

A Strategic Plan for
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Natural Agenda



FISCAL YEARS 2025-2029



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AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

For Fiscal Years 2025-2029

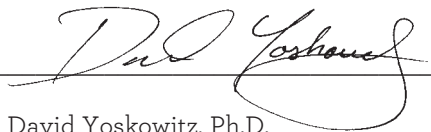
by the

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Jeffery D. Hildebrand, Chairman	August 6, 2019 – February 1, 2025	Houston
Oliver J. Bell, Vice-Chairman	November 15, 2018 – February 1, 2029	Cleveland
James E. Abell	August 6, 2019 – February 1, 2025	Kilgore
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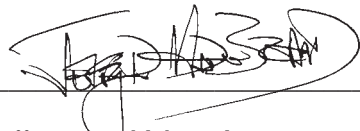
Submitted August 2024

Signed:



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Approved:



Jeffery D. Hildebrand
Chairman
Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission

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TPWD STRATEGIC PLAN



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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 2025 and the end of the fiscal year provided unless otherwise 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 12,000 surveys annually to assess population trends of recreationally and commercially important species and their habitats.
- » Perform 1,500 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 10 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 41 million fish fingerlings annually in Texas public waters.
- » Support 30 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.
- » Contribute to the 2027 State Water Plan and associated regional water plans by providing technical input on instream flow, water level, freshwater inflow, and water quality needs of fish and wildlife resources.
- » 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.
- » Develop a State Park Land Acquisition Strategy by 2025 that prioritizes land acquisition decisions based on biological value and recreational need.
- » 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.
- » Enhance the scope and functionality of the Land Management Assistance system to allow the tracking and reporting of TPWD's cost-share programs (including the number of participating properties and acreage restored or improved) by 2025.
- » 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 2028 through repatriation, habitat restoration, and other conservation actions.
- » Perform a statewide assessment and prioritization of Conservation Opportunity Areas by 2026 to identify and focus conservation efforts on landscapes important to Species of Greatest Conservation Need.
- » 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 by 2028 of laws, regulations, and enforcement strategies needed to conserve fish and wildlife habitats on public lands, public freshwaters including state-owned streambeds, and Texas tidal waters including state-owned submerged lands.
- » Perform a comprehensive gap analysis by 2028 of laws, regulations, and enforcement strategies needed to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants.
- » 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.
- » Assemble a Cultural Resource Inventory Strategy for Texas State Parks by 2025 that prioritizes locations for which to conduct inventories and publish cultural resource reports.

- » 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 by 2028.
- » Provide fishing opportunities and related outreach to 30,000 visitors annually at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center.
- » Construct 33 miles of trails on state park sites by 2029.
- » Provide outdoor programs at TPWD sites reaching 226,000 youth annually.
- » Add 41,000 acres to the state park system by 2029.
- » 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 three state park sites currently owned by the state park system by 2029.
- » Increase the amount of state park acreage within a 60-mile radius of the Texas Triangle by three percent by 2029.
- » Update the Texas R3 Strategic Plan by 2026 to recruit, retain, and reactivate anglers, boaters, hunters, and target shooters.
- » 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 2%.
- » Increase hunting participation annually by 1%.
- » Expand email subscriber lists for nature tourism programs annually by 10% through effective management, promotion, and targeted communication efforts.
- » Maintain the 79 existing Texas Paddling Trails for access to paddling, fishing, and wildlife viewing on rivers, lakes, bays, and coastal areas through 2028.
- » Increase Texas Paddling Trails by 150 miles by 2028.
- » Ensure 100 new miles of paddling trails are located within 60 miles of urban centers.
- » Engage Texas Master Naturalist volunteers in annual site visits to help promote and update information for at least 33% of all Great Texas Wildlife Trails sites by 2028.
- » Update the Great Texas Wildlife Trails website twice annually to ensure updated information on nature tourism destinations is provided to the public online.
- » Increase the registered number of Great Texas Birding Classic teams to 240 by 2028.

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 Hunting for Conservation workshop annually to grow advocates for hunting and wildlife conservation.
- » Conduct a Fishing for Conservation workshop annually to grow advocates for fishing and aquatic resources conservation.
- » Support 18 high-use urban fishing sites annually through the Neighborhood Fishin' Program.
- » Complete 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 department-wide implementation of the first phase of data identification and protection by 2025.
- » Complete 90% of identified technology upgrades to build on opportunities for expanding connectivity and digital services by 2027.
- » Implement a succession planning program by 2026 that includes an analysis to identify critical positions and strategies to address recruitment, retention, and ongoing staff development.
- » Implement a department-wide survey of former department interns currently holding FTE positions by 2025.
- » Remediate five IT legacy applications by 2027.
- » Maintain department cybersecurity maturity levels above level three through 2027, in accordance with Texas Cybersecurity Framework standards.
- » Expand digital tag program to include all applicable license types by license year 2026.
- » Full expansion to chip enabled devices including at Law Enforcement Offices in 2026.

OPERATIONAL GOALS AND ACTION PLANS



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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 our 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 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 spotted seatrout regulations, recreational use of crab traps, oyster mariculture, flounder regulations, and regulations related to hunting, freshwater, and saltwater fisheries.

- TPWD has recently begun providing 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 to efficiently supporting its programs. The agency continues to provide new services in mobile and web-based applications. Examples include new permits in the Agency Permitting System, additional functionalities for digital tags and harvesting in Texas Hunt and Fish application, rewriting Boat Titling and Registration System, adopting technologies like Low Code development to quickly develop applications, and research in using Robotic Process Automation technology. 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 reaching a wider 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 through the use of various performance measures. TPWD is currently in the process of establishing 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 new 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 a number of 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:**Challenges for Wildlife, Fisheries, Enforcement and Related Activities**

TPWD's ability to carry out responsibilities and activities under this goal is challenged by a number of 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, described in greater detail in Goal 4 of this plan, 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 above concerns are previously identified 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 in light of recent evaluations of Game, Fish and Water Safety Account 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.

Freshwater Fish Habitat and Angler Access Program

Fish populations and quality angling opportunities depend upon healthy aquatic habitats and the public's access to them. Texas fisheries face a litany of habitat-related challenges including sedimentation, loss of vegetation and coarse woody structure, water regime changes, nutrient loading, and invasive species. TPWD Inland Fisheries (IF) staff cooperate with local partners to design and implement aquatic habitat restoration, enhancement, and protection projects.

In 2022, with expansion of the allowable uses of the Freshwater Fish Stamp, the IF Division launched the Habitat and Angler Access Program (HAAP), a grant program designed to restore and enhance freshwater fish habitats and improve and expand bank and shoreline-based angler access on public creeks, rivers, ponds, and lakes throughout the state. During the 2022-2023 grant cycle, 19 projects were supported, the majority of which included a habitat improvement component. Completed projects include installation of aeration systems, fishing piers, floating docks, fishing pads, kayak launches, ADA-compliant fishing access ramps, boardwalks, trails, and parking areas, as well as dredging, bank stabilization, revegetation, and placement of structural fish habitats. The IF Division also acquired a 30-foot-long habitat barge in 2022 that will be used to deploy structural habitat improvements in public lakes that the public can access. The IF Division also continued to guide revenues available through sale of the largemouth bass and Texas rivers-themed conservation license plates to support aquatic habitat improvements in public waterways.

As the HAAP has been successful in partnering with eligible groups (local municipalities, water authorities, educational institutions, conservation organizations, etc.) to support individual fish habitat improvement and angler access projects in a timely and cost-effective manner, TPWD hopes to seek additional Freshwater Fish Stamp funding and staffing resources to allow this program to expand its impact in the future.

Aquatic Invasive Species Management

Fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants that are not native to Texas may outcompete native animals and plants for food and space. In their new environment, they can multiply and spread at an alarming rate, impeding boater access for recreation, causing extensive damage to water and power supply infrastructure, affecting water quality, and causing a range of other problems.

Zebra and quagga mussels continue to pose threats to lake ecosystems and man-made infrastructure. The Inland Fisheries Division and its partners continue to intensively monitor water bodies for early detection of zebra mussel infestations, using a combination of shoreline surveys, settlement samplers, plankton sampling, and DNA analysis. As of spring 2024, 31 Texas lakes across six river basins were classified as infested, meaning that these lakes were determined to have an established and reproducing zebra mussel population. Zebra mussels or their larvae have also been found in five other lakes and in rivers downstream of infested waters.

TPWD has also been involved in a collaborative effort with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to oversee an invasive bighead carp population assessment in the Lower Red River Basin. The study started in 2023 and found invasive bighead and silver carp in all Texas tributaries of the Red River with the exception of the Sulphur River.

Containment of aquatic invasive vegetation is a significant endeavor. Prevention is the first line of defense against aquatic invasive vegetation. If reported early enough, TPWD can implement its rapid response protocols to prevent the further spread of aquatic invasive vegetation within a water body and substantially increase the chances of eradication. TPWD targets public awareness campaigns (e.g., Protect the Lakes You Love) to educate anglers and boaters about the dangers of aquatic invasive vegetation, including advertising, online videos and social media posts, boat ramp signs and stencils, and traditional media outlets, encouraging boaters to clean, drain, and dry their boats.

Additionally, as part of the integrated pest management (IPM) plan, the agency uses biological control agents (such as insects and triploid grass carp), mechanical treatments (such as floating booms and manual removal), and herbicides to manage numerous species of aquatic invasive vegetation such as giant salvinia, water hyacinth and hydrilla.

TPWD will continue to use its IPM plan to monitor and manage a number of aquatic invasive species across the state. However, costs for these treatments, as well for outreach efforts, have steadily increased and are expected to continue to grow. This, coupled with the expanded number of water bodies in need of management, is eroding TPWD's ability to deliver services and has stretched existing resources and campaign coverage thin. Additional resources would allow TPWD to better address these critical needs.

TPWD Science Council

TPWD is in the process of establishing a new cross-divisional Science Council to help better anticipate changes and emerging issues, as well as to ensure that decisions involving natural and cultural resources, conservation, and other areas continue to be data- and science-driven. The council seeks to bring together various types of expertise within the department; identify opportunities for collaboration and exchange of best practices, technologies, methodologies, and gaps; present and publish work at the national and international levels; secure and make greater use of existing data; and communicate results with internal and external audiences to help the public better understand the scope and impact of TPWD projects and research. A roadmap towards the establishment of the council will be developed in the summer of 2024.

Oyster Management/Conservation

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, which can contribute to eutrophication (depletion of oxygen) in estuaries. 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.

More boats are currently active in the fishery than the resource can support, causing the available harvest to be quickly exploited and 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.

Additionally, in January 2024, the TPW Commission formed an Oyster Advisory Committee that will be comprised of members of the public interested in oyster-related matters to assist in ensuring that regulation of oysters in Texas continues to reflect TPWD's strong commitment to the long-term health of oyster resources and the additional habitat and ecosystem services they provide. An evaluation of all oyster management issues is ongoing.

Recent legislation related to oyster management includes Senate Bill 1032 (88th Legislature), which allows for the expansion of the private rental lease (certificate of location) program in the oyster fishery. Leases are limited to Galveston Bay (43 current leases), but this bill allows the department to expand and create guidelines for the program to be used for restoration purposes for groups that want to help support oyster restoration.

Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal neurodegenerative disorder that is known to affect some cervid species, including white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, red deer, sika, and their hybrids. Although the scientific knowledge of CWD continues to evolve, it is known to be invariably fatal to deer. If CWD is not contained and controlled, the implications of the disease for Texas and its multibillion-dollar ranching, hunting, wildlife management, and real estate economies may be significant. To that end, the department has developed and implemented various regulations since CWD was first detected in Texas in 2012 and has worked collaboratively with the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) and stakeholders to address the threat by implementing a comprehensive management strategy focused on early detection and containment of the disease. The principal strategies of early detection currently involve statewide voluntary sampling of hunter harvest and road killed deer, the establishment of mandatory check stations to test all hunter harvest in areas where the disease is known or suspected to occur, and enhanced testing requirements for individuals permitted to move live deer. Where CWD is discovered or likely to occur, containment strategies involve the development of zones that can include restrictions on the movement of live and dead animals to prevent disease spread.

Over the past decade, the Wildlife Division has expended considerable manpower and financial resources to determine the extent of the disease on the landscape and to contain it where it is known to exist. Continued proactive surveillance of hunter-harvested, roadkill or clinical susceptible species is critical for early detection and containment of the disease. These surveillance and containment efforts are critical and must continue in order to manage CWD in Texas. Furthermore, enhanced testing and reporting requirements established for captive deer breeding facilities have been invaluable in detecting CWD and expediting epidemiological investigations of animal movements to and from CWD-positive facilities to contain the disease and protect both captive and free-ranging cervids. In support of these efforts, the Wildlife Division has made and plans to keep making appropriate staffing changes (e.g., the recent addition of new Regional Wildlife Health Specialist positions) to enhance monitoring and surveillance efforts, provide continued support for the Texas A&M Veterinary and Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) to accommodate testing needs, and to support ongoing and future research to enhance CWD management strategies using the best available science. Unfortunately, as new CWD positive cases continue to be detected across the state and the CWD management strategy continues to evolve, there is an increased strain on staff and funding resources. Since 2018, CWD-related expenditures have increased by 168% and staff time dedicated to CWD monitoring and management has

increased by 117%. State appropriations have not kept pace with increased budget requirements and the Wildlife Division has been required to use mostly federal funds to cover the ever-increasing need. However, federal funds available for this purpose are distributed through a cost-share program, and state appropriations for use as match are still a major limiting factor. No additional FTEs have been allocated specifically for the purpose of CWD monitoring and management since the detection of the disease in Texas. Staffing changes discussed above have been accomplished by re-purposing vacancies. Enhanced resources for efforts such as seasonal sampling and creation of a new Wildlife Health Program would allow TPWD to better address existing wildlife health issues like CWD and prepare for future wildlife health concerns as they emerge.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need

The State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) for Texas, formerly known as the Texas Conservation Action Plan (TCAP), defines and lists the Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in Texas, as well as the priority habitats, threats, conservation actions, and monitoring of those species. The TCAP was a 10-year plan that was approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in 2013 and expired in 2023. The Wildlife, Inland Fisheries, and Coastal Fisheries divisions have worked together to develop and submit a major revision of the SWAP to the USFWS. Approval of the 2023 plan was received in 2024. TPWD intends to revise the plan again with a target date in 2025 to better align with other state plans and the guidance issued by the USFWS associated with the timing of the revision cycle.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) [S.1149], if passed at the federal level, would provide a reliable but restricted source of revenue for wildlife research, habitat management and protection, land acquisition, education, law enforcement, and outdoor recreation focused on SGCN listed in the SWAP. This legislation would have a positive effect on the department's ability to fulfill its mission and its work with partners to protect important species and habitats by dedicating a significant amount of funding and helping to implement the statewide SWAP. Although RAWA was not passed in the 2023 federal congressional session, efforts on this front are continuing at the congressional level for 2024. TPWD plans to monitor progress on this bill carefully, and plans are in place for implementation if RAWA or similar federal legislation appears likely to pass. Additional state resources for match may need to be identified for TPWD to maximize use of these federal funds if enacted.

Water Rights

The Texas Water Trust was created by the Texas Legislature in 1997 to hold water rights dedicated solely to environmental needs, including instream flows, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and bay and estuary inflows. For many years, a water right could not be placed in the trust unless approved by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) after appropriate consultation with TPWD. Due to the original structure of responsibilities and other issues, the trust had difficulty meeting its statutory goals and very few water rights were ultimately secured. House Bill 2225 (87th Legislature) was aimed at addressing these concerns by directing TPWD to encourage and facilitate the dedication of water rights in the Texas Water Trust through lease, donation, purchase, or other means of voluntary transfer for environmental needs, including for the purpose of maintaining or improving instream flows, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and bay and estuary inflows.

As TPWD's regulatory role in water right proceedings has diminished, proactive voluntary approaches like that of HB 2225 have been considered critical options for maintaining and restoring environmental flows. As a growing number of aquatic species are in decline due to alteration of natural flow regimes, there is considerable need to restore and protect environmental flows and habitat where such species coincide with streams that are fully allocated or over-allocated and where environmental flow standards are not present or not protective.

Programmatic implementation of HB 2225 is multifaceted, including but not limited to the identification of priority conservation areas, determination of flow protection and restoration needs and strategies, engaging water right holders, public outreach, contracting, permit amendments, and compliance monitoring. TPWD's Water Resource Program (WRP) has taken initial steps in facilitating dedications to the trust, but issues like lack of state funding sources for acquisition, suspension, or lease of water rights significantly limit the ability to plan and strategize for transactions or to respond to unique opportunities or detrimental environmental conditions. Funds from philanthropic and federal entities are the only potential sources to procure environmental water transactions. The WRP has partnered with stakeholders and secured federal funds through a State Wildlife Grant for term leases of water rights to restore flows as a demonstration project.

TPWD is also engaged in other efforts aimed at improving preservation of water rights for environmental purposes. For example, the agency has developed a geospatial decision support tool called the Environmental Flows Information Toolkit (EFIT). The goals of EFIT are to aid in identifying environmental flow needs and deficits; prioritize areas for developing voluntary flow protection and restoration strategies; and to facilitate dedications of water to environmental flow needs by supporting conservation non-profits and others in strategically identifying environmental flow protection and restoration strategies. In the longer term, a water rights assistance and technical guidance program, similar to the Wildlife Division's landowner assistance programs, could engage water right owners directly to facilitate dedications to the trust and to use other mechanisms available for instream flow protection and restoration. To this end, TPWD partnered with stakeholders, such as the Texas Living Waters, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and the TWDB, to host a workshop to promote and educate water managers, conservation professionals, and water rights owners on the Texas Water Trust, and TPWD's responsibility in working with water right owners to assist in voluntary dedications to the trust. Additionally, TPWD holds several water rights and is evaluating these rights for potential dedications to the Texas Water Trust.

TPWD has also undertaken efforts to facilitate and encourage dedications to the trust by collaborating with the Brazos River Authority on instream flow studies in the Brazos Basin to identify stream reaches for flow restoration/protection and amounts of water for dedication.

Prescribed Fires

Fire is essential to managing the majority of the department's 1.4 million acres, including numerous wildlife management areas and state parks across the state. Restoring and maintaining all department lands in desirable condition through the utilization of prescribed burning is the most cost-effective and ecologically beneficial long-term fire management strategy. It reduces wildfire risk by reducing decades of accumulated hazardous fuels to maximize long-term protection to surrounding communities, minimizes the costs of fire suppression and emergency rehabilitation of lands damaged by catastrophic wildfire, and maximizes available resources for fire suppression on other federal, tribal, state, and private lands. A recent example of a prescribed fire providing community wildfire protection is the October 2023 prescribed fire that protected the city of Borger from the 142,000-acre Windy Deuce Fire in February 2024. It is also a cost-effective habitat management tool that is critical in achieving habitat and wildlife management goals on both public and private lands across the state.

Enhanced Coastal Restoration Activities

Habitat loss is one of the major issues challenging coastal environments, and restoration is an integral strategy in conserving them. Currently, the activities to receive funding, manage, and implement large restoration projects on the coast are limited. Numerous funding opportunities are available to pursue additional restoration objectives, including funding from the RESTORE Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, but staff capacity limits the Coastal Fisheries Division's ability to apply for these additional opportunities and increase restoration activities. Additional staff would increase the division's capacity to acquire, manage, design, execute, and monitor restoration projects in coastal waters, including oyster restoration activities, living shorelines, breakwaters, marsh restoration, and artificial reefs.

Flounder Hatchery Production

The Coastal Fisheries Division is actively engaged in production of flounder to sustain and increase flounder populations in Texas waters. In order to meet constituent expectations, the division has increased flounder production within the marine stock enhancement program by adding and retrofitting existing hatchery facilities to allow for flounder production during the winter. This increased activity has led to a need for additional staffing levels. Staffing increases will allow maintained production of red drum and spotted seatrout, and support increases in flounder production, while continuing important maintenance on equipment and facilities. Further, this will allow the division to continue to cover emergencies and shifting production demands such as those experienced after Winter Storm Uri, where the division was able to quickly add to spotted seatrout production. Additional staff at Sea Center Texas and the Coastal Conservation Association Marine Development Center would streamline scheduling and allow for increased production.

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 by 2028.
- » Provide fishing opportunities and related outreach to 30,000 visitors annually at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center.
- » Construct 33 miles of trails on state park sites by 2029.
- » Provide outdoor programs at TPWD sites reaching 226,000 youth annually.
- » Add 41,000 acres to the state park system by 2029.
- » 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 three state park sites currently owned by the state park system by 2029.
- » Increase the amount of state park acreage within a 60-mile radius of the Texas Triangle by three percent by 2029.
- » Update the Texas R3 Strategic Plan by 2026 to recruit, retain, and reactivate anglers, boaters, hunters, and target shooters.
- » 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 2%.
- » Increase hunting participation annually by 1%.
- » Expand email subscriber lists for nature tourism programs annually by 10% through effective management, promotion, and targeted communication efforts.
- » Maintain the 79 existing Texas Paddling Trails for access to paddling, fishing, and wildlife viewing on rivers, lakes, bays, and coastal areas through 2028.
- » Increase Texas Paddling Trails by 150 miles by 2028.
- » Ensure 100 new miles of paddling trails are located within 60 miles of urban centers.
- » Engage Texas Master Naturalist volunteers in annual site visits to help promote and update information for at least 33% of all Great Texas Wildlife Trails sites by 2028.
- » Update the Great Texas Wildlife Trails website twice annually to ensure updated information on nature tourism destinations is provided to the public online.
- » Increase the registered number of Great Texas Birding Classic teams to 240 by 2028.

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 general 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 scoping meetings with the public regarding the

Land & Water Plan, accessibility, state park developments, and regulations related to hunting, mule deer, spotted seatrout, migratory game birds, ocelot recovery, and saltwater and freshwater fisheries.

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, and information kiosks installed in certain state parks.

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.
- By continuously monitoring division activities, TPWD is able to 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 a number of 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:

Fund 9 Division Capital Construction and Repair Funding

While recent significant increases in capital construction authority and new funding sources will help address a decades-long backlog of necessary repairs to state park facilities, deferred maintenance challenges still exist for facilities not located in state parks, including wildlife management areas, fish hatcheries, and fish, wildlife, and law enforcement regional and district offices and other facilities, which have been impacted by a lack of adequate and sustainable Fund 9 capital construction authority.

Current Fund 9 capital construction funding levels appropriated for the FY 2024-2025 biennium are \$24.7 million, \$16.95 million of which is dedicated specifically to Sea Center Texas capital projects. This level of Fund 9 deferred maintenance appropriations creates a significant repair backlog and contributes to further deterioration of these facilities.

Affected divisions, including Coastal Fisheries, Inland Fisheries, Wildlife, and Law Enforcement, require well-maintained facilities to carry out the department's mission and goals, including increasing access to and participation in the outdoors by providing public hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing opportunities, and carrying out other conservation and safety enforcement priorities. Some examples of current Fund 9 capital construction and repair needs are water delivery improvements at Heart of the Hills Fisheries Science Center, replacement of pond liners at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, construction of the Powderhorn WMA Conservation/Education Center, replacement of perimeter fencing and storage at various WMAs, exterior façade and parking lot replacement at Dickinson Marine Laboratory, aquarium support structure replacement and aquarium redesign at the CCA Marine Development Center, replacement of the Waco District/Regional Office, upgrades to the Game Warden Training Center, law enforcement offices and statewide boat barns, and the Fund 9 component of critical Austin HQ repair/upgrade needs. Additional capital construction and repair appropriation authority to address these needs, including from Freshwater Fish Stamp funds, would help alleviate these issues.

Changing Population in Texas and R3 Planning

Texas' human population continues to grow and change, with a current population of over 30 million people. Consequently, the makeup of TPWD customers has become increasingly varied, along with their experiences, changing preferences, and participation in outdoor recreation. As a result, the department has implemented a Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation (R3) plan and implementation teams to guide future efforts and program development aimed at strategically increasing participation by all Texans in and support for shooting sports, hunting, angling, and boating. The department has also hired two R3 coordinators to develop, evaluate, and support these efforts.

To date, these efforts have included, but are not limited to, email and text engagement and retention campaigns, mentored fishing and hunting programs, expansion of a pilot-scale digital license and harvest tagging system, initiating and enhancing a R3 data dashboard project, and programs to enhance fishing, boating, hunting, and recreational shooting access. Increased support of the agency's R3 Plan would allow for additional progress in this important component of TPWD's customer service and engagement efforts. Opportunities for expansion include the evaluation of participant data, support for agencywide R3 coordination, improvement and creation of additional partnerships, increased abilities to communicate the value of outdoor recreational activities, the development and implementation of a customer relationship management system, and improved/expanded online content.

Work in the area of R3 will be informed by the results of the 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation, one of the oldest (conducted since 1955) and most comprehensive continuing recreation surveys, collecting information on the number of anglers, hunters, and wildlife watchers, how often they participate, and how much they spend on their activities in the United States and in states, like Texas, which opt in for additional state-level data.

The results of the survey indicate that in 2022, 11.9 million Texas residents 16 and older participated in wildlife associated recreation activities in Texas. Of the total participants, 3.2 million fished, 1.1 million hunted, and 11.5 million participated in wildlife watching activities. In total, state residents and nonresidents spent \$39.8 billion on wildlife associated recreation. Anglers spent \$11.0 billion, hunters spent \$5.4 billion, and wildlife watchers spent \$23.4 billion. Respondents were also asked questions specific to TPWD, with 88% stating that TPWD represents their values and are supportive of the TPWD mission.

Water Access and Safety

As the population of Texas continues to increase, additional pressures are put on public waters, leading to the need for increased efforts to provide access and work with private partners to ensure recreational opportunities across the state, in both rural and urban areas.

Texas contains 191,228 miles of rivers and streams, including 40,194 miles of perennially flowing waters. All of this water flows into Texas' eight major estuaries that span 3,359 miles of coastline and over 2.6 million acres of estuarine habitat. The state maintains public navigability laws that ensure the rights of paddlers and anglers to wade and float in many Texas aquatic and marine ecosystems. However, private ownership may limit public access to those waters. To confront this reality, TPWD and its partners have built partnerships with landowners to expand fishing and paddling opportunities on publicly navigable streams and rivers, secured and leveraged innovative sources of funding to establish river access agreements with private

riparian landowners (supported through lease payments), assembled and implemented conservation plans to ensure sustainable recreational use of the new river access areas, and built collaborative relationships among local fly fishing clubs, non-governmental organizations, and communities to promote and encourage use of the river access areas and to engage local partners in delivery of volunteer-based river stewardship projects. A total of 29 public river access leases have been established with cooperating landowners. The corresponding access areas enabled or enhanced paddling and river fishing on nearly 200 miles of the Brazos, Colorado, Devils, Guadalupe, Llano, Neches, Nueces, Sabine, San Marcos, and South Llano rivers.

On the coast, there are 10 established paddling trails with a total of 29 access points in Galveston, Aransas, Matagorda, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, and Lower Laguna Madre bays. Meanwhile, Texas has 367 miles of shorefront along the coast that are open to the public for fishing and other water-based activities. Additionally, four coastal state parks offer prime saltwater fishing opportunities.

With increased access and participation in boating and water-based activity on public waters statewide, enforcement efforts aimed at making Texas waters safe and enjoyable for everyone become even more critical. With nearly six million surface acres of freshwater and saltwater, recreational boating is enjoyed by over four million Texans annually and has a \$11.8 billion economic impact in the state.

Texas currently registers 567,895 motorized vessels in the state and conservative estimates conclude that another 359,000 paddlecraft are owned and operated on the state's waters. The department takes a multi-dimensional approach to keep the public waters of Texas safe and enjoyable for all, but additional resources are needed.

Paddlecraft or human propelled vessels (kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddleboards, etc.) have increased in popularity in the recreational boating market as the gateway to the outdoors. While paddlecraft only account for a small amount of the overall boating-related accidents, paddlecraft in Texas make up a disproportionately large percentage of the state's boating-related fatalities. Additionally, hundreds of hours are expended by game wardens annually on search and rescue missions related to overdue paddlers or paddlecraft found adrift. Non-federal match dollars or potential funds from additional permitting opportunities would help increase public access and response times to accidents or investigations.

Centennial Parks Conservation Fund

The challenge of conserving lands and improving access to state parks for all Texans is immense, urgent, and critical to achieving the agency's mission. To meet the growing demand for outdoor recreation and conservation opportunities in state parks, TPWD must accelerate land acquisition now to have the inventory to design and build out new parks over the next several decades and beyond. Approval of the new Centennial Parks Conservation Fund by the 88th Legislature represents an unprecedented opportunity for TPWD to better address this growing demand by expanding access to new and existing state parks across the state.

The Centennial Parks Conservation Fund was created by Senate Joint Resolution 74 and Senate Bill 1648 (88th Legislature) as a trust fund outside the state treasury, to be held and invested by the Texas Treasury Safekeeping Trust Company and administered by TPWD for the purpose of creating and improving state parks. The new fund and related provisions took effect January 1, 2024, after voters approved the related constitutional amendment (Proposition 14) in the November 2023 election.

Under provisions of this bill, TPWD would be authorized to request distributions from the fund to acquire real property to create and improve publicly accessible parks. TPWD is required to obtain Legislative Budget Board approval prior to acquiring property. Money in the fund cannot be used for salaries, benefits, administration, operating or program costs, or maintenance or operation of state parks.

Since passage, TPWD has been engaged with the Legislature, Legislative Budget Board, and the Texas Treasury Safekeeping Trust Company to ensure that the new Centennial Parks Conservation Fund is implemented and utilized in accordance with requirements and expectations. As part of these discussions, the agency has identified several areas that may benefit from further clarification, including whether an approval process is required for use of funds for improvements; the timing and use of funds for land acquisition related costs such as surveys, due diligence and legal fees; and reporting requirements and expectations. TPWD plans to seek statutory and rider changes during the upcoming biennium to address these issues.

TPWD has also crafted a Centennial Park Plan (CPP) handbook to ensure acquisition of high value park sites consistent with outdoor recreation and conservation objectives of the department. The CPP is a set of tools, strategies, research, policies, and other information to support the statewide effort to acquire land and properties for sustainable outdoor recreation and the conservation of resources of statewide significance. This handbook is a “living” document focused on acquiring land and properties for state parks that will be updated as TPWD undertakes usage of the fund. Staff are currently in the process of identifying potential sites for acquisition as new parks.

Despite the staff effort required within State Parks, Infrastructure, Legal, and other support divisions to successfully execute use of these funds, there is currently no additional available source of funding to address these related costs, as the new fund may not be used for salary or administrative expenses. Critical positions, including a Park Planner, Geographic Information Specialist, Archeologist, and Natural Resource Specialist have been added to State Parks staffing in 2024 to facilitate this effort. Additionally, it is anticipated that multiple new state parks will be in various phases including acquisition, caretaking, contracting, planning, design, construction, and public use, requiring various levels of staffing/operating and capital equipment throughout a given biennium. Additional appropriation of TPWD GR-Dedicated sources of funds, such as the State Parks Account, may be needed to cover these costs.

State Parks Capital Construction Program

Recent increases in funding for capital construction and major repair, particularly from Sporting Goods Sales Tax revenue, will allow the department to make significant strides in addressing major repair backlogs and construction needs at parks statewide. This allows for an increase in both project size and overall geographical impact of the capital construction portfolio. These increased funding levels enable the department to perform more purposeful upgrades to rapidly aging park facilities, which are needed to meet increased population growth and overall use. These projects directly impact visitation and user expectations when visiting TPWD sites.

For example, the consideration of how to effectively implement a repeatable holistic capital construction program delivery strategy is now underway, involving planning, designing, and managing multiple large projects at a single appropriate site at a rate of one per year or two per biennium. This approach, which may include temporarily closing entire parks for repair and renovation, will likely provide better customer service by minimizing the overall impact of capital construction projects to the public, allow for more efficiencies in project completion, and also provide safety improvements by eliminating public interaction with construction activities.

In addition to the above strategies, another key imperative for increasing public access to lands is the development of properties within the TPWD’s existing inventory. Opening/expansion of the following undeveloped state parks and natural areas will help to increase public access to park lands.

- **Dan Allen Hughes Unit, Devils River State Natural Area**

The southern portion of Devils River SNA is an 18,000-acre tract that will add unique outdoor recreational opportunities to visitors. Scheduled to open to the public in the fall of 2024, the SNA will be the first of four state parks and natural areas scheduled to be opened by the end of FY2029.

- **Palo Pinto Mountains State Park**

Palo Pinto Mountains State Park will provide additional recreational opportunities for the public in the growing Dallas-Fort Worth area. TPWD has worked extensively with local stakeholders, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, and the Texas Department of Transportation to coordinate construction activities and complete this project in 2025.

- **Albert and Bessie Kronkosky State Natural Area**

The development of Albert and Bessie Kronkosky State Natural Area has begun and is currently scheduled to open in 2026. Future public use of this site will require resources for park planning, facility design and engineering, and construction costs, as well as necessary equipment and staff needed for operations. Each of the sites have significant natural and cultural resource components that will require careful planning and management work prior to visitation.

- **Powderhorn Ranch State Park**

A portion of the Powderhorn Ranch property was transferred into State Park System management in FY2022. The development of Powderhorn State Park has begun and is currently scheduled to open in 2029. Capital construction funding is needed for the Advanced Planning phase, which typically includes the costs for park planning and design, permitting, multiple Natural Resource and Public Use surveys, and utility planning.

Continued funding levels for state parks capital construction, development, and repairs will help ensure that TPWD is able to build and maintain a state park system that broadens access to the outdoors and provides safe and quality cultural and outdoor recreational experiences to the public.

Status of Battleship TEXAS

The 86th Legislature directed TPWD to enter a 99-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a qualified non-profit organization for the operation and maintenance of the Battleship TEXAS (Senate Bill 1511) and appropriated funds for improvements and repairs of the Battleship, as well as a curatorial study of its artifacts, via the supplemental appropriations bill (Senate Bill 500). In August 2019, TPWD executed an MOU with the Battleship Texas Foundation (BTF), and transfer of operational responsibilities were completed in September 2019.

The Battleship Texas Restoration Plan was approved by the Legislative Budget Board in July 2020. The ship was moved from the San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site to the Port of Galveston in August 2022, where repairs were conducted by a marine engineering and refurbishment company. Upon completion of repairs, the ship will be stationed at a location where it will be open to the public and managed by the BTF. The primary goal is to make the Battleship TEXAS a tourist attraction to sustain the cost of future operations and maintenance.

The 88th Legislature appropriated certain funds to TPWD for the purpose of making a grant for the benefit of the Battleship TEXAS (Senate Bill 30) and directed TPWD to submit annual reports based on information provided by BTF to the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor's Office related to the repair, renovation, operation, and maintenance of the ship.

TPWD continues to have legal responsibilities under state and federal law for the stewardship of this unique historic resource and the thousands of artifacts associated with the ship. As such, the agency will continue to incur ongoing costs related to the provision of temporary storage space for artifacts removed from the ship during shipyard repairs and long-term storage of items that will not be displayed on the ship when it is re-opened for public visitation.

Investments in Local Recreational and Conservation Needs

The Recreation Grants Program serves the population of Texas by providing a variety of acquisition and development grants to local governments, non-profits, commercial entities, and special districts to increase access to public parks, indoor recreation facilities, and outdoor recreation facilities. These include urban and non-urban Outdoor and Indoor Recreation grants, Boating grants, Target Range grants, and Recreational Trails grants. In addition, the Community Outdoor Outreach Program provides funding to non-profit and other entities to provide outdoor experiences and environmental education opportunities specifically for underserved populations in Texas. These programs are very popular and in high demand, as they have been found to contribute to the physical, social, and mental well-being of residents; create economic benefits locally; and effectively leverage state funding to obtain positive outdoor recreational and conservation outcomes for Texas communities.

In addition to providing SGST funding for competitive grant programs and legislatively directed local park projects, the 88th Legislature also directed \$1 million per year of SGST funding to the Recreational Trails Grant Program. This program, which funds motorized and non-motorized recreational trail projects such as the construction of new recreational trails, improvements to existing trails, development of trailheads or trailside facilities, and acquisition of trail corridors, has historically been solely federally funded. The infusion of state funds for this purpose will greatly enhance TPWD's ability to meet demand for trail grants statewide. Given the value of these programs, TPWD will be requesting continuation of funding levels commensurate with availability of SGST proceeds for TPWD.

Land Access and Conservation Opportunities

The 88th Legislature appropriated \$10 million in Migratory Game Bird Stamp funds to the Wildlife Division for land acquisition over the 2024-2025 biennium. Leveraging those funds as well as in-kind donations as match, the Wildlife Division has used available federal funds to purchase (or is in the process of purchasing) several large ranches from willing sellers, potentially to be managed as stand-alone wildlife management areas (WMAs), and smaller tracts adjacent to existing WMAs. One example of such a purchase is the approximately 2,178-acre Colonel Burns Ranch in Brown County, which the Wildlife Division purchased using federal Pittman-Robertson grant funds matched with an in-kind donation from the landowners. Over the next biennium, the division will strategize how best to maintain and protect the exceptional habitat on this new WMA and provide public access in a responsible, conservation-minded manner.

Additional wildlife-related acquisitions may be complicated by staffing availability in the agency's Land Conservation Program, as long-tenured staff in the program have recently retired, and remaining staff will experience increases in upcoming workload tied to greater land acquisition opportunities provided by the new Centennial Parks Conservation Fund.

Management of WMAs for nature-oriented outdoor recreational opportunities like public hunting requires infrastructure on those sites to be operational. In the FY 24-25 biennium, only \$150,000 was allocated for WMA-related infrastructure projects, which was insufficient to address the many capital construction needs at WMAs statewide, like fence repairs and installation, storage barn replacement and construction, parking lot installation, new conference and education centers, and on-site residence renovations. The backlog of needs could potentially be addressed in the next biennium if sufficient capital construction funds are appropriated for these purposes.

In addition to anticipated acquisitions for new parks and expansion of existing parks that will be pursued using the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund, TPWD was appropriated \$125 million of General Revenue via the supplemental appropriations bill (Senate Bill 30) and \$25 million of Sporting Goods Sales Tax (SGST) via the General Appropriations Act (House Bill 1) for state parks land acquisition. Use of these funding sources, which will be focused on land acquisition to help meet the growing demand for outdoor recreation, will also be directed by the tools and strategies set forth in the Centennial Park Plan (CPP). As such, TPWD is currently evaluating several possible park land acquisitions to increase outdoor recreation opportunities for the state of Texas, with a focus on acquisitions with significant societal impact, including sites in areas defined as a "gap," or absence of a recreational experience/and/or conservation opportunity.

Due to the one-time nature of the \$125M funding provided in the supplemental bill, TPWD expects that similar amounts will not be available for acquisition efforts in the future. However, TPWD's goal is to maintain SGST funding levels for land acquisition in the next biennium and beyond, to ensure that continued progress can be made to expand access to the outdoors via purchase of inholdings and adjacent lands at existing state parks.

Texas Farm and Ranchlands Conservation Program

The Texas Farm and Ranchlands Conservation Program (TFRLCP) is aimed at conserving working lands that have high values for water, fish, wildlife, and agricultural production and that are at risk of development. Conservation is achieved by providing grant funds to purchase long term conservation easements from willing participants. To date, under TPWD the TFRLCP Council has approved funding for a total of 37 projects, bringing almost 47,000 acres of the state's high value working farms and ranchlands under perpetual protection. Since inheriting the program in 2015, TPWD grant funds totaling \$8.26 million have been leveraged with landowner in-kind matches and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service funds for a total conservation value of over \$60 million. Based on the success of this program, additional appropriation amounts would increase the number of grants awarded for the purchase of long-term conservation easements. The funding would help address burgeoning landowner demand for such easements, facilitate an increase in acreage protected from fragmentation and development, and increase effectiveness in conserving the state's fish, wildlife, water, and open space resources, which are largely found on private lands.

TPWD American Disability Act (ADA) Transition Plan and Barrier Remediation Plan

TPWD has invested substantial resources into identifying ADA barriers at all public-facing facilities including state parks, law enforcement offices, fish hatcheries and offices, wildlife management areas, and headquarters facilities. As a result, the agency now has a comprehensive database of every known barrier, along with a plan to remediate these barriers, which will span 24 years (three phases of eight years each). While each division is taking a slightly different approach to barrier remediation, all divisions will need both human and financial resources to accomplish this task. For example, phase one for state parks will begin in FY25, end in FY32, and will contain work at existing facility restrooms, parking, and accessible routes. Implementation costs for this project are estimated at \$5 million annually until completion.

GOAL 3**Educate, Inform and Engage Texas Citizens 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 Hunting for Conservation workshop annually to grow advocates for hunting and wildlife conservation.
- » Conduct a Fishing for Conservation workshop annually to grow advocates for fishing and aquatic resources conservation.
- » Support 18 high-use urban fishing sites annually through the Neighborhood Fishin' Program.
- » Complete 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.

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. One recent example would be new capabilities to stream live video of TPW Commission meetings (previously audio-only), as well as availability of

recorded video on the TPWD website and translation of executive summaries of Commission meeting action items and land transactions into Spanish.

- The department also maximizes the use of volunteers in provision of its services. In FY2023, volunteers contributed 1,146,794 hours across the agency, the equivalent of \$36.5 million, or 551 full-time employees (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:

Opportunities for Engagement

As Texas' population grows, so do the impacts and pressure on the state's lands and waters. Texas is one of the fastest-growing states in the nation, with many new Texans arriving daily from a variety of areas. A growing number of Texans and visitors are seeking more outdoor experiences outside of traditional hunting and fishing, which will call for new recreational opportunities to meet demand. While the department is faced with the challenge of stabilizing participation of traditional users such as hunters and anglers, this also presents the department with opportunities to more effectively recruit, retain, and engage a broad range of outdoor enthusiasts to carry forward Texas' rich natural and cultural heritage, all while preserving the critical funding streams that enable successful natural resource stewardship. Although demand for some outdoor activities may be relatively stable, general demand for outdoor recreation, particularly non-consumptive activities, is on the rise.

Various studies have documented that Texans have a longstanding affinity for nature and the outdoors, which continues into the modern era. Despite the state's increasingly urban population, Texans are concerned about threats to natural resources. Polls and surveys also show strong public support for increased fish and wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation funding. In a follow-up to the 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation, 94% of Texan respondents agreed that managing state parks and historic sites to conserve natural and cultural resources is important; 92% agreed that providing recreational and educational opportunities is important; 91% agreed that fostering understanding of diversity of

lands and heritage for all generations is important; and 92% agreed that communicating the importance of conserving cultural and natural resources is important.

With the right focus and smart investments, the department can take advantage of this growing interest in the outdoors to help build a population committed to effective and responsible stewardship of the state's resources and to promote an outdoor lifestyle that contributes to a healthier population and economic prosperity. Recreation Grant programs are integral to this, as are programs such as Master Naturalist, Urban Wildlife, Neighborhood Fishin', Texas Children in Nature programs, and others.

Changes in Communications Strategies

Dramatic changes have occurred in communications technology in recent years. As customers increasingly expect quick and easy access to digital information and services, the department must expand digital and mobile friendly customer communication options to keep pace with Texas' growth and modernization. One recent initiative in this area involves improvements to the Commission Hearing Room at TPWD headquarters, including an upgraded AV system incorporating multiple cameras and more focused lighting. These changes allow for digital video streaming of TPW Commission meetings, allowing audiences around the state and beyond to conveniently be informed about recent developments concerning TPWD-related issues.

Over the years, the department has added specialized communication expertise in areas like web development, mobile apps, marketing, and social media, and also regularly uses email and text communications to cost-effectively communicate with different customer and constituent groups to increase engagement and generate incremental revenue from agency licenses, fees, products, and programs. One example would be automatically generated license renewal emails encouraging customers to maintain their current engagement level in TPWD-related activities.

There are additional opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of these communications through advanced services which would enable more automated email communication campaigns, sophisticated audience segmentation, improved testing capabilities, advanced analytics, and interactive text messaging. These efforts lead to a more purposeful, data-driven, and persistent retention of customers.

At the same time, digital communications have not entirely replaced print materials, despite these materials becoming more costly to print and mail. TPWD will continue to evaluate customer preferences and all communications options to ensure its products, offerings, and services are as accessible and contemporary as possible. *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine is an example of this shift in strategy. Published in print since 1942, the magazine has in recent years implemented changes to its business model in reaction to changes in magazine-related consumer preferences. Rather than selling print and digital subscriptions separately, each print subscription now also includes full access to the magazine app, offering increased flexibility for subscribers. In order to be attractive to the greatest number of potential customers, the magazine has also moved from an annual/biannual subscription model to a more flexible \$2/month model. Magazine-adjacent activities and events such as the Great Outdoor Scavenger Hunt (GOSH) and Texas Bird Bingo also increase awareness of TPWD's mission in general and *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine in particular, as well as increasing participation in outdoor recreational activities.

TPWD has also added a new Language Support Specialist position that is exclusively dedicated to helping reach audiences with limited English proficiency to expand the reach of communications to various audiences. Current activities include the development of a limited English proficiency plan, translations of all Commission agenda items into Spanish, and a glossary of terms to help with common translation questions. This position will allow the department to be more proactive in the future to expanding messaging into underserved, multi-lingual communities through language support.

Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center (TFFC)/Sea Center Texas (SCT)

Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center (TFFC) is the Inland Fisheries Division's primary outreach and education facility, providing facility tours and exhibits including 300,000 gallons of aquariums, workshops, aquatic education classes, and other special events. TFFC is also home to the statewide Toyota ShareLunker Program, Texas Fish Art Contest, Angler Recognition Program, and Texas Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame. In FY2023, TFFC visitation included 40,495 people from 119 Texas counties, 45 states and five foreign countries. TFFC provided hands-on fishing for 22,615 visitors, with 846 receiving First Fish Awards. A total of 15,289 people toured the hatchery ponds via 502 guided tram trips.

In March 2024, with the assistance of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and generous donations from many organizations and individuals, work began on improvements and upgrades to the outdoor exhibits at TFFC. The facility has been in continuous operation since 1996, and improvements are needed to replace aging equipment and upgrade and enhance exhibits to better reflect the nature and value of aquatic resources in Texas, improve the visitor experience, and highlight the work of the Inland Fisheries Division.

As the keystone TPWD Coastal Fisheries marine stock enhancement facility and visitor center, Sea Center Texas (SCT) receives over 50,000 visitors per year, providing a significant tourism opportunity to the Lake Jackson area. Additionally, SCT has taken an expanded role in supporting a distance learning program that impacts thousands of school-aged children each year. To maintain the level of service to its visitor center constituents, for distance learning and due to an increase in large-scale activities such as Special Olympics, Kid Fish Days, and other events, additional resources are needed to effectively sustain the growth in demand for Sea Center Texas programs.

Hunter Education

Hunting accidents continue to decline as the hunter education program continues to grow. Hunter Education is required for every hunter in Texas (including out-of-state hunters) born on or after September 2, 1971. The minimum age for certification is nine years of age and certification lasts for life. More than 1.5 million students have been certified with Hunter Education since inception of the program, with over 52,000 certifications in FY23.

Since the launch of the voluntary hunter education program in 1972 and the initiation of mandatory hunter education requirements in 1988, hunting injuries have fallen by more than 80%. Fatal accidents have fallen by more than 90%. Much of this success in increasing hunter safety can be attributed to the program's mission, which is to teach "safe, responsible, knowledgeable and involved hunting and target shooting practices."

Boater Education Fees

House Bill 2755 (88th Legislative Session) modified provisions of the Parks & Wildlife Code to allow boater education course fees previously deposited into General Revenue to be deposited into TPWD's Game, Fish and Water Safety Account (Fund 9). These amounts, however, are currently not appropriated to TPWD. The Boater Education Program certifies over 36,000 Texans annually, helping to ensure safe and responsible use of Texas' water resources by the boating public. With growth in population and interest in water-based recreation, these numbers are expected to continue to grow, and it will become increasingly important to receive adequate funding to meet program needs. Providing TPWD the authority to spend collected fees would better allow TPWD to appropriately respond to the growth in the recreational boating community and use fees to benefit the boater education program. See the related item in the Redundancies and Impediments section of this plan for additional information.

ADA Programming

TPWD is committed to prioritizing accessibility and improving and making new opportunities for engaging in the outdoors available for people with disabilities. The department strives to achieve accessibility through physical design, adaptive equipment, communication resources, and/or reasonable accommodations. The current agency ADA program includes an ADA coordinator, an accessibility training specialist, and an accessibility program specialist. The ADA program is aided by an ADA Advisory Committee, which includes members of the public to address ADA issues specific to their areas. Examples of these recent initiatives include more than doubling the state parks all-terrain wheelchair fleet; a communications campaign, including a new accessibility website, press release, social media posts, marketing and outreach activities; increased disability-specific special events; and a number of other projects to increase access across the agency.

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 department-wide implementation of the first phase of data identification and protection by 2025.
- » Complete 90% of identified technology upgrades to build on opportunities for expanding connectivity and digital services by 2027.
- » Implement a succession planning program by 2026 that includes an analysis to identify critical positions and strategies to address recruitment, retention, and ongoing staff development.
- » Implement a department-wide survey of former department interns currently holding FTE positions by 2025.
- » Remediate five IT legacy applications by 2027.
- » Maintain department cybersecurity maturity levels above level three through 2027, in accordance with Texas Cybersecurity Framework standards.
- » Expand digital tag program to include all applicable license types by license year 2026.
- » Full expansion to chip enabled devices including at Law Enforcement Offices in 2026.

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 a number of technological modernization efforts aimed at increasing efficiency by automating business functions. One example would be a current initiative 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 2023 Sustainability Toolkit includes information aiming to reduce waste and electricity and water use. Using this toolkit can create not only cost savings, but resource savings as well. Examples of specific actions taken include

instituting recycling programs and installing solar panels and rainwater collection systems.

- TPWD is currently undergoing a modernization initiative that, when implemented, will include projects that will upgrade the physical and digital infrastructure of the department in ways that will provide efficiency, both for staff and the general public.

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

- This goal encompasses a number of 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; Historically Underutilized Business and contract reporting to the Comptroller's Office and LBB; deferred maintenance construction project reporting; 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 a number of 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.

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

- Agency efforts to employ efficient and sound business practices include a number of 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 the recent initiative to translate TPW Commission meeting executive summaries, action items, and land transactions into Spanish.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Acceleration of Agency Modernization

TPWD has recently embarked on an important initiative to accelerate the modernization of the department by examining technology, standard operating procedures, and facilities needs to unlock potential efficiency gains and cost reductions that can be deployed to support its mission. The ultimate aims are to create better customer and stakeholder experiences both internally and externally, to create efficiencies where savings can be directed to advancing the mission on land and water, to continue to stay relevant with Texans, and to be a leader among Texas state agencies. Digital accessibility, improving the ease of customer transactions, eliminating barriers, and allowing better, easier, and more efficient access to relevant information are key components of allowing customers to interact with TPWD in a more modern and efficient way. Likewise, these efforts will be geared to improving the internal TPWD environment as well, thereby helping TPWD employees perform their jobs more seamlessly, transparently, and effectively.

As part of the process, the department has identified a number of modernization actions that are already underway. For example, replacement of TPWD's legacy boat registration and titling system is currently in progress and planned to be completed in 2026. The department is also in the process of expanding digital tagging options for hunting and fishing licenses, is continuing to expand opportunities for customers to obtain certain wildlife and fisheries permits online, and is continually exploring additional opportunities to upgrade bandwidth at TPWD facilities across the state.

TPWD has also identified a host of other modernization needs which will require longer timelines and additional resources to be fully implemented. Examples of initiatives with potential to significantly advance the agency's modernization efforts include but are not limited to new digital solutions that will allow staff to automate processes that are currently manual; continuing to evaluate legacy systems and prioritize eligible applications to enhance functionality for internal and external customers, including upgrades to the Texas Wildlife Information Management Services (TWIMS) online system, the agency's Geographic Information System (GIS) infrastructure, and GoFISH application; enterprise-wide law enforcement management system and in-car automation to improve the transparency and efficiency of agency enforcement transactions; opportunities to enhance access to TPWD sites and facilities for customers with disabilities; and technology upgrades to better use existing spaces and enhanced user-friendly experiences across all facilities, including additional state parks kiosks that enable self-service tools for state park visitors. As TPWD begins the process of developing its Legislative Appropriations Request for the 2026-27 biennium, the agency will be evaluating each of these identified needs for potential impacts to modernization gains and possible inclusion in the department's funding request.

Program Growth and Impact on Support Functions

As pressure on natural, cultural and recreational resources and demand for access to agency facilities and services grows, programs will need to be modified, expanded, or created to appropriately respond, and the need for changes to and/or additional staffing and resources may be identified. This is true across the gamut of TPWD programs, but recently is particularly notable in light of the availability of additional Sporting Goods Sales Tax (SGST) after passage of Proposition 5, and creation of the new Centennial Parks Conservation Fund with the passage of Proposition 14, making significant additional new sources of funding available for state park operations, local park grants, and new parkland acquisition and improvements. The direct benefits of these funding sources to specific programs are immense and represent a tremendous and unprecedented opportunity to expand access to the outdoors. At the same time, such increases often result in greater demand for agency support functions without commensurate increases in support staffing or other resources. For example, Infrastructure and Legal divisions are and will continue to be directly involved in additional land/capital improvement transactions, made possible by the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund, while support functions such as Financial Resources, Purchasing, and Human Resources will experience a greater volume of contract development requests and purchase orders, accounts payable and budget transactions, and position postings and hiring efforts. As agency capacity to deliver direct programs grows, careful consideration must be given to ensuring support functions have the financial and staffing resources necessary to accommodate increases in demand for services from these and other changes.

Employee Compensation

Employee compensation surveys and studies have consistently identified pay and compensation as significant issues for the department. Analysis of TPWD's salary structure indicated a median salary of \$61,011 at the end of FY2023. Additionally, TPWD's average salary lags behind the collective of Article VI agencies (Natural Resources) by \$4,250 annually. TPWD is also the only Article VI agency that has employees in Salary Schedule C, which if excluded from these totals, shows an even lower median salary and even larger lag behind other Article VI agencies.

Despite legislatively mandated pay increases for FY2023 and the FY2024-2025 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, which present a limited labor pool, and/or the availability of higher paying private sector jobs. TPWD currently has some positions paying less than entry-level retail positions in the private sector. Additionally, inflationary pressures on the purchasing power of wages can cause talent to look for employment opportunities elsewhere. In addition to overall inflation levels, which remain relatively high, 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-based positions, particularly those related to support functions such as finance, revenue, accounting, legal, communications, and information technology.

The department has been working towards a long-term goal of developing a competitive total rewards strategy that includes employee programs, business practices, and other dimensions that collectively comprise the department's strategic efforts to attract, motivate, and retain quality employees. This effort includes cross-divisional comparisons of "like" classifications to

reduce compression among pay grades and annual comparisons of all classifications among state agencies to ensure recent gains are not lost. Ultimately, an effective compensation package that includes competitive salaries is critical to the department's ability to recruit and retain qualified staff, and must be a key component of any such plan. 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.

Inflationary Pressures and Other Operating Needs

According to the Comptroller's Office, inflation has caused prices to rise 4.4% in March 2024 above an already fairly high March 2023 baseline. The Consumer Confidence Index for Texas remains fairly turbulent since its lows in 2020-2021. Due to the broad range of TPWD responsibilities and services, many TPWD functions are highly sensitive to inflationary cost increases, including those impacting commodities such as electricity, natural gas and fuel, as well as goods, services, and materials. Many routine agency daily operations, such as vehicle and boat patrols conducted by game wardens, population and harvest surveys, research, and state park maintenance are all heavily fuel intensive. Likewise, electricity/utility needs at TPWD facilities are quite different from those at most other agencies. Many state park sites offer recreational vehicle campsite pads with sewer, water, and electrical hook-ups. Sites require lighting for visitor centers and interpretive displays. Hatcheries require water and electricity to operate pumps to maintain healthy environments for raising fingerlings. The rising cost of goods and materials likewise impacts nearly every facet of TPWD operations, ranging from paper and cleaning supplies needed to operate parks and other facilities, vehicles and vessels used for law enforcement, construction materials used in capital construction and repair projects, to feed, fertilizers, and other products required to operate fish hatcheries.

Vehicles, vessels, aviation and other equipment, related insurance, infrastructure, office and boat barn leases, maintenance, and repair have all become drastically more expensive in the last five years. Further, operational costs tied to maintenance, repair, and replacement of agency equipment also require ongoing investments. TPWD equipment needs range from items such as mowers, tractors, and generators needed for operation and maintenance of state parks and WMAs, to hauling tanks, intake pumps, and water quality meters required for coastal and inland fish hatchery operations. Daily law enforcement operations are also reliant on more specialized types of equipment such as body armor, vehicle and body worn cameras, and hand-held and mobile radios. Delays in the replacement of this equipment can result in safety concerns for employees and the visiting public, possible interruptions in service, and increased repair expenses over time.

Multi-Division Project Funding and Austin Headquarters Complex Needs

The department's Infrastructure Division utilizes a wide variety of funding appropriations to deliver projects. Several appropriations are division-specific and are restricted by federal, state, or legislative guidelines. These guidelines dictate how TPWD may fund facilities that house multiple divisions designed to integrate staff into one facility and facilitate ease of access and service to the public. Examples of multi-division sites with outstanding repair needs include Waco Regional Office, Rockport Regional Office, and Davis Mountains/Alpine Regional Office. While one funding source may be able to fund its "share" of the project, often, the other required funding source is not available, making the holistic approach to planning, designing, and constructing projects of this nature very difficult. Approval of more general funding sources for these types of multi-divisional projects would help alleviate some of these challenges.

TPWD's Austin Headquarters (HQ) complex is another example of a multi-divisional facility. The HQ building was completed in 1976, contains over 145,000 square feet of office space, and is in dire need of replacement and/or major repair. Maintenance for the HQ building has been handled in a piecemeal approach for decades because a sustainable maintenance budget has been difficult or impossible to secure, and multiple funding sources are required to cover costs, given that every TPWD division has a presence at HQ. For example, during the 88th Legislative Session, funding was requested for replacement of HQ air handlers. The total combined base and exceptional LAR request was for \$6.6 million, comprised of \$3.6 million of Sporting Goods Sales Tax (SGST) and \$2.9 million of Fund 9. However, only the SGST portion of this item was approved.

The inability to take a holistic approach to invest significantly in the regular maintenance and updated planning of the HQ building has created a disjointed and unsystematic repair effort, and the need to address the emergency repair needs that occur

as a result have proven disruptive to the department's daily business. Building D at the HQ complex, which houses public-facing licensing, boat registration and titling, and other agency functions, has recently experienced issues with sewer lines rendering restrooms unusable for staff and the visiting public. The backlog of repairs and unexpected issues such as these results in more expensive strategies to administer building improvements.

Additional capital funding and other resources to address critical HQ complex maintenance, operations, and repair issues continue to be needed in order to operate efficiently and provide a safe environment for employees and visitors. Over the longer term, consideration must be given to a complete renovation or replacement of the current HQ building, given its age and ongoing annual costs for upkeep.

Game, Fish and Water Safety Account Balance Concerns

TPWD has been facing concerns with general Fund 9 balances over the last several years. Leading into the 2018-19 biennium, the agency had identified issues with projected declines in general Fund 9 balances. During that session, a number of items, such as legislatively mandated reductions, TPWD initiated method-of-finance swaps and legislative changes, were successful in helping to temporarily alleviate concerns with Fund 9 balance declines. Recent increases in cash transfers and appropriation authority, however, have resulted in greater expenses, which are projected to outpace revenues, leading to projected fund balance declines over time. Reduced levels of general Fund 9 cash may impede the department's ability to carry out core wildlife and fisheries conservation, management, and enforcement functions in the future. TPWD will continue to evaluate various options, including a range of regulatory (fee) and statutory approaches, to improve the general Fund 9 cash balance outlook and to stabilize the fund over the long term.

Border Security and Operation Lone Star Initiative

TPWD game wardens and state park police officers protect the state's diverse, valuable, and fragile natural resources, including fish, wildlife, and state parks, through land-based and marine patrol throughout the state, including along the border. They protect the citizens of Texas by providing water safety, search and rescue, general law enforcement services, and supporting local, state, and federal law enforcement partners.

The Unified Command, led by U.S. Border Patrol, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), and TPWD, deploys forces to disrupt and deter illegal activities along the border. Units conduct overt and covert land-based operations which are intended to disrupt illegal hunting and fishing, trespassing, and transnational criminal organizations' activity involving the trafficking of narcotics, humans, stolen vehicles, stolen vessels, firearms, and currency, in order to protect Texans, reduce border-related crime, deter transnational criminal influence, and deter the illegal harvest and smuggling of aquatic and wildlife resources within the area. TPWD has 209 game wardens stationed along the breadth of Texas' southern border. Of those, 49 positions are funded through dedicated border security funds. These forces conduct intelligence-based operations to protect the people and the resources of Texas in the region, serving both as a deterrent and a reactive force.

In January 2022, at the request of the Governor, TPWD game wardens and state park police officers deployed to assist with Operation Lone Star, a multi-state agency border security initiative led by DPS and the Texas Military Department. Between September 2022 and August 2023, TPWD game wardens and state park police officers referred 11,603 criminal suspects along the border to the Department of Public Safety, Border Security, and local authorities and made seizures of numerous feet of illegal fishing gill net and approximately 1,000 pounds of illegal drugs. A total of 1,212 individuals were prevented/deterred from entering illegally into Texas at the border. The Governor's Office is providing funding to TPWD for the expenses associated with this surge, including game warden and state park police overtime, fuel, travel, and equipment costs.

Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan Revisions

TPWD recently completed updates to the *Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan* (Land & Water Plan). The updates, which were by guided by the TPW Commission's Subcommittee for Conservation and Recreation Planning, were initiated in fall 2022 and included comprehensive review and updates to goals, objectives, strategies, and action items as well as stakeholder surveys to solicit feedback on TPWD performance, priorities, and programmatic strategies. The completed plan, approved by the TPW Commission in November 2023, outlines goals, objectives, strategies, and actions intended to promote stewardship on public and private lands and waters; protect unique natural and cultural resources; encourage partnerships with

stakeholders; use science as the backbone of decision-making; promote participation in the outdoors; and instill appreciation of nature in Texas residents. The plan will be updated every ten years in conjunction with updates to the Land and Water Statewide Inventory. Progress on delivery of plan strategies will be reported formally at five-year intervals and via updates to the TPW Commission at regularly scheduled meetings.

Cybersecurity/Data Security Efforts

To support the secure use of digital resources by staff, partners, and constituents, TPWD employs advanced technology tools and services to enhance its cyber defenses. Enforcing security policies and utilizing threat prevention tools are essential for risk management and new threat mitigation. The agency has partnered with the Department of Information Resources (DIR) to protect, detect, and remediate cybersecurity threats on systems to ensure essential business processes are not impacted. With more frequent cybersecurity threats, it is critical that the agency is prepared to limit potential risks and ensure citizen data is not compromised by setting transparent department-wide expectations. Since end-user behavior and networked devices make up a majority of exposures and risks, collaboration with leadership and staff is required for a successful cybersecurity program. TPWD continues to improve a culture of security awareness through outreach, training, and with executive leadership support. The Information Technology (IT) Division has upgraded its vulnerability scanning software and has implemented Privileged Access Management or credentials management. In collaboration with DIR, TPWD continues to utilize Managed Security Services to supplement security capabilities with limited resources.

The ability to securely collect and store data throughout the agency is critical to ensure that key decisions can be made on reliable and readily available data. The Legislature and pertinent oversight entities also recognize the importance of that partnership between secure but readily available data. While there were many rules and regulations put in place in the last legislative session related to secure data, one impactful change to TPWD was the funding and support to hire a dedicated full-time Data Management Officer (DMO). Despite the challenges of classifying data in such a decentralized environment, the IT Division has implemented controls around sensitive data to include the creation of the Data Classification policy and enabling data labels.

The IT Division is providing new services in mobile and web-based applications. Examples include new permits in Agency Permitting System and additional functionalities for digital tags and harvesting in Texas Hunt and Fish application. All of these new services rely on and collect valuable data that must be securely stored. Based on the requirements laid out in Senate Bill 475 (87th Legislature), the DMO has completed the agency-wide Data Maturity Assessment for a full picture on importance of data security and integrity for key decision making. The DMO is also working with the Department of Information Resources (DIR) to establish an agency-wide Data Literacy program which will educate the TPWD staff that collaborates with the many partners and constituents on how to collect, store, and share the data efficiently and securely.

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 2025 and the end of the fiscal year provided unless otherwise specified.

**INFORMATION
RESOURCES
PLANNING
AND
TECHNOLOGY
RESOURCE PLAN**



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INFORMATION RESOURCES PLANNING

The Information Technology (IT) Division is crucial in advancing the agency's mission by facilitating the introduction and adoption of new technology. Its goals are to deliver secure, efficient, and cost-effective digital services that align with both internal and external stakeholder needs and to support business goals. The agency adheres to the Department of Information Resources (DIR) processes and enforces Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 202 requirements to safeguard data and systems. TPWD's IT programs align with the State Strategic Plan for Information Resources Management to uphold the state's technology objectives. Detailed initiatives are 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:** Continuous improvements to network infrastructure and connectivity allow agency business to operate more efficiently by enabling faster data transfer, seamless communication, and streamlined processes. Building reliable infrastructure ensures consistent service delivery, faster response times, and enhanced user experiences, leading to increased customer satisfaction.
- **Data Management:** To enhance data analytics, the agency is exploring a central repository for agency-wide decision-making and cost-effective service delivery. TPWD's IT Division acknowledges the necessity of governance and data compliance monitoring to ensure consistent, transparent, and secure data practices.
- **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:** 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 the growing customer demand for accessible services at all times and from any location.

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

- **Network Access Control:** This platform employs policy-based rules and customized security profiles to regulate network access and user privileges. The tool features Authentication, Authorization, and Accounting (AAA) to link security threats and remediation actions.
- **Network Improvement:** Continuous network upgrades support business growth, facilitate innovation, and enable the adoption of emerging technologies.
- **Security Initiatives:** Current initiatives include: regularly assessing risks and audit incident response plans; updating monitoring and protection tools for prompt and effective cyber threat response; adopting technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, and forensic tools to enhance security; and promoting security awareness through outreach, training, and cybersecurity awareness programs.
- **Digital Services:** TPWD's IT Division collaborates with business partners to provide secure applications across devices, to meet the growing demands of our citizens and workforce. Expanding self-service options, collaboration platforms, and mobile application development ensure customers have easy access to data and services.
- **Emerging Technologies:** As technology evolves, so does demand for new tools and applications. TPWD's IT Division and executive leadership prioritize technology initiatives to adapt services like smart devices, mobile applications and cloud solutions for staff and users.

- **Technology Refresh:** Refreshing hardware, operating systems (OS), 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.

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 (PAM) for credentials management. In collaboration with DIR, TPWD continues to utilize Managed Security Services (MSS) to supplement security capabilities with limited resources.
- **Endpoint Provisioning:** Currently, TPWD's Windows-based endpoints are ordered and delivered to Austin HQ. Imaging and preparing a computer for use is a time-intensive process. Leveraging cloud services allows an endpoint to be directly delivered and set up with all the user's settings and apps out of the box.
- **Low-Code:** Low-code is a software development approach that requires little to no coding to build applications and processes. This allows non-technical users to build applications, increases productivity, and speeds up service delivery for business users and constituents.
- **Texas Hunt and Fish:** Digital tag enhancements will create better customer experiences by integrating with the License Sales System and new digital license offerings to see tag usage and allowing the customer to enter required harvest data more conveniently.
- **Agency Permitting System:** This system converts various manual paper-based permitting processes into an online, consolidated, electronically managed solution. This is a multi-divisional partnership effort in various stages of development.
- **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:** The Boat Registration Information and Titling System (BRITS) has been in production since January 2006. The technology used by the current system is now outdated and is considered a legacy system by DIR. Newer technologies allow for better scalability, enhanceability, supportability, and increased security. Building on a new platform should also remove past struggles with recruitment and retention of key technology resources. A rewrite will allow end user staff the ability to make certain business rule changes without IT assistance such as fee changes, acceptance of in-person credit cards, and bypassing the Department of Motor Vehicles network, except for internet access, for Tax Accessor-Collector system access.

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

- **Collaborative Solutions:** Agency staff continue to seek cloud services and smart devices that meet their 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.
- **Identity and Access Management:** 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.
- **Critical Infrastructure Protection:** 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 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.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE PLAN

1. ELEVATED GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

Initiative/Strategy Name:

Cybersecurity and Enhanced Connectivity

Initiative Description:

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.

Continuous improvements to network infrastructure and connectivity allow agency business units to operate more efficiently by enabling faster data transfer, seamless communication, and streamlined processes. Reliable infrastructure ensures consistent service delivery, faster response times, and enhanced user experiences, leading to increased customer satisfaction.

Associated Project(s):

Identity and Data Protection
Field Network Hardware Refresh
Application Modernization
Application Vulnerability Scan
Privileged Access Management
CrowdStrike Endpoint Detection and Remediation
Identity Access Control Phase I: Wireless Authentication
Identity Access Control Phase II: Endpoint Discovery & Cataloging
Identity Access Control Phase III: Network Endpoint Management
Direct Internet Access
Network Colocation for Redundancy

Status:

Current
Implemented
Current
Implemented
Current
Implemented
Implemented
Current
Planned
Current
Current

Agency Objective(s):

E.1 Indirect Administration

Statewide Technology Priority(ies):

- Advancing technology demands ongoing landscape assessments to rapidly counter threats with affordable cybersecurity measures.
- Broaden and improve network services for smoother business operations and a better customer experience.
- Enhance customer engagement through the “Texas by Texas” (TxT) initiative and by improving application usability and responsiveness on all platforms.

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 and unreliable network connectivity in remote areas. The cybersecurity risks TPWD faces widely range in sophistication and scope. Diverse technology solutions require different support skills and data management oversight methods.

2. MATURE DATA MANAGEMENT AND PRIVACY PRACTICES

Initiative/Strategy Name:

Data Management

Initiative Description:

To enhance data analytics, TPWD is exploring a central repository for department-wide decision-making and cost-effective service delivery. TPWD's IT Division acknowledges the necessity of governance and data compliance monitoring to ensure consistent, transparent, and secure data practices.

Associated Program(s):

Open Data Portal
Data Classification
Data Management
Data Governance
Data Literacy Program
Data Maturity Assessment
Privacy Program
Advanced Data Analytics Capacity
Increased Data Sharing and Collaboration

Status:

Current
Implemented
Current
Current
Current
Implemented
Planned
Current
Planned

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.

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.
- This will allow for improved analytical capabilities and data processing enterprise-wide.

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.
- TPWD has a large number of datasets, presenting a challenge in identifying each specific type of data in an efficient manner.

3. SKILLED AND RESILIENT WORKFORCE

Initiative/Strategy Name:

Collaborative Solutions and Workforce Planning

Initiative Description:

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.

Attracting and growing talent, engaging staff through events and division partnerships, and leveraging external resources enhances staff ability to prioritize key tasks.

Associated Projects(s):

Mobile Application Development
Agency Permitting System
Digital Tags

Status:

Implemented
Current
Current

Agency Objective(s):

E.1 Indirect Administration

Statewide Technology Priority(ies):

- Investigate application development technologies that do not require highly specialized skills.
- Expand hiring to statewide, fully remote applicants for certain positions.
- Provide training and growth opportunities for staff.
- Work with junior colleges on an apprenticeship program and provide internship opportunities.

Anticipated Benefit(s):

- Remote 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 provides opportunities for hiring and growing junior staff.

Capabilities or Barriers:

- Streamlining customer access to digital resources by modernizing legacy services and introducing new processes and tools.

4. TRANSFORMATION AND MODERNIZATION

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 demands for accessible services at all times and from any location.

Associated Projects(s):

Telecommunications Infrastructure
Robotic Process Automation: Accounts Payable Invoicing
Self Service Kiosks
Technology Refresh
Cybersecurity Performance Reporting System
Boat Registration and Titling

Status:

Current
Current
Current
Current
Planned
Current

Agency Objective(s):

E.1 Indirect Administration

Statewide Technology Priority(ies):

- Adoption of business process automation and low-code development platforms.
- Working on several process improvements like optimizing procurement processes and continuous evaluation of technology use policies, standards, and controls.
- Researching and providing productivity and collaboration tools for the department and working with DIR on Artificial Intelligence adoption and governance.
- Enhancement of Application Development Ecosystem to include Agile methodologies, DevSecOps processes, procuring productivity tools and continuous evaluation of application and infrastructure technologies including performing third party assessments.

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 remote work, and stay competitive in a dynamic business environment.

Capabilities or Barriers:

- License cost and vendor dependencies make low-code adoption challenging.
- Workforce and technology constraints make it difficult to perform enhancements and maintenance on legacy applications.

REDUNDANCIES AND IMPEDIMENTS



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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
Changes to Travel/Grocery Reimbursement Requirements (Government Code, Chapter 660, Subchapter F)	Current travel provisions do not allow state agencies to reimburse state employees for groceries purchased at the employee's designated headquarters and consumed during travel. Groceries are only reimbursable within certain dollar limits if purchased on a day that the employee conducts state business and only if purchased outside the employee's designated headquarters. Given the nature of TPWD's work, TPWD employees are often required to travel to remote locations with limited or non-existent options for the purchase of meals or other food/meal preparation items. This can result in employees driving longer distances, and spending more time and money to obtain a meal.	Amend Government Code to allow state agencies to reimburse state employees for grocery and related preparation items purchased within an employee's designated headquarters in advance of travel.	Allowing employees to be reimbursed for purchase of groceries/meal preparation items at designated headquarters prior to travel would increase efficiency/flexibility of state employees on travel status, while also resulting in cost savings to the state.
Appropriation of Boater Education Fees	With the passage of House Bill 2755 in the 88th Legislative Session, fees charged for Boater Education are deposited into Game, Fish and Water Safety Account (Fund 9), but are not appropriated to TPWD. As the Boater Education program and associated revenue collections continue to grow, it is increasingly important to receive adequate funding to meet program needs.	Adopt a new rider authorizing appropriation of Boater Education Program fee revenues to TPWD.	Appropriation of Boater Education Fees currently deposited into Fund 9 would improve transparency by ensuring that fees paid for boater education programs managed and offered by TPWD could be used directly for the benefit the boater education program. This would better allow TPWD to more appropriately respond to the growth in the recreational boating community.
General 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 subaccounts/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.

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
Non-Resident Hunting Licenses (Parks and Wildlife Code Chapter 42[.0141, .0142], numerous subsections)	The Parks and Wildlife Commission does not currently have the authority to manage non-resident hunting licenses that are specifically named in statute, unlike non-resident fishing licenses. While the Commission has the ability to adjust the fee for these license types, it has no ability to modify the license offerings and what they authorize. TPWD is currently evaluating consolidation of the five existing non-resident hunting licenses to two options, with associated fee adjustments. Current statutory language precludes the ability to consolidate TPWD's license catalog in order to simplify and streamline license offerings.	Update Parks and Wildlife Code Chapter 42 to authorize the Commission to manage the types of non-resident licenses and associated fees.	This change would support the agency's goal of consolidating the license catalog to provide for simpler licensing requirements for constituents. Depending on implementation, it could also increase non-resident license derived revenue and provide additional funding for fish, wildlife, and related enforcement responsibilities.
Boat/Boat Motor Sales and Use Tax (Tax Code §160.121)	Currently, under provisions of the Tax Code, TPWD retains 5% of boat/motor sales and use tax, while the remaining 95% is remitted to the Comptroller's Office. Allowing TPWD to retain an increased percentage of boat/motor sales and use tax would provide an increased source of funding for TPWD game, fish and water safety related activities.	Modify Tax Code provisions or examine other alternatives to: (1) allow a greater percentage of boat sales and use tax revenues to be directed to TPWD and (2) expand allowable uses of these revenues.	An increase to the amounts directed to TPWD, along with appropriation authority, would provide an additional source of funding for TPWD and help address possible Fund 9 revenue/balance concerns.
Unexpended Balances (UB) Authority for Land Acquisition Appropriations	The inability to carry forward unexpended and unobligated land acquisition appropriations can hamper strategic planning for land acquisition and weaken the department's ability to mitigate risks that arise during real estate negotiations and purchases, which can often result in processes (seller dynamics, price negotiations, legal agreements, etc.) taking longer than anticipated. Absent UB authority, land acquisition transactions occurring near the end of a biennium are at risk of being canceled if such issues are encountered.	Adopt a new rider in the 2026-2027 General Appropriations Act to allow unexpended and unobligated balances of Land Acquisition appropriations to be carried forward from one biennium to the next for the same purposes.	The ability to carry forward unexpended balances of land acquisition appropriations allows for strategic planning to target conservation efforts and strategic tracts of land and allows the department to respond to emerging business needs. Due to the complicated nature of major land transactions, which will inevitably span across biennia, UB authority would provide flexibility to manage the land acquisition portfolio and mitigate risks without jeopardizing negotiations, improving TPWD's ability to acquire strategic tracts of land at the best value for the state.

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
Take of White-tailed Deer (Texas Parks & Wildlife Code Chapter 43.151 to 43.153, and 43.157)	Current rules for depredation permits only allow take of white-tailed deer for purposes of commercial agricultural crop damage or public safety. There are few options to address overabundant deer populations on city, state, federal, and other lands where recreational hunting is not feasible. The proposed changes would allow for certain entities to utilize the depredation permit for purposes other than crop damage or public safety and provide another tool for these communities to manage deer populations.	Modify the statutory provisions related to deer depredation to allow political subdivisions, state agencies, federal agencies, institutions of higher education, or property owner's associations to control white-tailed deer populations by lethal means for purposes of preventing damage to habitat for federal or state listed species, or in situations where there is an overpopulation of white-tailed deer on a property owned by the applicable entities where recreational hunting is not feasible for deer population control. Statutory changes would also allow a person to be compensated for removal of depredating wildlife under the authority of the permit.	This change would allow the department more flexibility in addressing overabundant deer problems where recreational hunting is not practical, helping to prevent property damage, and improving health and safety concerns stemming from deer overpopulation in urban areas.
Centennial Parks Conservation Fund Statutory Clarifications (Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapter 21A) and Reporting Requirements	Ongoing discussions with oversight and other entities regarding this new fund have highlighted issues with current statutory provisions which are subject to interpretation, as well as with expectations regarding reporting requirements.	Seek clarifying changes to related statute regarding allowable uses of the fund, LBB approval of uses, and other items. Also adopt new rider language outlining the specific information TPWD will report on for the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund and the timing/frequency of reports.	Clarification on allowable uses and other statutory requirements and the time frame, nature and extent of information reported by TPWD would ensure efficient use of TPWD resources while meeting Legislative and oversight office expectations.
Requirement for Payment and Performance Bonds for Certain Construction Projects (Government Code Chapter 2253)	Texas Government Code currently specifies that payment bonds are required for construction contracts in excess of \$25,000 and performance bonds are required for construction contracts in excess of \$100,000. This limits competition, as many new or small contractors who can carry out larger size projects are not experienced in the bonding process and may not have the required bonding capacity. These smaller contractors sometimes ultimately pay a larger general contractor to technically serve as the prime contractor for the use of their bonding capacity while still acting in essence as the prime contractor for the contract, which in turn can increase costs. Increasing this threshold would allow a larger bidding pool, increase competition, and could potentially result in lower bids to the state.	Modify existing statute to raise the dollar thresholds, using existing federal requirements for guidance on appropriate levels or requirements for municipalities.	This change would potentially result in time and cost savings to TPWD. Changes to the statute may also increase the number of Historically Underutilized Businesses that bid on these projects.

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
Approval of Additional Sporting Goods Sales Tax (SGST) Allocations (Rider 14)	The timing of LBB approval of additional SGST amounts received during the biennium is often uncertain, and in some instances has taken many months. Depending on the timeframe and specific timing of the approval, this can have consequences for effectively/efficiently planning and expending these dollars within the biennium.	Amend language in Rider 14 section (a) to establish a timeframe of 90 calendar days for LBB approval of TPWD's proposed plan for use of additional SGST.	Approval of these amounts within a 90-day timeframe would ensure TPWD can make the best usage of the funds as intended according to the submitted plan.
Participation in Water Permit Hearings (Water Code §5.115(b); Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) rules at 30 Tex. Admin. Code §§55.103, 55.139, 55.201, 55.203, 55.256, and 80.109)	Parks and Wildlife Code §12.024 allows for TPWD to be a full party in any hearing on an application to store, take, or divert water. However, HB 2694 (TCEQ Sunset bill, 82R) amended Water Code §5.115(b) to prohibit a state agency from contesting the issuance of a permit or license. TCEQ's rules were changed to significantly expand this prohibition, to preclude TPWD from participation as a landowner or stakeholder of any kind in permit hearings. This significantly restricts TPWD's ability to protect fish and wildlife resource interests consistent with statutory authority.	Modify Water Code and TCEQ rules to allow TPWD be a full party in contested case hearings on TCEQ permit matters when TPWD is an affected landowner.	This change would allow TPWD to protect the interest of the state's fish and wildlife resources and protect TPWD lands such as state parks and wildlife management areas, ultimately allowing for greater protection of Texas' aquatic terrestrial and habitat resources.
Job Order Contracting (JOC) Exception for TPWD Civil Works Projects	<p>Texas Government Code (TGC) currently specifies that job order contracting (JOC) processes may not be utilized for civil works projects which includes all utility work.</p> <p>TPWD's numerous facilities located in remote areas of the state currently have aging infrastructure that requires recurring maintenance, repairs, and component replacements. This includes water supply and distribution systems, wastewater treatment systems, and electrical power distribution.</p> <p>A significant portion of the TPWD construction portfolio consists of projects that involve both utility infrastructure and vertical construction. Because TPWD is unable to utilize JOC for projects that involve utilities, a significant portion of the TPWD portfolio is impacted.</p>	<p>Examine alternatives to allow TPWD to utilize the JOC procurement method for projects that include civil works. Current options include:</p> <p>(1) Modify Texas Government Code Ch. 10, Subtitle F, Ch. 2269 and Subchapter I, Section 2269.402 to grant TPWD a specific exception, allowing the agency to use the JOC procurement method for projects that include civil works.</p> <p>(2) Modify Parks and Wildlife (PW) Code to enable TPWD use of JOC for civil projects.</p>	<p>If the requested exception or changes are adopted, the JOC procurement method will allow for expedited access to contractor services by eliminating the necessity of soliciting for a new contractor for every project. Instead, individual job orders would be awarded to qualified contractors participating in the JOC program.</p> <p>Ultimately, this would lower project costs, increase procurement, and project execution efficiencies, and reduce administrative burden on state/contracting resources.</p>
TPWD Regulatory Authorities for Protection of Fish and Wildlife Habitats on TPWD Lands and in Public Waters	Chapter 69 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) contains rules for establishing recovery values for many fish and wildlife species and other taxa groupings, but not for fish and wildlife habitat. The ability of the TPW Commission to adopt rules establishing values for habitat recovery within TAC 69 is superseded and constrained by legislative statute (Parks and Wildlife Code 12.301). Likewise, Parks and Wildlife Code 11, Subchapter G establishes guidelines for aquatic vegetation management in public waters, but does not include provisions for enforcement by TPWD.	Amend Parks and Wildlife Code 12.301 and 11, Subchapter G to enable regulatory based protection of fish and wildlife habitats and enforcement of aquatic vegetation laws in public waters.	Statutory changes would allow for greater clarification of TPWD's roles and responsibilities, and improve TPWD's effectiveness in protection/enforcement related to fish and wildlife habitats and aquatic vegetation management in public waters.

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
Treatment of Capital Transportation Appropriations for Non-Law Enforcement Related Functions	<p>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.</p> <p>The TPWD vehicle fleet is critical to its ability to effectively carry out its mission and on-going 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 on-going/recurring replacement schedule. They are as integral to operations as computers and cell phones. Lack of stable funding to replace aging transportation items on a regularly occurring schedule can create concerns for employee safety and increase repair and maintenance costs.</p>	Consider the unique nature the TPWD fleet in establishing base limits and in budget development processes by allowing the agency to retain related transportation authority when developing Legislative Appropriations Requests.	Lack of stable and secure appropriation authority to address capital transportation needs creates uncertainty and inefficiencies for TPWD fleet management and budget management. Allowing capital transportation authority to be treated similar to computers and other equipment would ensure that vehicles and other transportation items could be replaced on a rolling and recurring basis, ensuring smooth and seamless operations, increased safety, and improving agency efficiency and effectiveness overall.
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 \$250 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.

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
Appropriation of Carbon Sequestration Revenues	House Bill 4018 (88th Legislature, R.S.) authorizes the department to enter into agreements with public or private entities to develop nature-based carbon sequestration or similar ecosystem projects on TPWD lands. Funds received under such agreements are to be deposited to the Game, Fish and Water Safety Account or the State Parks Account, depending on the type of land the project impacts. Any amounts that may be received would not currently be appropriated to the department for use on ecosystem enhancement and/or other projects, limiting the effectiveness of such agreements in benefiting TPWD programs and ecosystems.	Include a rider authorizing appropriation of any revenues received from carbon sequestration agreements to TPWD, or provide for an increase in authority to allow the agency to spend amounts that have been deposited.	Estimated revenue impact to TPWD is unknown at this time, as the agency is in the process of evaluating contract proposals. However, the overall expected benefit is that this may provide some additional funding for Fund 9 and 64 related activities, and if approved as an appropriations rider, would also better allow TPWD to respond to needs related to habitat/ecosystem management and/or other agency needs as they arise.
Publication Sales Sources of Revenue Benefits Proportional Calculations (Park & Wildlife Code Sections 12.006 and 13.017)	Current Comptroller guidance provides that appropriated receipts methods-of-finance must be included in benefits proportional calculations unless another provision prohibits/restricts proportionality. As a result, publications sales are subject to calculation. However, TPWD does not have the ability to recoup additional amounts from these sources to cover the calculated cost over and above actual fringe amounts.	Amend both Parks and Wildlife Code 12.006 and 13.017 to clearly specify that publication sales sources of revenue may not be used to pay employee benefit costs other than those directly related to payment of actual salaries from that source (i.e. are not subject to benefits proportional calculations).	This change will help ensure benefits proportional costs are hitting in funds that actually incur benefit costs and are able to cover additional fringe expenses. Ultimately, this will improve transparency in use of state funds.
Relating to the Adoption of the Uniform Certificate of Title for Vessels Act (UCOTVA)	As the demand for boats continue to increase, saturation of the market with vessels damaged by natural disasters and other means puts consumers and lenders at risk, as well as others on the waterway. UCOTVA gives protection for consumers interested in purchasing a boat by protecting consumers from buying boats with previous damage, offering greater lending security, providing clear ownership records, and ultimately helping consumers make more informed decisions when purchasing used boats.	Amend current Texas vessel titling laws to incorporate the provisions of UCOTVA.	Adoption of UCOTVA will incorporate nationally adopted standards for titling of these crafts along with added protections, including but not limited to title branding and first right of lien, resulting in improved consumer protections and improved safety.

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
Purchasing Rules for Concession Operations	Purchasing policies should allow procurement of site-specific, customized products from sole source providers to ensure quality products for visitor consumption. Purchasing restrictions for staff operated concession operations must be removed if staff operations are to achieve revenue growth and visitor satisfaction.	Amend Parks and Wildlife code to allow the Commission to establish procurement standards and procedures for goods purchased for resale to meet the business needs of the department and specify that state procurement requirements do not apply to the procurement of goods purchased for resale.	Align TPWD purchasing rules for concession operations with those of other agencies. Other state agencies like State Preservation Board and Texas Historical Commission (THC) already have delegated authority codified in statute which allows those agencies to carry out more efficient retail operations. In 2023, H.B. 2719 (88R) permitted THC to establish, manage, and operate gift and souvenir retail establishments and provide retail services through the Internet or other electronic methods to support and promote state historic sites and related THC goals.
Authority for Timber Sales – Statutory Clean Up & Possible Rider Appropriation Authority	Current language in Parks and Wildlife Code 12.008(c) requires the Comptroller to execute sale of timber, hay, or other products grown on TPWD lands used as preserves, sanctuaries, or management areas, including wildlife management areas. This is legacy language missed during prior statutory clean-up efforts. However, until such time as the language is removed, TPWD must seek a delegation of authority to sell products. Additionally, proceeds from sale of these items are not currently appropriated to TPWD, limiting the ability to direct such revenues back for the benefit of the impacted property.	Modify Parks and Wildlife Code Sec.12.008 (c) to remove the outdated language; consider adoption of rider language that would grant TPWD authority to spend receipts from sale of such products for habitat treatment or other purposes on the related properties.	The changes would clean up outdated statutory language and increase efficiency and consistency in TPWD operations related to sale of products grown on TPWD lands and use of those funds to directly benefit the properties. The changes would align the requirements in Sec. 12.008 regarding the sale of products from wildlife management areas to be consistent with the requirements applied to state parks lands under Sec. 13.0061.

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 and Wildlife Code §64.001, §64.002, and §64.011)	<p>Federal regulations by the USFWS on migratory bird issues, such as depredation permits and take regulations, may change significantly across time; unfortunately, state statute precludes the Commission and/or Department from implementing regulations (i.e., various depredation orders) to be consistent or more restrictive to these changes in regulations and, ultimately, does not allow the State to act quickly on regulations that may be significantly impact certain user groups (e.g., private landowners, public, or industry).</p> <p>For example, Parks and Wildlife Code §64.002 specifically lists the bird species that may be taken at any time and in any number, and non-game birds not included on that list are assumed to be protected. Non-indigenous species of wildlife should not be afforded the same protections as indigenous species which is consistent with most state statute. Given that additional non-indigenous birds species will likely appear in Texas in the future, this list needs to be more flexible than statute.</p>	The TPW Commission should be given authority to make additional changes on bird regulations.	The Commission would need to establish regulations, and the agency impact would depend on the content of those regulations. Expected benefit would be regulatory clarity.
Harvest Reporting Data Privacy	Harvest location data collected as a result of digital tagging and mandatory reporting requirements, including specific harvest locations is subject to Open Records requirements. This creates barriers to collection of accurate harvest location data which is critical for wildlife population management.	Update appropriate statute(s) or pursue other strategies as appropriate to only allow the department to release harvest location data received as a result of digital tagging and mandatory or voluntary harvest reporting at a scale that prevents identification of specific harvest location, including property name or owner name (i.e., allow for county level summaries, but nothing more detailed). This is a proactive effort to ensure that TPWD is honoring privacy of hunter and landowner information, thereby generating trust in the regulated community that will lead to accurate reporting.	Provides hunters and anglers with confidence that harvest data submitted to the department will not be misused/abused through Open Records. Such confidence is necessary to encourage hunters/anglers to accurately report harvest data to support sound management decisions.

SCHEDULE A

Budget Structure



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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 2026-2027 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 Freshwater Fish Research Studies Underway
Number of Surveys Conducted of Freshwater Fisheries Resources
Number of Hours Spent Managing, Treating, Surveying or Providing Public Education on Aquatic Invasive Species
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 Accidents 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 Plan 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 AND 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
Number of Fisheries and Wildlife Hours
Hunting and Fishing Contacts
Water Safety Contacts
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]

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



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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 requests for 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:** No **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:

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.

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.

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

Output:

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.

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 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 interviews at boat ramps to inform the public of need for control of nuisance aquatic species infestations.

Data Limitations: Management of aquatic nuisance vegetation is guided by the Texas Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan. The plan describes best available strategies and treatment methods for prevention and control of aquatic nuisance vegetation, and establishes criteria that guide and prioritize use of available resources by TPWD. There are currently limited means to eradicate most nuisance animal species such as zebra mussels and efforts are directed toward educating the public to clean, drain and dry boats to help prevent new infestations.

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 nuisance vegetation 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 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 tallies 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 Mexico.

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 and funded state parks minor repair/maintenance projects targeted for completion during the current biennium (based on appropriated funding). 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 e-Builder and which ties to the output measure "Number of Funded State Park Minor Repair Projects Completed") by the number of projects that are approved 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 Accidents per 100,000 Park Visits Resulting in Injury or Death

Definition: Measure counts the number of accidents resulting in injury or death at state parks per 100,000 visitors. Accident 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 accidents 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.

Data Limitations: New 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 a result, the total number of park holdings may differ from the numbers reported for this measure.

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.

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.

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 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 (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.

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 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 (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.

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.

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 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 (e-Builder) and TPWD Financial System.

Methodology: The total number of minor repair projects completed within the fiscal year, as reported in e-Builder, 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 and funded Minor Repair projects 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 e-Builder.

Methodology: Using the report from e-Builder, 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 volunteer labor, including 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 this performance measure is dependent on field employees across the state completing all the required paperwork accurately and 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: Manual tabulation counting 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). Data is submitted through supervisory channels (district to regional LE offices) compiled at Austin HQ and maintained in an ACCESS database. 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.

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.

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 district offices to regional offices; then data entered at Austin HQ into the LE Division Contact Data Access database).

Methodology: Data from contact data database provides an automated tabulation of 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 district offices to regional offices; then data entered at Austin HQ into the LE Division Contact Data Access database).

Methodology: Data from contact data database provides an automated tabulation of 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 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 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. 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: Law Enforcement Division (Instructors' reports; Hunter and Boater Education record database).

Methodology: Automated tabulation. Access query pulls information based on actual class date, i.e., count of all students attending classes held 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 (automated query of the LE Contact Data ACCESS database 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 (automated query of the LE Contact Data Access database 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 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. Access query pulls information based on actual class date, i.e., count of all students attending classes held between September 1 and August 31 of each fiscal year. Cumulative.

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

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, classes, or outreach events held. Most data is reported online through the department's Volunteer Management System (VMS). For those reports that are collected and reported manually, data is compiled by program managers from the event or program report forms which are stored with respective programs. Data from the forms is entered into measures forms for annual tracking where applicable, the VMS for Outreach and Recruitment, Aquatic Education, Community Water Education, and Project WILD, and into the Online Registration System for Outreach performed by Hunter Education staff and volunteers.

Methodology: Data is tabulated for each program or event, based on program/event date. Tabulations are made by adding the number of participants at outreach and education events 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 TPWD 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 Matamo Analytics software; limitations are dictated by hardware failures, potential software limitations or errors within Matamo Analytics.

Data Source: Matamo Analytics application.

Methodology: Matamo 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 is 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 by GovDelivery, 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 GovDelivery, a nationally recognized email service provider serving international, federal and state agencies. GovDelivery provides the unique number of people who are signed up for specific topics.

Methodology: The GovDelivery comprehensive digital communication management platform is a web-based solution that enables customers and constituents to opt-in to receive updates and information on topics of interest to them. It follows best practices in enabling these subscribers to easily unsubscribe or change their subscription preferences at any time. This management platform provides updated information on the number of subscribers and their preferences. A TPWD database analyst deletes all "unlisted" subscribers (those who have received a one-time transactional email but have not signed up for any ongoing communications).

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 Granicus' GovDelivery Communications Cloud (GovDelivery), 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 GovDelivery, a nationally recognized digital communication platform serving international, federal and state agencies.

Methodology: The GovDelivery comprehensive digital communication management platform is a web-based solution that enables Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to communicate with its customers and constituents. It follows best practices in enabling these subscribers to easily unsubscribe or change their subscription preferences at any time. GovDelivery's Bulletin Analytics Report provides the total number of delivered email and text messages during a specified period and also provides detail of breaking this down by each message sent during the 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 Matamo 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 Matamo Analytics data compilation software. Non-cumulative.

Purpose: Measure reflects the number of magazine subscribers and content viewership. 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 Registration Information and Titling System (BRITS).

Methodology: Automatically tabulated by BRITS 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 & 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 & 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



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GOAL: HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESS (HUB)

To strive to ensure that contracting opportunities for Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB) vendors exist throughout all divisions within the department and to establish and implement policies governing purchasing that promote the use of HUB vendors in all purchasing and contracting activities.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) established agency specific HUB goals by determining average HUB 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.

HUB OBJECTIVE:

To include HUB vendors in the total value of contracts and subcontracts awarded annually by the agency in purchasing and public works contracting for object codes designated by the Texas Comptroller in accordance with established agency-specific HUB goals by procurement category. Agency-specific HUB goals for fiscal year 2024 are as follows:

11.20%	Heavy Construction
21.10%	Building Construction
32.90%	Special Trade Construction
23.70%	Professional Services
17.61%	Other Services
21.10%	Commodities

Outcome:

Percentage of total dollar value of purchasing and public works contracts and subcontracts awarded and paid to HUB vendors certified by the Texas Comptroller in the designated object codes specified for each of the six procurement categories.

HUB STRATEGY:

Continue to develop and implement a program to identify and recruit HUB vendors, identify subcontracting opportunities, and provide education and assistance to minority, woman, and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses in the HUB certification and bidding process. Improve subcontracting reporting process to ensure accurate data is provided and captured properly.

Output:

Number of Bid Proposals Received from HUB Vendors

Number of Contracts Awarded to HUB Vendors

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

TPWD HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESS PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

TPWD is committed to supporting and promoting the State of Texas (HUB) program. The department strives to ensure that contracting opportunities for minority, woman, and service disabled veteran-owned businesses exist throughout all divisions and to promote the use of HUB vendors in all purchasing and contracting activities.

TPWD's HUB program is administered by the Procurement Director/HUB Coordinator. The HUB coordinator maintains open communication with agency leadership and purchasing personnel regarding established TPWD HUB policy and the status of the agency's progress toward achievement of HUB goals.

In accordance with the Texas Administrative Code, TPWD has established agency-specific HUB goals. These goals were developed in consultation with and based on a methodology from the Comptroller's Office that is used by all state agencies. The methodology includes the "Ready, Willing and Able" vendor list, five-year performance results, and the percentages resulting from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts' most recent Disparity Study.

On an annual basis, these goals will be reviewed and adjusted based on purchasing history and anticipated budget constraints in future years. TPWD monitors its performance against the agency-specific goals, as well as the statewide HUB goals and reports HUB information to the Executive Office on a quarterly basis.

TPWD is confident that ongoing initiatives, as detailed below, will continue to positively impact future HUB participation:

- Increasing efforts to identify minority-owned, woman-owned, and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses to educate them on the benefits of participating in state programs such as the Centralized Master Bidders List (CMBL) and becoming HUB certified.
- Cultivating ongoing partnerships with Texas Association of African American Chambers of Commerce (TAACC) and Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce (TAMACC). Through these partnerships and active participation 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, TPWD continues its efforts to increase vendor outreach, education and recruitment.
- Improving tracking and reporting of HUB subcontracting expenditures through monthly Progress Assessment Reports (PARs).
- Seeking HUB subcontracting in contracts that are less than \$100,000 when possible.
- Including HUB subcontracting plans in all agency contracts in excess of \$100,000 wherein subcontracting opportunities are determined to exist and monitoring contractor compliance with HUB subcontracting plans after contract award.
- Providing potential contractors with reference lists of certified HUB vendors who may be able to participate as subcontractors in TPWD contracts.
- Targeting specific categories of items for HUB purchases such as office equipment/supplies, maintenance, repair and operating equipment/supplies, and computer/telecommunications equipment/supplies.
- Compiling monthly and quarterly reports tracking the use of HUB vendors by each operating division.
- Preparing and distributing purchasing, contracting and subcontracting information in a manner that encourages participation by all businesses.
- Using the CMBL and supplementing with non-CMBL vendors on the HUB directory for solicitation of formal and informal bids.
- Conducting preliminary reviews of HUB Subcontracting Plan submittals prior to solicitation due dates.

CONTRACT MANAGER TRAINING

TPWD 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.

FY23 HUB BUSINESS POLICY COMPLIANCE

The following information was originally submitted to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and the Legislative Budget Board in November 2023, pursuant to Article IX, Sec. 7.07 of the General Appropriations Act (88th Legislature). This information is included for reference.

1. YOUR AGENCY HUB GOALS DURING FY 2023

Procurement Category	Heavy Construction	Building Construction	Special Trade Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	Commodities
FY 2023 Goal	11.20%	21.10%	32.90%	23.70%	15.37%	21.10%
Performance	24.88%	21.90%	22.80%	26.06%	19.23%	20.15%

2. PRIME CONTRACT ACTIVITIES

2a. Prime Contract: Total expenditure during FY 2023

Procurement Category		Heavy Construction	Building Construction	Special Trade Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	Commodities	Total
African American		\$27,044	\$279,986	\$405,662	\$0	\$437,766	\$221,461	\$1,371,919
Asian American		\$0	\$5,685	\$0	\$18,676	\$403,012	\$418,044	\$845,417
Hispanic American		\$2,664	\$2,770,445	\$421,428	\$355,659	\$1,677,411	\$2,562,465	\$7,790,072
Native American		\$11,041	\$2,826,044	\$372,662	\$0	\$75,137	\$53,661	\$3,338,545
Non-minority Woman		\$1,274,869	\$719,917	\$227,548	\$434,940	\$3,637,378	\$3,293,297	\$9,587,949
Disabled Veteran	Included in HUB Groups	\$0	\$75,000	\$782	\$0	\$120,815	\$5,223	\$201,820
	Not Included in HUB Groups	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-HUB		\$7,092,619	\$25,734,530	\$5,079,971	\$4,302,432	\$33,235,495	\$40,254,231	\$115,699,278
HUB Total		\$1,315,618	\$6,677,077	\$1,428,082	\$809,275	\$6,351,518	\$6,554,151	\$23,135,722

2b. Prime Contract: Number of HUB/non-HUB vendors (ongoing and new) utilized during FY 2023

Procurement Category		Heavy Construction	Building Construction	Special Trade Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	Commodities	Total
African American		2	1	5	2	19	23	52
Asian American		0	1	0	2	13	15	31
Hispanic American		2	8	28	12	49	50	149
Native American		1	1	2	0	5	7	16
Non-minority Woman		5	8	30	3	100	125	271
Disabled Veteran	Included in HUB Groups	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
	Not Included in HUB Groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-HUB		43	69	1,752	470	2,817	2,918	8,069
HUB Total		10	19	65	19	187	223	523

3. SUBCONTRACT ACTIVITIES**3a. Subcontract: Total expenditure during FY 2023**

Procurement Category		Heavy Construction	Building Construction	Special Trade Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	Commodities	Total
African American		\$214,972	\$173,954	\$0	\$57,121	\$65,890	\$0	\$511,937
Asian American		\$2,055	\$79,596	\$0	\$120,105	\$0	\$0	\$201,756
Hispanic American		\$503,989	\$22,171	\$0	\$56,753	\$0	\$0	\$582,913
Native American		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$34,006	\$0	\$0	\$34,006
Non-minority Woman		\$48,128	\$163,668	\$0	\$266,476	\$0	\$0	\$478,272
Disabled Veteran	Included in HUB Groups	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$136	\$0	\$0	\$136
	Not Included in HUB Groups	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-HUB		\$2,609,172	\$4,281,660	\$0	\$633,297	\$0	\$0	\$7,524,129
HUB Total		\$769,144	\$439,389	\$0	\$534,597	\$65,890	\$0	\$1,809,020

3b. Subcontract: Number of HUB/non-HUB vendors (ongoing and new) utilized during FY 2023

Procurement Category		Heavy Construction	Building Construction	Special Trade Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	Commodities	Total
African American		13	4	1	11	5	0	34
Asian American		1	0	1	26	4	0	32
Hispanic American		17	18	6	32	8	0	81
Native American		3	0	2	7	4	0	16
Non-minority Woman		21	13	31	53	29	0	147
Disabled Veteran	Included in HUB Groups	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Not Included in HUB Groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-HUB		380	525	333	112	137	36	1,523
HUB Total		55	35	41	130	50	0	311

4. NEW VENDORS: NUMBER OF VENDORS (PRIME AND SUB) UTILIZED IN FY 2023 WHICH WERE NOT USED DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS

Procurement Category		Heavy Construction	Building Construction	Special Trade Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	Commodities	Total
African American		0	0	0	0	8	10	18
Asian American		0	0	0	0	2	3	5
Hispanic American		0	1	7	1	8	12	29
Native American		0	0	0	0	2	2	4
Non-minority Woman		0	2	3	1	12	16	34
Disabled Veteran	Included in HUB Groups	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
	Not Included in HUB Groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-HUB		12	21	82	6	511	535	1167
HUB Total		0	3	10	2	33	44	92

5. SPONSORED OR PARTICIPATED IN LOCAL AND STATEWIDE SETTINGS TO ENCOURAGE HUB PARTICIPATION IN STATE PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES FY 2023

Event/Activity	Number of Events Hosted or Attended	
	Hosted	Attended
Economic Opportunity Forum	1	2
Annual Meeting/Setting	1	1
Advocacy Group Meeting (i.e., TAAACC, TAMACC, etc.)	0	3
DIR HUB Advisory Committee, CPA HUB Advisory Committee, HUB Discussion Workgroup, Other	3	9

6. MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ PROGRAM

Active Mentor-Protégé Program	Ongoing	Added Current Fiscal Year
Number of Programs	0	1

7. HUB PROGRAM STAFFING

HUB Staffing	Allocated	Current
Staff Size	2.25	2.25

8. WORK RELATED ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY HUB PROGRAM STAFF

HUB Program Personnel	% of Weekly Hours with HUB	% of Weekly Hours with Purchasing	% of Weekly Hours with Contract
Staff 1	25%	50%	25%
Staff 2	60%	20%	20%
Staff 3	100%	0%	0%

PLAN FOR MAINTAINING FUTURE COMPLIANCE

TPWD is diligently working to increase efforts to recruit minority, woman, and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses for the Statewide HUB program. Focus is on vendors in our remote locations, educating the vendor community as well as TPWD personnel, outreach to small business councils, and a field initiative to identify HUB vendors in TPWD's area of operations with outreach from HUB program staff.

SCHEDULE D

Statewide Capital Plan

[PLAN SUBMITTED SEPARATELY TO BOND REVIEW
BOARD IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS.]



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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.]



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SCHEDULE F

Workforce Plan



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TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Workforce Plan

Fiscal Years 2025-2029

Hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation have long been part of the fabric of Texas. Thousands of years ago, native hunters and gatherers settled in Texas to take advantage of its abundant natural resources. Today, people still 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 vitally essential that lands and waters in Texas are set aside and managed for the conservation of our 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 and talent retention,
- development, implementation, and integration of effective Human Resources (HR) policies and systems that promote an agency-shared culture of growth,
- promotion of an environment of continuous learning and development, and
- fostering an environment of employee engagement.

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 skill sets 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, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Chief of Staff. Division Directors provide leadership and oversight to their respective areas of responsibility. The agency is organized into 13 divisions:

- Coastal Fisheries
- Communications
- Executive Office
- Financial Resources
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Infrastructure
- Inland Fisheries
- Law Enforcement
- Legal
- State Parks
- Support Resources
- Wildlife

In the General Appropriations Act, the Legislature categorizes agencies broadly by their function. This allows for information to be provided about the funding of each Article, or function, of government spending, as well as a comparison between agencies under

the same function. TPWD is categorized under Article VI, or Natural Resources agencies. The comparisons of TPWD to Article VI agencies in the charts herein are intended to provide more specific points of comparison than TPWD to 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 limitation of 3,160.9 in FY2024 and FY2025. The workforce headcount during FY2023 averaged 2,939.4, 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 89 state parks/historic sites, 50 wildlife management areas, eight fish hatcheries, and a law enforcement training academy that collectively comprise over 1.4 million acres managed in the public trust for recreation and conservation.

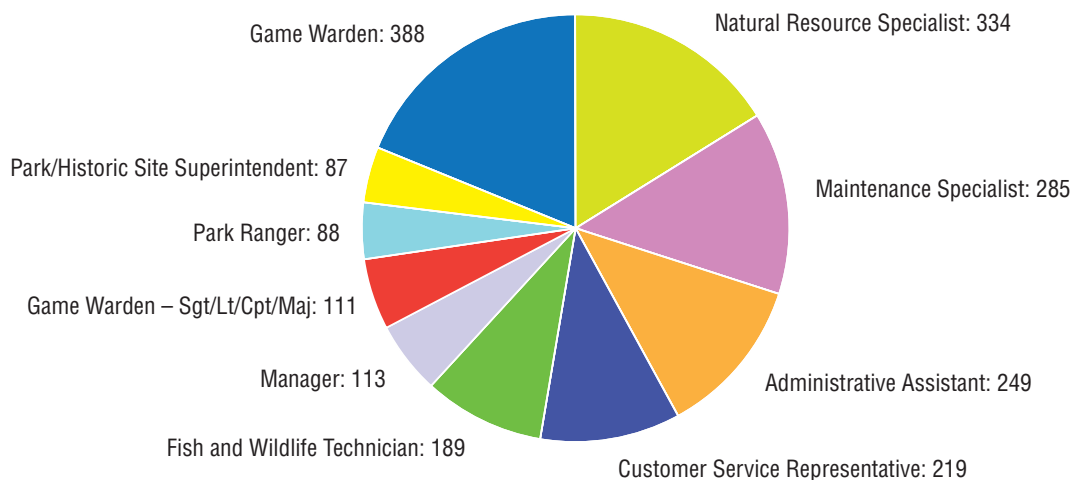
As of the end of January 2024, TPWD's workforce consisted of:

- 3,028 classified regular full-time (CRF) and part-time employees
- 67 classified temporary full-time (CTF) and classified temporary part-time (CTP) employees
- 3 contingent workers aiding on short-term projects and other temporary work assignments
- 305 veterans
- 10,079 active volunteers (FY23 totals)
- 125 interns (FY23 Totals)

TPWD's workforce has focused skills and abilities supporting the agency's strategies and functions. Five of the top ten job classifications make up 48% of the agency's total workforce, with 1,475 employees occupying these positions. Professionals make up the most significant percentage of the TPWD workforce in the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) categories together with the following:

Professionals, 32%
 Protective Service Workers, 23%
 Administrative Support, 19%
 Service Maintenance, 13%
 Technicians, 10%
 Paraprofessionals, 2%
 Officials and Administrators, 0.68%
 Skilled Craft Workers, 0.65%

Top Ten Classifications Used by TPWD

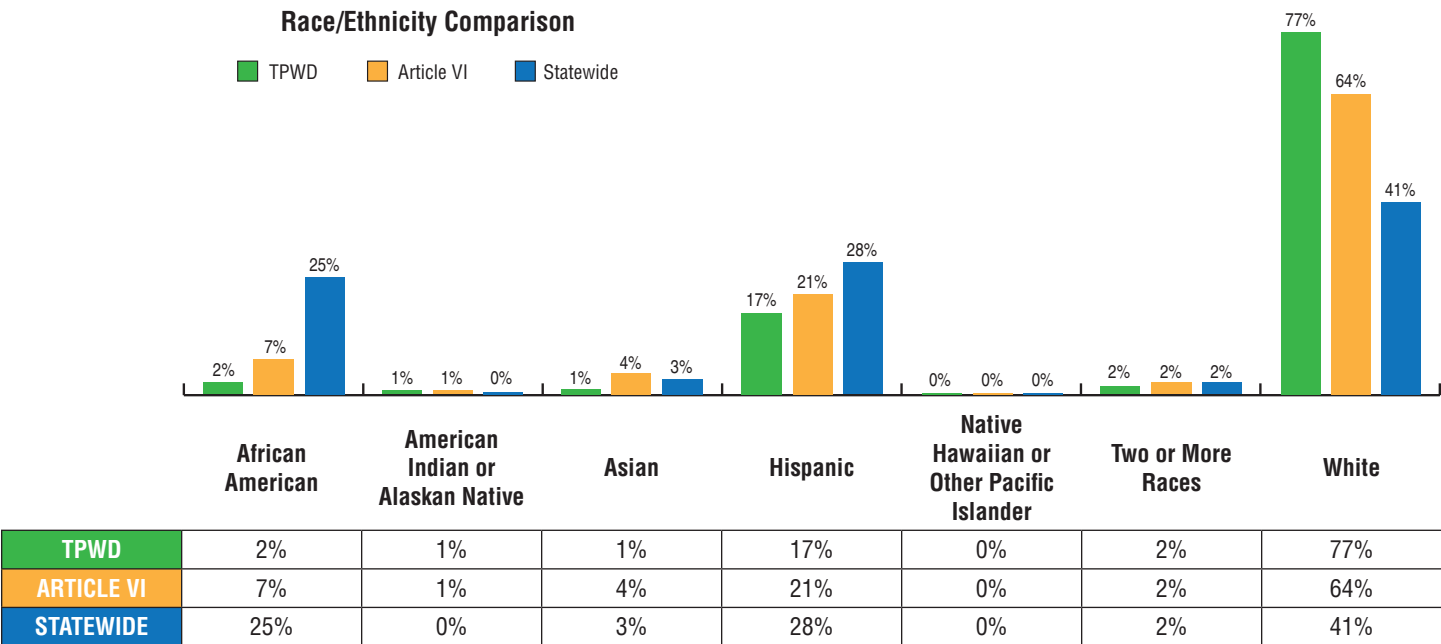


Most divisions supplement their workforce with TPWD-paid and externally paid interns. Externally paid internships are funded by partnerships outside of TPWD such as the Al Henry program, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, and the Coastal Conservation Association. The seasonal and temporary workforce is essential to the agency, due to increased activities and visitors to TPWD’s facilities. In addition, interns support ongoing programs, events, maintenance, and the agency’s overall operations.

RACE/ETHNICITY

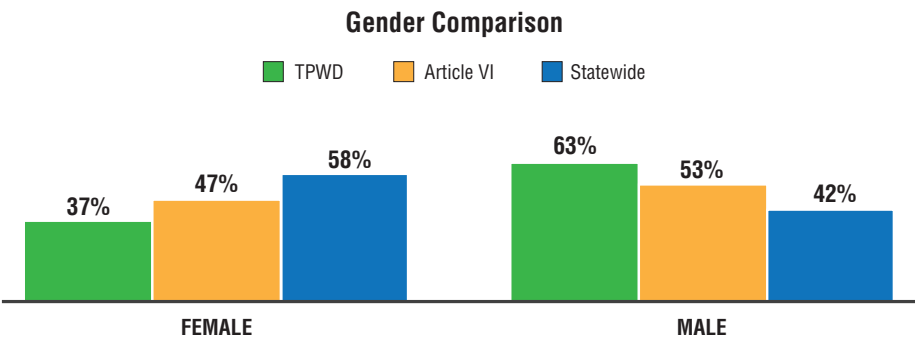
TPWD’s workforce is:

- 77% White
- 17% Hispanic
- 2% African American, and
- 1% or less each: Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (NHPI), and Two or More Races



GENDER

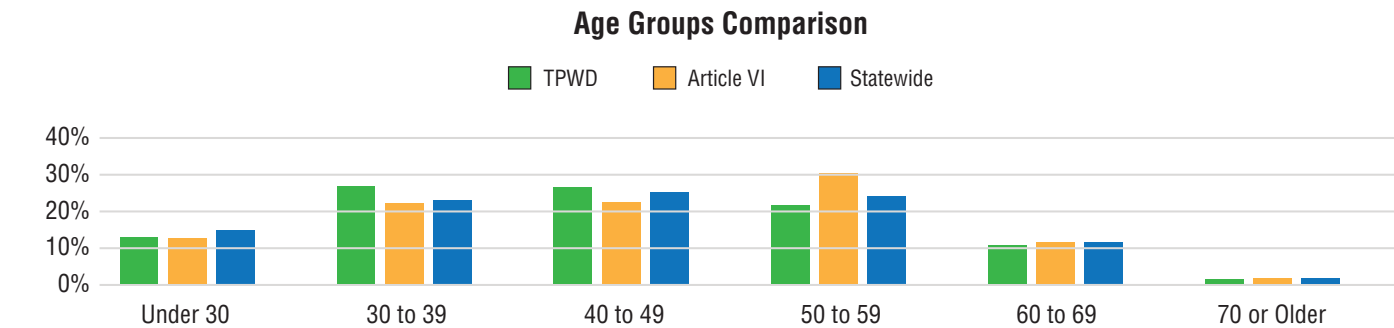
TPWD’s workforce is 63% male and 37% female. In the first quarter of FY2024, TPWD has seen an increase in female hiring at many levels across the agency. However, an examination of turnover data for the first two quarters of FY2024 has shown females leaving the agency at a higher rate than they are represented in the agency.



The agency has seen an increase of females appointed to numerous executive and management positions. Females occupy significant leadership roles in the agency, serving as directors of Communications, Human Resources, Infrastructure, Information Technology, and Internal Audit, in addition to the agency’s Chief of Staff.

AGE

The graph below shows that 75% of the agency is between the ages of 30 and 60; 12% are approaching or are already at retirement age. With more individuals choosing to work well past the typical retirement age, TPWD and other workplaces are experiencing a multi-generational workforce. TPWD employees range in age from 17 to 86 years old.

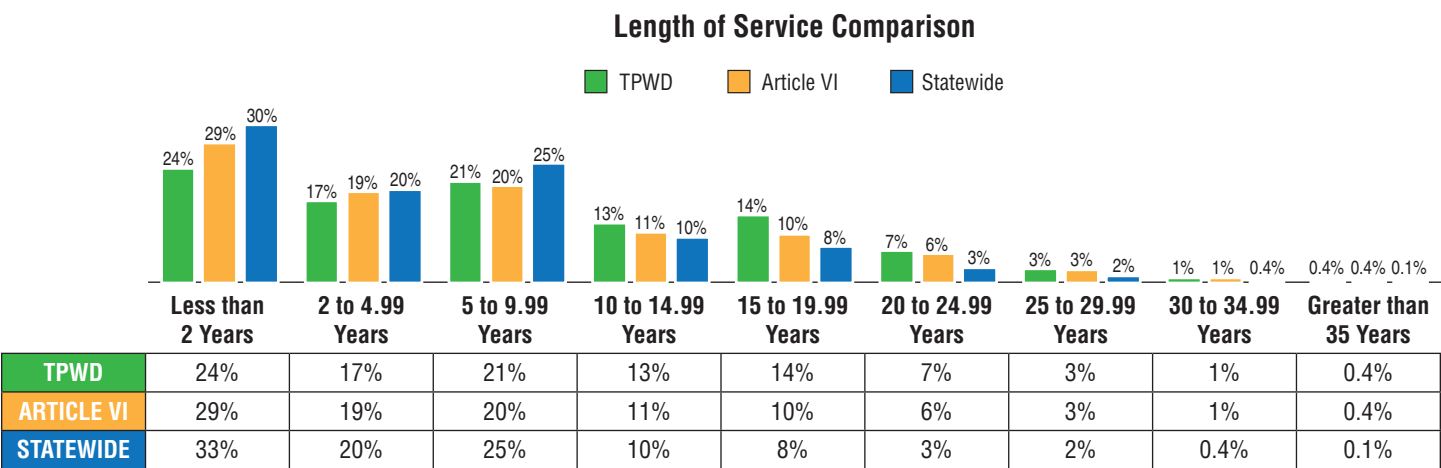


VETERANS

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 veterans in the workforce stands at 9.77%. TPWD actively participates in Veteran Recruiting events and the U.S. Department of Defense SkillBridge Program to create a pipeline of veteran candidates for TPWD vacancies.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

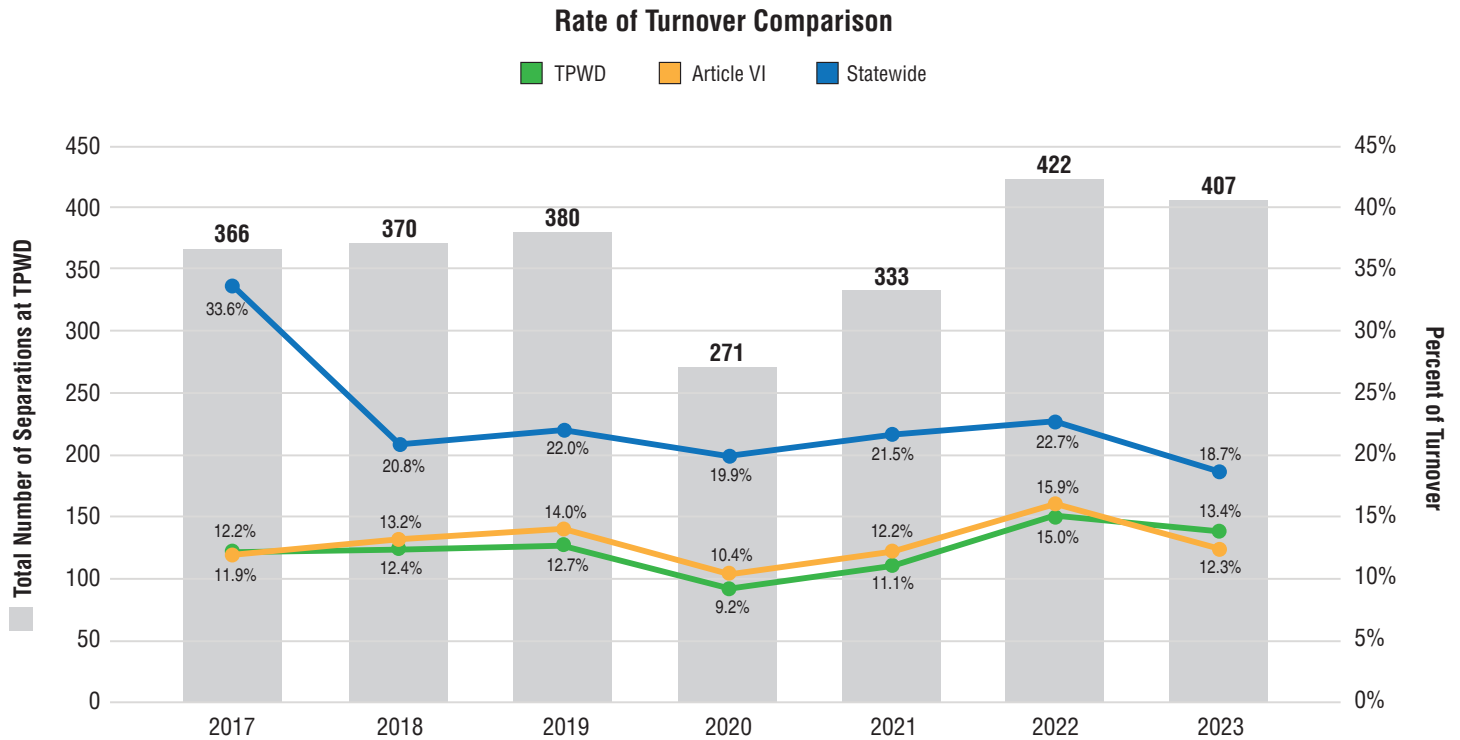
As of January 2024, approximately 41% of TPWD employees have five or fewer years of service at TPWD, 27% have between ten and 20 years, and approximately 11% have 20 years or more. While 62% of TPWD’s workforce has less than 10 years of service, the agency has a larger proportion of employees with 10-20 years of service than other state agencies.



TURNOVER

TPWD is known for recruiting and retaining quality employees dedicated to the mission of the agency. This dedication is reflected in the relatively low and consistent turnover rate the agency has experienced when compared to statewide and Article VI agencies. In FY2023, TPWD experienced a turnover rate of 13.4%, compared to an 18.7% turnover rate for state agencies.

Despite consistently low turnover, the agency's key challenge is the loss of institutional knowledge and expertise resulting from retirements and resignations.



Post-pandemic, TPWD is starting to see turnover rates reduced from what was experienced during the colloquial “great resignation.”

During FY2023 and thus far into FY2024, the common reasons reported for voluntary separations from TPWD were:

- Better pay/benefits
- Retirement
- Issues with my supervisor/issues with employees supervised
- No or little career advancement opportunities
- Relocation of self or spouse

RETIREMENT ELIGIBILITY

The agency estimates that 28% of agency staff will be eligible for retirement at the end of FY2029. By FY2029, seven of TPWD's 13 divisions will have 35% or more staff eligible for retirement. Currently, the agency employs 54 return-to-work retirees and has 430 employees who are eligible to retire at the end of FY2024. As employees retire, establishing knowledge transfer or knowledge-sharing best practices will be key to the continuity of operations.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

TPWD pay lags behind Article VI agency salaries on average. State salaries have always lagged behind private-sector salaries for comparable work; however, the gap continues to widen. While state employees received a legislatively appropriated salary increase in July 2023 and targeted salary increases that were distributed in early fiscal year 2024, pay continues to contribute to employee turnover since it has not kept pace with inflation and the labor market. Another legislatively appropriated increase is set to take place in September 2024. 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 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 variety of services across almost every division. State Parks volunteers serve as ambassadors to the public and support staff in day-to-day operations at the parks and providing interpretive programs. Texas Master Naturalists provide education, outreach, and service to 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.

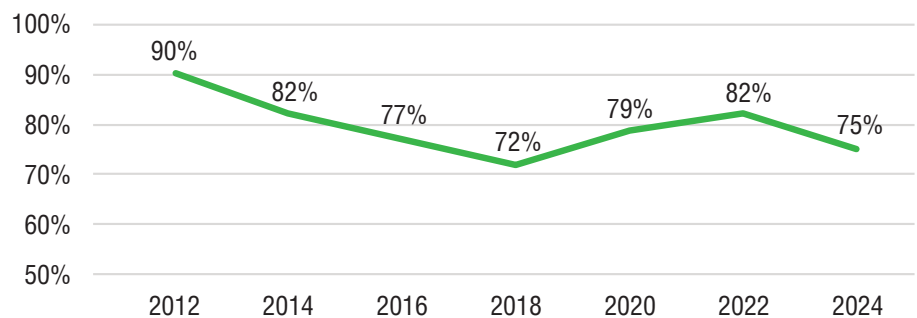
In FY2023, TPWD had over 10,079 active volunteers working within the agency. These volunteers provided over 1,146,794 hours of service for the agency. These services are equivalent to 551 FTEs, valued at over \$36.5 million based upon the dollar value of volunteer time at \$31.80 hour (Independent Sector). Volunteer numbers decreased during COVID, but are beginning to trend back to pre-pandemic levels. TPWD continues to seek opportunities to expand its volunteer program and increase the diversity of its volunteers.

SURVEY OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

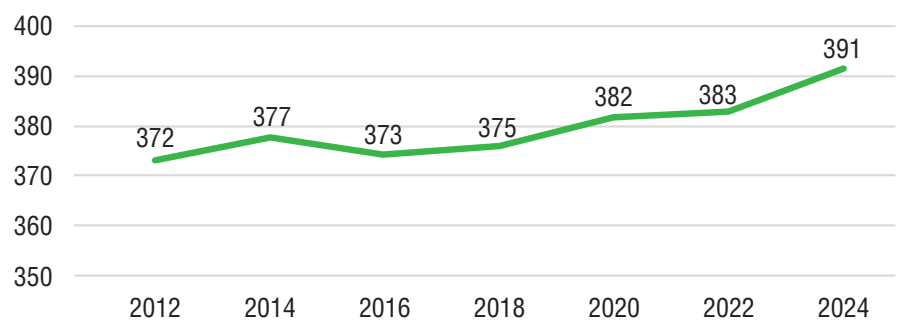
The Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) is an assessment administered biennially to employees throughout state government by the Institute of Organizational Excellence at the University of Texas at Austin. Employees are asked to anonymously share feedback on their agency's multiple topics through the SEE, including internal communication, pay, supervision, and strategic vision. Generally, the agency has high response rates and high scores on the survey constructs.

Employees are asked to respond to over 70 statements using a Likert scale that ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The results of the responses are calculated into corresponding scores that span 100 to 500 points. 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 2024 results showed some shift in the agency's strengths. For the most recent survey, the highest scoring constructs for the agency (in order from highest score to third highest) are Workgroup, Supervision, and Strategic Vision. TPWD's lowest-scoring constructs (in order from lowest score to third lowest) are 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 2024, half of all construct scores for TPWD were above 400 points.

TPWD will continue to utilize the SEE results to address employee concerns, strategically plan for the future of our workforce, and develop appropriate actions that boost engagement and retention throughout the agency. It is vital that the agency utilize organizational tools, like the SEE, to protect one of our most valued resources – our human resources.

II. FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE (DEMAND ANALYSIS)

As times change, the workplace and workforce also change. Post-pandemic, we are starting to see which effects will be long lasting. More recently, employees and potential applicants are looking for a workplace that aligns with their specific individual and family needs and values. Reconciling the needs of the workforce and what a workplace can provide are critical to agency operations.

The world is experiencing a post-pandemic evolution that is changing our perspectives and beliefs about how we work. In particular:

- The balance of power has shifted from employers to employees.
- The employee value proposition has shifted from “work for me” to “work with me.”
- Employees favor a hybrid model versus going back to the office full time.
- Employees are rethinking their purpose—they are searching for meaning, not activity. In particular, millennials are interested in working with purpose-driven companies rather than those focused on shareholder value ⁱ.

Collaboration no longer requires working in proximity to one another. Technologies that were quickly put in place at the start of the pandemic have become efficient collaboration tools for headquarters and field staff, replacing in-person meetings that may be perceived as time wasters and productivity barriers. Now, we have those discussions and complete the work synchronously through quick, virtual meetings that are less taxing on time and fiscal resources.

The Texas unemployment rate has not seen a rise since April 2021. The unemployment rate is low at 3.9%, and has consistently been between 3.8% and 4.1% since April 2022 ⁱⁱ. The U.S. economy is projected to add almost 4.7 million jobs from 2022 to 2032, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports. Total national employment is projected to increase to 169.1 million and grow 0.3% annually, which is slower than the 1.2% annual growth recorded over the 2012-22 decade ⁱⁱⁱ.

Projected employment growth is driven by labor force growth, which in turn is constrained by population growth. Total population is projected to grow slightly slower than previous decades, at 0.7% annually over the projected period, although population growth is concentrated among individuals aged 75 and over because of the aging of the baby-boom generation ^{iv}. Because older age groups have lower labor force participation rates than prime age workers, overall labor force participation rates are projected to decline. The participation rate for prime working age women, ages 25-54, is projected to increase slightly from 76.4% in 2022 to 76.7% in 2032. For prime working age men, however, the participation rate is projected to decline 0.2% annually in the 2022-32 decade, from 88.6% to 86.7% ^v.

The computer and mathematical occupational group is also projected to experience much faster than average employment growth. The expanding digital presence of businesses and consumers will produce a massive amount of data for these workers to collect, organize, analyze, and protect. Employment in occupations such as data science, statistics, and information security is projected to grow more than 11 times the average rate ^{vi}.

TPWD has established the following overlay initiatives to guide the strategic planning that sets forth the work of our agency. These overlay initiatives have established working groups within the agency and the work groups 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.
 - Create better customer and stakeholder experiences both internally and externally.
 - Create efficiencies where savings can be put towards advancing the mission of preserving and recreating in the landscape and in the water.
 - Continue to stay relevant with Texans and be a leader amongst all other agencies.
- Elevate the enterprise of science.
 - 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 needed skills/competencies to carry out these duties.

CRITICAL JOB COMPETENCIES

As previously mentioned, TPWD employs a variety of positions to carry out its mission. Human Resources Division follows the guidelines provided by the State of Texas Classifications Plan of the State Auditor’s Office and works closely with the agency supervisors/managers to identify the basic and advanced technical skills and competencies of 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 & Job Specific Skills

- Strong information technology skills (including legacy tools and systems)
- Water and wastewater licensed operators
- Maintenance and repair (equipment and facilities)
- Toxicology expertise
- Experience in specialty programs like ADA compliance, sustainability, safety, and risk & 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 competencies were identified and deemed critical for agency-wide 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 other similar jobs outside of state employment. TPWD employees drive significant distances to perform their job duties in many cases. This is due to a lack of affordable housing close to designated worksites and/or remote worksite locations, requiring significant travel. State Auditor's Office (SAO) exit surveys also reveal that pay and benefits continue to be the number one reason for leaving employment with TPWD. With high inflation, concerns that pay will not keep pace with rising costs are real. TPWD has some positions paying 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 33% of employees 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 targeted recruitment, 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 better 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, pay by project, 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 different generations typically want 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 salary comparisons of classifications against other state agencies and within internal divisions to compare and reduce compression issues between divisions. Empirically, the SEE results have confirmed that salary remains the number one issue related to job satisfaction. The agency turnover rate is seeing signs of stabilization post-pandemic. Other noted staffing challenges with recent external changes and competition for talent include:

- Other state agencies and the private sector have affected the entire agency significantly in retention and quality of applicant pools. TPWD is not able to offer competitive pay for its employees.
- Entry-level positions, particularly at state parks, are challenging to fill. The department is seeing current staff take on more responsibilities with small pay increases when available. Entry-level salaries in other job markets are paying increasingly more.
- TPWD has experienced recruiting and retention difficulties for many mid-level and senior positions in the areas of natural resources, maintenance, administrative support, and executive leadership due to below-market salary and minimum experience requirements.

OPERATIONAL EXPANSION AND FTE LIMITATIONS

Over the past several years, TPWD has faced newly emerging challenges in the conservation landscape and experienced fortuitous opportunities with new, mission-specific funding sources. The natural resources of Texas continue to face various threats in various forms such as disease, urban expansion, and invasive species. However, the agency mission has already or

potentially stands to benefit from several funding sources, including the dedication of the Sporting Goods Sales Tax and the establishment of the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund. Collectively, these emerging challenges and opportunities require TPWD to adjust, create, 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 disease eradication and species of greatest conservation need. The agency will need additional FTEs to appropriately staff these efforts. Of course, 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 would also need to focus on positions necessary to support operational expansion (human resources, finance and purchasing, information technology, legal, communications, and other support resources).

While TPWD can successfully maintain current business operations within its current FTE limitations, process efficiencies and workload capacities have been maximized. To respectfully 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 highly quality staff and to ensure an effective human resources management (HRM) 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 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 human resource-specific strategic goals:

Goal 1: Recruitment and Talent Management – Attract, employ, develop, and retain a qualified, varied 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 to reflect the workforce of the state, 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 must implement a succession plan and 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 endeavors to be an employer of choice.

Given that 14% 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 helping the agency secure the talent needs 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.
- Targeted recruitment efforts for students and veterans in areas of the state where TPWD positions exist by engaging communities through efforts such as providing seminars on becoming a successful applicant.
- Developing and executing recruitment strategies to reach educational institutions with conservation-relevant degree programs for broad segments of the population.
- Increasing investment in high school students by conducting visits and contacts with guidance counselors and coaches to promote TPWD employment and professional growth opportunities to interested students.
- Utilizing community college partnerships to recruit IT professionals earning industry-relevant certifications in conjunction with HB 584 (88th Legislative Session).
- With the agency's goal to increase veteran employment to 20% of the workforce, the Military Employment Liaison position in the HR Division dedicates its services to veterans. TPWD participates in the U.S. Department of Defense SkillBridge Program. SkillBridge is an opportunity for service members to gain valuable civilian work experience in government positions during their last 180 days of military service and at no cost to the agency. This has been a successful recruitment avenue for the agency and we will continue to expand the usage of the program within TPWD.
- Increasing outreach to veterans by expanding existing partnerships among TPWD divisions.
- Create 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 in comparison within TPWD, to other state agencies, the private sector, and the overall labor market. The agency's long-term goal is to develop a comprehensive compensation package that is competitive enough to attract, motivate, and retain quality employees.

While the agency will not be able to directly compete with many private entities, TPWD will emphasize a total compensation package that includes 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 provides key professional development and supports formal succession plans by ensuring capable leaders at all levels of the organization have the acumen to 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 eight-month-long Senior Leadership Development Program (SLDP).

- Continuing to develop first-line managers and team leaders through the Successful First Line Management program (SFLM), which covers self-reflection, nature of management, nature of teams, communication, conflict management, and coaching.
- Ongoing development of a Middle Management Development Program for leaders who are seeking development and growth between SFLM and SLDP.
- Deployment of 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 team.
- 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 iteration of mentoring is intended for supervisors who are new into a managerial role to be mentored by tenured, experienced managers.
 - Informal Mentoring – The Human Resources Training and Organization Development offer 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 the 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, multigenerational workforce, facilitation skills, teambuilding, 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 the best, brightest individuals and team accomplishments.
- Developing and executing recruitment strategies to reach educational institutions with relevant degree programs.
- Promoting participative management strategies that allow individual contributors to take an active role in decision-making, which increases employee engagement.
- 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 Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) and 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 is 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 State Auditor's Office online database systems, and various research from industry-leading resources that were information applicable.

The labor market profile is in constant change, and it is critical for the agency's operational success to have a thorough, comprehensive workforce plan. As new technologies continue to consistently 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 is believed 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 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.]



Life's better outside.®

SCHEDULE H

Report on Customer Service



Life's better outside.®

CUSTOMER INVENTORY

The 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

Strategies may be subject to change based on approval from the Legislative Budget Board and Governor's Office for the 2026-2027 biennium.

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 and on the TPWD Office of Internal Affairs page on the TPWD website, 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.

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/business/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 our 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 2023-2024 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
- TPWD online customer satisfaction survey (general)
- Department website – TPWD routinely solicits and responds to public comment and inquiries through the agency website

For the purpose of this report, TPWD will focus on the TPWD online customer satisfaction survey.

TPWD ONLINE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Executive Summary

The TPWD online customer satisfaction survey was available from Monday, March 4, 2024, to Monday, March 18, 2024. A total of 1,172 survey responses were collected. This version of the survey featured some significant improvements from prior iterations.

- Sampling method:
Instead of continuing to use a convenience sample (in which web visitors received a pop-up box on the web page asking to complete the survey online), a randomized sampling method was employed to ensure that the individuals selected for the survey were representative of the TPWD customer population. Using this method allowed for a more definitive analysis that can be extrapolated back to the population.
- Question structure:
Previously, multi-part questions made it unclear which portions a given answer was responding to or had an opinion about, and just as importantly, which portions were not considered relevant (example question: “How satisfied are you with TPWD facilities, including access to the agency itself, the physical office location, its signage and cleanliness?”). Breaking down these questions into their sub-components yields better understanding of how customers view each attribute separately.
- Demographic segmentation:
Collecting demographic data made it possible to break out customer feedback by age, gender, ethnicity, household income, and zip code. This change allows for investigation into how customer satisfaction levels may differ across segments of the population.

Compared to the previous survey, satisfaction remains high across all measured features. 54.0% of customers indicated they were “very satisfied” and 36.8% indicated they were “satisfied” overall, for a combined 90.9% of respondents indicating that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with TPWD.

TPWD ONLINE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

An online customer satisfaction survey of key TPWD constituents, drawn from a sample of license holders, state park visitors, magazine subscribers, educational course participants, and boat owners was conducted in the spring of 2024. The survey measured statutorily required 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.

Additionally, the following questions were asked if the respondents indicated having experience with these functions/areas:

- Satisfaction with Gov QA;
- Satisfaction with calling TPWD on the phone;
- Satisfaction with digital tagging for hunting and fishing;
- Satisfaction with fresh and saltwater fishing.

Components and Features

TIMEFRAME

The survey was accessible from Monday, March 4 to Monday, March 18, 2024.

METHODOLOGY

Once the decision was made to utilize a random sample instead of a convenience sample (web pop-up), the next step was to determine the data source from which to draw responses. LURES (License Utilization and Revenue Enhancement System) was chosen, as it serves as a central repository for every type of TPWD customer. To collect as representative a sample as possible, consumptive (hunting, fishing, and combination license holders) and non-consumptive (magazine subscribers, boat registrants, state park visitors, and educational course participants) customers in LURES were used as the target population. The sample group was created using a simple random sample framework.

The customers selected for the survey received an email on Monday, March 4th containing a link to the survey. If they chose to click the link and subsequently fill out the survey, their responses were logged, and the analysis was completed by TPWD Communications Division staff.

LIMITATIONS

Since this is the first time a random sampling method has been employed for this survey, the response rate of individual customer groups was unknown. Acknowledging this unknown, the assumption was that the response rate would be similar across customer groups (i.e., hunting license holders would be just as likely to respond as TPW magazine subscribers) because there was no prior data to reference. This turned out not to be the case, as the response rate did vary between groups, as this table indicates.

Customer Source	Response Rate
License Database	1.3%
BRITS (Boat Registration and Titling System)	2.4%
TPW Magazine	1.6%
State Parks	0.9%
HABES (Hunter and Boater Education System)	4.2%
TOTAL	2.2%

HABES customers had a higher response rate, likely due to chance, as only a few hundred HABES customers were in the sample of 52,231.

Some of the demographic cohort groups had too few respondents to confidently believe that their feedback should be considered representative of their overall groups. Those findings will help inform the necessary survey sample size in future iterations.

While using a simple random sample is an improvement over convenience sampling, there are still biases to be aware of. Because there was no incentive to complete the survey, respondents had to weigh whether providing feedback to TPWD was worth their time and effort. As a result, respondents self-selected to participate. Another type of related bias is non-response bias, as no real assumptions can be made about those who decided not to take the survey. We are unable to determine those individuals' motivations, but it is generally understood that there is a positive relationship between strong opinions (positive or negative) and willingness to provide feedback. This phenomenon helps explain the lack of more moderate responses.

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. 90.9% of customers reported themselves as being either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” with 4.3% selecting “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied”; and the remaining 4.8% selecting “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.”

Output Measure

NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SURVEYED

A total of 1,172 customers responded to the survey.

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 \$1.36 per completed survey.

Explanatory Measures

NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS IDENTIFIED

This survey was disseminated to a sample of 52,231 customers.

NUMBER OF CUSTOMER GROUPS INVENTORIED

To survey as representative of a sample of the TPWD constituency as possible, the sample was drawn from LURES (License Utilization and Revenue Enhancement System), a repository that houses all TPWD customers. The customer groups were de-duplicated before being sampled so that a customer could only appear once in the sample regardless of how many activities they participated in.

Survey Result Measures

STANDARD ERROR AND CONFIDENCE LEVEL

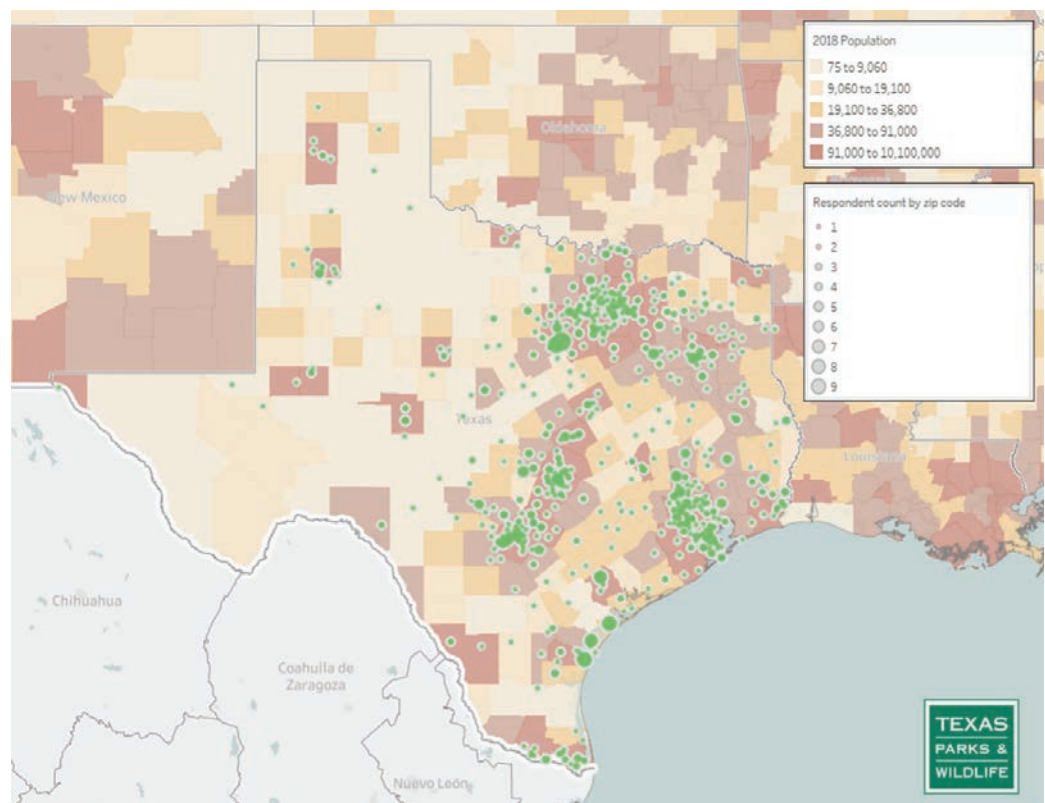
On a numeric scale from 1–5, where 1 is “very dissatisfied” and 5 is “very satisfied,” at a 95% confidence level, the mean overall satisfaction scores in this population are between 4.319 and 4.424. The mean overall satisfaction rate of the customers surveyed is 4.392, which falls within the confidence interval range and therefore we can assume the results are valid.

The standard error for overall satisfaction is 0.0251. This value indicates that the sample is representative of the population.

RESPONSE RATE

A total of 52,231 customers received the survey and of those, 1,172 responded. The response rate for the entire group is 2.2%, which is consistent with the response rate seen in similar surveys.

The map indicates the geographic distribution of the respondents. The darker the county in the background layer, the more populated it is.



DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF RESPONDENTS

Note: Segments marked with an asterisk symbol (*) received fewer than 30 respondents (n < 30).

Gender Identity	Frequency	Percent
Didn't answer	149	12.7%
Female	118	10.1%
Male	886	75.6%
Non-binary*	1	0.1%
Prefer not to say*	18	1.5%
TOTAL	1172	100.0%

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Didn't answer	155	13.2%
Asian Pacific Islander	6	0.5%
Biracial	5	0.4%
Black	15	1.3%
Latino	60	5.1%
Native American	13	1.1%
White	862	73.5%
Prefer not to say	56	4.8%
TOTAL	1172	100.0%

Generation (Age Range)	Frequency	Percent
Didn't answer	123	10.5%
Gen Z (18 – 25 years old)	13	1.1%
Millennial (26 – 40 years old)	70	6.0%
Gen X (41 – 55 years old)	201	17.2%
Boomer II (56 – 75 years old)	613	52.3%
Boomer I (> = 76 years old)	132	11.3%
Prefer not to say	20	1.7%
TOTAL	1172	100.0%

Household Income (Before Taxes)	Frequency	Percent
Didn't answer/prefer not to say	312	26.6%
\$160,000 and above	231	19.7%
\$140,000 - \$159,999	64	5.5%
\$120,000 - \$139,999	82	7.0%
\$100,000 - \$119,999	108	9.2%
\$80,000 - \$99,999	97	8.3%
\$60,000 - \$79,999	110	9.4%
\$40,000 - \$59,999	94	8.0%
\$20,000 - \$39,999	50	4.3%
Under \$20,000	24	2.0%
TOTAL	1172	100.0%

Questions	Not Applicable	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied or Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Q1). How satisfied are you with the CLEANLINESS of these TPWD facilities?						
State parks	9.3%	0.4%	0.8%	4.7%	35.8%	49.0%
State historic sites	22.4%	0.3%	1.1%	5.3%	31.0%	40.0%
Wildlife management areas (WMAs)	28.2%	0.8%	1.7%	6.9%	26.3%	36.1%
Headquarters	37.6%	0.3%	0.5%	9.1%	20.4%	32.1%
Law enforcement offices	36.8%	0.4%	1.0%	9.0%	21.0%	31.8%
Q2). How satisfied are you with the SIGNAGE of these TPWD facilities?						
State parks	7.4%	0.5%	1.2%	5.6%	36.7%	48.7%
State historic sites	18.7%	0.3%	1.6%	6.4%	31.2%	41.8%
Wildlife management areas (WMAs)	25.3%	0.8%	2.1%	9.5%	28.3%	34.1%
Headquarters	36.2%	0.4%	0.7%	9.5%	23.3%	30.0%
Law enforcement offices	35.6%	0.6%	1.1%	9.8%	22.7%	30.3%
Q3). How satisfied are you with the HOURS and OPERATIONS of these TPWD facilities?						
State parks	7.8%	0.5%	2.8%	8.6%	37.7%	42.6%
State historic sites	20.2%	0.5%	1.0%	9.1%	33.8%	35.4%
Wildlife management areas (WMAs)	26.7%	0.8%	0.7%	9.9%	30.6%	31.3%
Headquarters	34.2%	0.7%	1.2%	11.7%	24.5%	27.7%
Law enforcement offices	35.8%	0.7%	1.6%	11.3%	22.7%	27.9%

Questions	Not Applicable	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied or Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Q4). How satisfied are you with TPWD staff...?						
Courtesy and friendliness	5.3%	1.2%	1.8%	4.7%	23.3%	63.7%
Knowledgeability	6.2%	0.7%	1.7%	4.6%	26.6%	60.3%
Identifying themselves by name	8.6%	0.8%	1.3%	9.1%	27.3%	52.9%
Display of name tags	8.3%	0.5%	0.9%	7.1%	25.8%	57.4%
Timely service	8.4%	1.3%	1.5%	7.9%	27.0%	53.9%
Q5). How satisfied are you with the TPWD website in terms of the following?						
How easy it is to navigate the site	3.5%	0.4%	3.8%	10.2%	43.4%	38.7%
The usefulness of the information on the site	3.7%	0.5%	2.4%	8.4%	40.9%	44.0%
Viewing the site on your mobile device	11.5%	0.8%	2.7%	13.2%	34.9%	36.9%
Finding lists of services and programs (e.g. Neighborhood Fishin' Program)	11.2%	0.5%	3.6%	14.4%	34.9%	35.4%
Finding information on the physical location of agency offices	14.6%	1.1%	2.1%	12.4%	33.9%	35.8%
Q6). How satisfied are you with the following TPWD mobile applications?						
Texas State Parks Official Guide	21.9%	0.7%	0.6%	10.9%	30.2%	35.6%
Texas Outdoor Annual	21.2%	1.1%	1.2%	8.9%	28.9%	38.7%
My Texas Hunt Harvest	36.8%	1.0%	0.8%	14.5%	19.5%	27.4%
My Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine App	37.7%	0.7%	0.7%	14.0%	19.4%	27.4%
Sharelunker App	48.6%	0.6%	0.4%	16.0%	13.8%	20.6%
Q7). How satisfied are you with the following outbound TPWD communications?						
Text messaging	32.2%	0.6%	0.9%	15.6%	24.8%	25.8%
Email	10.7%	0.6%	1.0%	12.3%	35.2%	40.1%
Mail	24.7%	0.7%	0.7%	15.6%	28.2%	30.2%
Social media posts (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)	32.6%	0.6%	1.5%	16.2%	23.1%	26.1%
Q8) How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your phone call with TPWD support? **						
Time spent on hold	3.0%	1.0%	5.3%	9.5%	35.9%	45.4%
Having my call transferred, if applicable	27.5%	0.7%	3.6%	11.6%	23.8%	32.8%
Access to a live person over the phone	0.6%	1.9%	3.9%	7.8%	31.5%	54.2%
The knowledgeability of the person(s) I spoke with	0.7%	2.3%	3.3%	5.6%	29.2%	59.0%
Q9). How satisfied are you with TPWD printed materials in terms of...?						
Accuracy	7.6%	0.8%	0.7%	8.5%	36.5%	45.9%
Usefulness	7.8%	0.5%	0.9%	9.0%	36.7%	45.1%
Access to materials	8.4%	1.1%	1.6%	11.9%	35.4%	41.6%

Questions	Not Applicable	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied or Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Q10). How satisfied are you with TPWD complaint process in terms of...?						
How easy it is to file a complaint	62.1%	1.0%	1.8%	15.7%	8.5%	10.9%
Timeliness of responses to a complaint	62.6%	1.3%	1.3%	16.1%	8.1%	10.7%
Ability to resolve a complaint	62.6%	1.3%	1.9%	16.0%	7.1%	11.1%
Q11). How satisfied were you with your experience with the Question/Answer Center (Gov QA) in terms of the following? **						
How easy it was to navigate to the page	0.0%	2.7%	6.7%	5.3%	41.3%	44.0%
The number of categories and topics to choose from	0.0%	2.7%	1.4%	11.0%	43.8%	41.1%
Tracking the status of the question I submitted	6.8%	1.4%	5.5%	9.6%	39.7%	37.0%
Receiving a timely response	4.2%	2.8%	4.2%	8.3%	40.3%	40.3%
The response I received answered my question	4.2%	2.8%	5.6%	4.2%	43.1%	40.3%
Q12). How satisfied are you with the following TPWD communications?						
TPWD PBS show	43.6%	0.8%	0.9%	14.4%	15.9%	24.4%
TPW magazine	34.6%	0.7%	0.8%	13.0%	20.7%	30.3%
Facebook	47.7%	0.5%	1.5%	17.0%	15.7%	17.6%
Instagram	60.1%	0.5%	1.0%	18.4%	9.5%	10.5%
X (formerly known as Twitter)	64.6%	0.4%	1.0%	17.6%	7.8%	8.7%
YouTube	51.0%	0.5%	1.0%	16.0%	13.7%	17.7%
Q13). Overall, how satisfied are you with TPWD?	0.5%	1.3%	3.0%	4.8%	36.7%	53.8%
Q14). Overall, how satisfied are you with your digital license? **	1.7%	0.8%	1.7%	6.6%	24.0%	65.3%
Q15). How satisfied are you with the following aspects of FRESHWATER fishing in Texas? **						
Ramps	11.6%	1.2%	6.2%	11.9%	43.1%	26.1%
Piers	12.1%	0.6%	6.2%	14.9%	41.2%	25.1%
Parking areas	4.3%	0.6%	4.7%	13.2%	50.1%	27.1%
Motorboat access	15.9%	1.6%	3.7%	12.5%	40.8%	25.5%
Canoe/kayak access	32.8%	1.7%	3.7%	16.5%	26.1%	19.2%
Shoreline access	11.4%	2.5%	8.8%	14.1%	38.4%	24.8%
Fish stockings	12.0%	3.0%	6.4%	13.3%	39.6%	25.7%
Q16). How satisfied are you with the following aspects of SALTWATER fishing in Texas? **						
Ramps	15.1%	1.3%	5.5%	13.4%	36.5%	28.2%
Piers	10.3%	1.0%	5.8%	14.1%	37.8%	31.0%
Parking areas	6.9%	1.3%	5.3%	15.5%	39.6%	31.5%
Motorboat access	18.0%	1.3%	4.6%	13.4%	36.0%	26.7%
Canoe/kayak access	37.0%	0.8%	3.1%	16.4%	22.9%	19.8%
Shoreline access	10.3%	1.5%	7.1%	13.1%	36.5%	31.5%
Fish stockings	24.2%	2.6%	4.3%	17.3%	24.7%	26.8%

** Participants had to answer that they had experience with this topic or function in a previous question to be given the question.

ANALYSIS

The following section analyzes segmented groups for their responses to the question on overall satisfaction.

Note: Segments marked with an asterisk symbol (*) received fewer than 30 respondents (n < 30).

Overall, how satisfied are you with TPWD? | GENDER

Gender	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Female (n = 114)	0.0%	1.8%	5.3%	27.2%	65.8%
Male (n = 866)	0.9%	2.8%	4.3%	38.1%	53.9%
Total (n = 988)	0.8%	2.7%	4.4%	36.8%	55.3%

Not only are women significantly (+11.86%) more likely to be “very satisfied” in comparison to men, but they are also less likely to be “very dissatisfied” or “dissatisfied” with TPWD. Men are less likely to be “very satisfied” (-1.68%) but more likely to be “satisfied” (+1.27%) than the average respondent. The percentage of men and women who report being satisfied to a varying degree is very similar (92.04% for men vs 92.98% for women), but the degree of satisfaction expressed between genders is noticeably different.

Overall, how satisfied are you with TPWD? | ETHNICITY

Ethnicity	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
American Pacific Islander (n = 5)*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%
Biracial (n = 5)*	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	40.0%
Black (n = 15)*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%
Latino (n = 59)	3.4%	1.7%	5.1%	20.3%	69.5%
Native American (n = 13)*	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	30.8%	61.5%
Prefer not to say. (n = 55)	5.5%	7.3%	12.7%	34.5%	40.0%
White (n = 845)	0.6%	2.4%	4.1%	37.6%	54.7%
Total (n = 1069)	1.2%	2.6%	4.5%	36.3%	54.9%

The two cohorts with over 30 responses self-identify as “white” or “Latino.” Customers who identify as Latino are much more likely (+14.82%) to be “very satisfied” with TPWD compared to white customers, while being more likely (+2.80%) to be “very dissatisfied” but less likely (-0.68%) to be “dissatisfied.”

Overall, how satisfied are you with TPWD? | GENERATION

Generation (Youngest to Oldest)	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Gen Z (n = 13)*	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	30.8%	61.5%
Millennial (n = 69)	5.8%	1.4%	7.2%	36.2%	49.3%
Gen X (n = 195)	2.1%	3.1%	5.1%	32.8%	56.9%

Generation (Youngest to Oldest)	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Boomer II (n = 601)	0.7%	2.7%	3.0%	38.6%	55.1%
Boomer I (n = 125)	0.0%	3.2%	8.8%	34.4%	53.6%
Prefer not to say (n = 19)*	10.5%	15.8%	21.1%	26.3%	26.3%
Total (n = 1022)	1.4%	3.0%	4.7%	36.5%	54.4%

While the Gen Z (born between 1997 and 2012) cohort has fewer than 30 responses, it should be noted that individuals born after 2006 are under 18 and therefore cannot be sent communications. Because of this, their representation is artificially suppressed in this survey; however, their long-term importance to TPWD should not be discounted.

Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) are the only generation cohort reporting a rate of being “very satisfied” below 50% (49.28%), while also having the highest rate of being “very dissatisfied” (5.80%). The low rate of “very satisfied” responses cannot be written off as Millennials being less enthusiastic in their satisfaction with TPWD either, as they are only marginally less likely to be “satisfied” with TPWD than average (-0.27%).

Overall, how satisfied are you with TPWD? | **HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

Household Income (Before Taxes)	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Under \$20,000 (n = 24)*	4.2%	0.0%	8.3%	16.7%	70.8%
\$20,000 – \$39,999 (n = 49)	0.0%	2.0%	4.1%	28.6%	65.3%
\$40,000 – \$59,999 (n = 91)	0.0%	3.3%	6.6%	37.4%	52.7%
\$60,000 – \$79,999 (n = 110)	0.9%	2.7%	3.6%	37.3%	55.5%
\$80,000 – \$99,999 (n = 97)	0.0%	5.2%	5.2%	36.1%	53.6%
\$100,000 – \$119,999 (n = 107)	1.9%	1.9%	0.9%	36.4%	58.9%
\$120,000 – \$139,999 (n = 79)	2.5%	2.5%	3.8%	35.4%	55.7%
\$140,000 – \$159,999 (n = 62)	1.6%	1.6%	4.8%	35.5%	56.5%
\$160,000 and above (n = 219)	1.4%	2.7%	4.1%	38.4%	53.4%
Total (n = 838)	1.2%	2.7%	4.2%	35.9%	56.0%

Combining the two lowest income cohorts (individuals reporting a household income of < \$20,000 or \$20,000 – \$39,999) to form a new segment comprised of individuals reporting less than \$40,000 results in a segment large enough (n = 73) to assume normality. This group reported being “very satisfied” with TPWD at a rate of 67.1%, which is 11.1% higher than average. Individuals reporting a household income greater than \$40,000 were less likely to be “very satisfied” at a relatively consistent rate.

Overall, how satisfied are you with TPWD? | CUSTOMER SOURCE

Customer Source	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
BRITS (n = 462)	1.7%	3.9%	5.8%	35.9%	52.6%
HABES (n = 9)*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	44.4%	55.6%
License holder (n = 368)	1.6%	3.3%	4.6%	38.0%	52.4%
TPW Magazine (n = 149)	0.0%	0.7%	3.4%	39.6%	56.4%
State parks visitor (n = 76)	0.0%	1.3%	2.6%	30.3%	65.8%
Total (n = 1064)	1.3%	3.0%	4.8%	36.8%	54.0%

Customers who visit state parks report the highest levels of being “very satisfied” (+11.75% higher than average) while also being less likely to be dissatisfied at any level. Magazine subscribers also reported being “very satisfied” and “satisfied” at a higher-than-average rate (+2.34% and +2.76% respectively). License holders and boat registrants reported very similar levels of being “very satisfied” (52.45% and 52.60% respectively) that are slightly below average (54.04%).

Further analysis:

In addition to the Likert-scale questions, participants had the option to offer more in-depth feedback via open-response questions. The text analysis for those responses is currently being conducted. 551 (47%) respondents indicated a willingness to be contacted about their experiences if TPWD had follow-up questions. Talking to those individuals about their responses could be a helpful avenue to explore.

FY2025 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 2025.

Output Measure**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SURVEYED (SURVEYS COMPLETED)**

The goal will be to collect 2000 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 2025 iteration. If there are additional groups that can be added in to improve the veracity of the sample, we will include them.

SCHEDULE I

Certification of Compliance with Cybersecurity Training



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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 2054.5191 and 2054.5192.

Chief Executive Officer or Presiding Judge

David Yoskowitz
Signature

David Yoskowitz, Ph.D.
Printed Name

Executive Director
Title

5/22/2024
Date

Board or Commission Chair

Jeffery D. Hildebrand
Signature

Jeffery D. Hildebrand
Printed Name

Chairman
Title

5/22/2024
Date

SCHEDULE J

Report on Projects and Acquisitions Funded by Certain Fund Sources



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REPORT ON ACQUISITIONS FUNDED FROM THE CENTENNIAL PARKS CONSERVATION FUND

As per Parks & Wildlife Code Sec. 21A.007 (created by Senate Bill 1648 last Legislative session), TPWD is required to include in its strategic plan a report on each acquisition funded using money in the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund during the two-year period preceding the date on which the strategic plan is submitted.

Provisions of Senate Bill 1648 took effect January 1, 2024. As a result, this is the first year of implementation. TPWD is in the process of identifying and implementing possible acquisitions, but none have been completed at this time.

TPWD plans to periodically report on acquisition information and other Centennial Parks Conservation Fund-related issues to the Legislature and oversight offices throughout the biennium, and will plan to include required information regarding completed acquisitions in the next strategic plan.



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