this version of the survey will be used going forward. The next iteration of the survey will be implemented in the second half of 2027.

Output Measure

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SURVEYED (SURVEYS COMPLETED)

The goal will be to collect 1000 responses so that the demographic cohort groups are large enough to analyze.

Efficiency Measure

ESTIMATED SURVEY COSTS

There will be no out-of-pocket costs for conducting this survey. All costs involve only staff time in designing the survey instrument, defining the methodology, as well as analyzing and reporting the results. Staff time costs are estimated at \$1,600 (40 hours).

Explanatory Measures

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS IDENTIFIED

The total number of customers identified will be based on the number of completed surveys.

NUMBER OF CUSTOMER GROUPS TO BE INVENTORIED

The same groups surveyed for this version (hunting, fishing, and combination license holders, magazine subscribers, boat registrants, state park visitors, and educational course participants) will be included in the 2027 iteration. If there are additional groups that can be added in to improve the veracity of the sample, they will be included.

SCHEDULE I

Certification of Compliance with Cybersecurity Training



APPENDIX 10. CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH CYBERSECURITY TRAINING



CERTIFICATE

Agency Name

Pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 2056.002(b)(12), this is to certify that the agency has complied with the cybersecurity training required pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Sections 2063.103 and 2063.104.

Chief Executive Officer or Presiding Judge

David Yaskowitz

Signature

David Yaskowitz, Ph.D.

Printed Name

Executive Director

Title

May 28, 2026

Date

Board or Commission Chair

Paul L. Foster

Signature

Paul L. Foster

Printed Name

Chairman

Title

May 28, 2026

Date

SCHEDULE J

Certification of Compliance with Artificial Intelligence Training



APPENDIX 11: CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TRAINING



CERTIFICATE

Agency Name

Pursuant to Government Code, Section 2056.002(b)(12), this is to certify that the agency has complied with the artificial intelligence training required pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Sections 2063.103 and 2063.104.

Chief Executive Officer or Presiding Judge

David Yoskowitz
Signature

David Yoskowitz, Ph.D.
Printed Name

Executive Director
Title

May 28, 2026
Date

Board or Commission Chair

Paul L. Foster
Signature

Paul L. Foster
Printed Name

Chairman
Title

May 28, 2026
Date

SCHEDULE K

Report on Projects and Acquisitions Funded by Certain Fund Sources



REPORT ON ACQUISITIONS FUNDED FROM
THE CENTENNIAL PARKS CONSERVATION FUND

Centennial Acquisition Report		
June 1, 2024 to June 1, 2026		
Property Name	Amount Spent	Date of Acquisition
Silver Lake Ranch	\$5,925,000	5/22/26



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