

# Game and Fish Department

## Budget Information:

Aquatic Wildlife Management	\$3,719,652	8.8%
Bird Farms	\$336,1900	.7%
COOP Unit Research	\$411,0001	.0%
Conservation Engineering	\$382,588	0.9%
Department Administration	\$2,192,592	5.2%
Education	\$659,816	1.6%
Feedgrounds	\$1,403,555	3.3%
Financial Management	\$2,658,757	6.3%
Fish Culture	\$4,249,365	10.0%
Habitat	\$4,312,191	10.2%
Information	\$1,184,448	2.8%
Information Technology Systems	\$1,139,672	2.7%
Legislatively Mandated Expenses	\$1,760,605	4.2%
Mailroom	\$572,898	1.4%
Personnel Management	\$223,074	0.5%
Property Rights	\$1,644,063	3.9%
Regional Information and Education	\$560,506	1.3%
Specialized Law Enforcement	\$779,643	1.8%
Strategic Management	\$596,485	1.4%
Support Facilities and Personnel	\$1,918,072	4.5%
Terrestrial Wildlife Management	\$10,229,677	24.3%
Wildlife Habitat Protection	\$274,992	0.6%
Wildlife Health/Laboratory	\$1,091,508	2.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$42,301,349</b>	

## Body to which the Wyoming Game and Fish Department Reports:

Wyoming Game and Fish Commission

## Number of Commissioners:

Seven

## Meeting Frequency:

Meeting frequency varies at the discretion of the commission members. Typically, the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission meets between six and eight times per year.

## General Information

Brent Manning, director

## Agency Contact:

Chris Burkett, strategic management coordinator  
Wyoming Game and Fish Department  
5400 Bishop Blvd.  
Cheyenne, WY 82006  
[Chris.Burkett@wgf.state.wy.us](mailto:Chris.Burkett@wgf.state.wy.us)

307/777-4510

## Other Locations:

Regional Offices are located in Casper, Cody, Green River, Jackson, Lander, Laramie, and Sheridan with an additional satellite office in Pinedale.

## Established:

1890

## Statutory Reverences:

W.S. 23-1-103, W.S. 23-1-104

## Number of Authorized Personnel:

354

## Organization Structure:

Office of Director, Fiscal Division, Fish Division, Services Division, and Wildlife Division

## Clients Served:

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department's clients include Wyoming resident and non-resident hunters, anglers, and others interested in Wyoming's fish and wildlife resources.

## Mission and philosophy

Conserving Wildlife – Serving People

### **Department Administration**

FY03 was a year of change for the Wyoming Game and Fish department and its administration. Governor Dave Freudenthal took office in January 2003, acting Director Tom Thorne retired after 35 years with the agency, and Mr. Brent Manning was appointed director of the department. Two new commissioners, Mr. Ron Lovercheck and Bill Williams, D.V.M., were appointed as the terms of commissioners L. Gary Lundvall and J. Michael Powers ended. Despite all of these changes, however, the focus of the department's administration remained: providing policy-level support and leadership, legal service, prioritization and coordination of activities, direction of department programs and policies, allocation of department resources, and effective coordination and interaction with other entities.

During FY03, a number of major accomplishments deserve mention. The *Wyoming Sage Grouse Conservation Plan* was completed. The process to develop the *Wyoming Gray Wolf Management Plan* was completed, and the document was prepared for the Wyoming Game and Fish commission's approval. The *Conservation Strategy for the Grizzly Bear in the Greater Yellowstone Area* was approved. Involvement in federal land use planning continued, with the department providing input on hundreds of federal actions. The relationship between the department and the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of Wyoming continued to mature, and Governor Freudenthal turned over his 20 complimentary hunting licenses to WHFW to administer their distribution for the benefit of wildlife. Leadership development efforts continued, with almost one-half of all permanent department employees now having received training under this program. Efforts to develop an electronic licensing system and manage Chronic Wasting Disease and Brucellosis continue.

The 2003 General Session of the Wyoming State Legislature was an important priority for the department administration. Three important funding bills were approved by the legislature and signed by the governor. This first increased the fee for the life-time conservation stamp from \$75 to \$150 and directed half of the money to the department's access easement account and the other half into the Game and Fish trust account. The second bill increased the percentage of nonresident licenses allocated to the special drawing to 40 percent for elk, deer, and antelope. This special drawing bill will increase the additional fee for the special license to \$200 for deer and antelope, and \$400 for elk. This action will provide an additional \$1.0-1.5 million, annually, to the department's budget. The third bill increased the price of most hunting and fishing licenses by 20 percent and

increased resident and nonresident application fees. This action will provide an additional \$3.5 million, annually, to the department's budget.

In addition, the legislature passed a number of other bills supported by the department. These actions included: changing the criteria for pioneer big game hunting licenses, prohibiting the use of aircraft in hunting, establishing a free fishing day, increasing compensation for Game and Fish commissioners, providing benefits to disabled hunters and anglers, and redirecting state restitution payments for wildlife violations to the department's access easement account.

Finally, the legislature passed a bill to reclassify wolves as a trophy game animals in part of Wyoming. This legal change should allow the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to initiate the process to remove wolves from under the Endangered Species Act. Ultimately, this action will return management responsibility for wolves to the state.

The department administration staff continued to work cooperatively with a host of other entities for the benefit of Wyoming's wildlife.

Administrators remain active participants and continue to provide input to the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

As indicated by the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 70 percent of all respondents indicated they were satisfied with the department's overall coordination and direction.

Due to a variety of conditions, only three external surveys were conducted. The first, the *FY03 Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey*, was conducted to evaluate the services of the department's Telephone Information Center, Lands Program, and Habitat and Access Maintenance Program during FY03. As these figures will be provided within other objectives, they will not be included here. The second included the department's harvest surveys. Again, as these figures are reported elsewhere within this report and they will not be included here. Finally, *Wyoming Residents' Attitudes Toward and Opinions on Wolf Management In Wyoming* did not ask questions suitable for evaluating overall agency performance. Unfortunately, no additional public satisfaction information is available for FY03.

### **Terrestrial Wildlife Management**

Terrestrial Wildlife Management personnel spent thousands of hours collecting and analyzing big game population data, preparing hunting season recommendations, presenting information at public meetings, and preparing regulations and hunting orders. Likewise, considerable time and effort were spent in efforts related to law enforcement, managing terrestrial nongame species, managing trophy game

species, resolving human-wildlife conflicts involving trophy game species, and managing waterfowl.

As part of the Annual Big and Trophy Game Harvest surveys, the department asks hunters to evaluate the quality of their overall hunt. As reported within the *Annual Report of Big and Trophy Game Harvest, 2002* 87 percent of resident antelope hunters, 71 percent of resident deer hunters, and 66 percent of resident elk hunters indicated they were satisfied with the overall quality of their hunt. Likewise, 91 percent of nonresident antelope hunters, 79 percent of nonresident deer hunters, and 74 percent of nonresident elk hunters were satisfied with the overall quality of their hunt.

A compilation of data from the *Annual Report of Big and Trophy Game Harvest, 2002* and the *Annual Report of Small and Upland Game Harvest, 2002*, indicates 1,204,835 days of hunting were provided in during 2002 (the most recent year for which data is available).

The *2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* indicates there were over 3.9 million days of wildlife-associated recreation in Wyoming that did not involve hunting or fishing.

## **Aquatic Wildlife Management**

Basin Management Plans were updated and work progressed to display these plans on the department's Intranet network.

Regional fisheries crews invested more time working to define the distribution and relative abundance of non-sport fish native to Wyoming waters. Work was particularly focused on the Black's Fork River and Powder River. Amphibian surveys were begun in the Wyoming Range, concentrating on boreal toads. These efforts serve as important first steps in updating information on native fishes and amphibians.

Statewide fisheries crews further fine-tuned sonar-based fish counting methods, completed preparation of a "standard" sampling manual for standing water fisheries, and a graduate research project to worked to assess interrelationships between gillnet and sonar sampling estimates of fish stocks in standing waters was initiated. A major investigation of the sauger fishery in the Wind River upstream of Boysen Reservoir was also completed. Together regional fisheries management and aquatic habitat personnel prioritized the top 10 watersheds in each region to better focus future aquatic habitat management efforts.

Every indication from creel surveys, angler groups, and reports received indicates that the angler satisfaction level (84 percent) reported for FY99 continues. Fishing in the Rocky Mountain region remains of high interest compared to the rest of the nation. Over 31 percent of Wyoming residents age 16 and older fish, more than any other state.

Because of cost (\$35,000 to \$40,000) another formal survey may not happen again for a few more years. It is very important to know that Wyoming anglers believe that fishing is important to the state and that they are well pleased with state fisheries work.

A formal fishing pressure survey has not been completed for several years, mostly because of cost issues. Previous national surveys of fishing, hunting, and wildlife associated recreation shows that fishing in the Rocky Mountain Region continues to increase more than any other region in the USA. The department believes angling recreation days in Wyoming during FY03 were comparable to that reported in the *2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, about 2.5 million fishing recreation days.

## **Fish Culture**

With the exception of the Wigwam Rearing Station, all Wyoming state fish hatcheries maintained disease free status. Fish culture personnel were able to produce the requested numbers, pounds, sizes and species of salmonid fishes as requested by personnel within the Aquatic Wildlife Management Objective. In addition to meeting the majority of fisheries management requirements, fish eggs and excess salmonid production were traded to other state and federal agencies; in return Wyoming waters were stocked with cool and warm water species via these trades.

Efforts to develop a brood stock for Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, in their native drainages, continued with assistance from Wyoming fisheries management crews and the U.S. Forest Service. These operations were essential in developing and maintaining captive brood stocks to produce eggs needed for a viable stocking program of Wyoming's cutthroat trout heritage. Additionally, the continued development of sources for rainbow trout and other species within the boundaries of Wyoming ensures the internal maintenance of unique species and protects the fish culture system from external disease influences.

## **Habitat**

The goals for personnel working within this objective are to maintain and enhance terrestrial and aquatic habitat for wildlife and provide access for wildlife related recreational opportunity on department managed lands. Efforts related to the Habitat Objective were focused on three broad areas: terrestrial habitat, aquatic habitat, and habitat and access maintenance.

In efforts related to terrestrial habitats, personnel developed and administered 67 individual trust fund projects. Examples of such programs included electric fencing research, the installation of fencing, the completion of 10 Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP) projects in

Weston and Crook counties, monitoring of shrub communities, and beaver research related to riparian habitats. Additionally, 34 individual landscape area surveys were either initiated or continued.

Within the aquatic habitat efforts, personnel either developed or implemented 28 grant or landowner extension projects during FY03. Examples of such projects included work done on Luce Reservoir, Littlefield Creek, and Blue Creek. Efforts were also made to participate in county-level Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) planning efforts. Inventory and monitoring efforts were conducted in 37 watersheds, included several small individual watersheds, as well as several larger basins. Finally, aquatic habitat personnel were involved with 26 individual enhancement/restoration projects. This involvement included project development, implementation, and post-construction monitoring.

With regards to habitat and access maintenance, efforts focused on maintaining and monitoring all facilities, structures, fences, roads, trail systems, and wetland complexes that fall under the department's purview. This responsibility encompasses 410,000 acres of lands managed for wildlife habitat and public recreational opportunity. These lands, in themselves, contain 121 miles of stream easements, approximately 21,014 surface acres on lakes and reservoirs for public access, 408 public parking areas, 1,163 miles of road, 883 miles of fence (8' elk fence and stock fence), 148 restroom facilities, 62 boat ramps, 15 car bridges, 15-foot bridges, 6,000 signs, 300 auto gates, 95 dam/wetland complexes, and 4,605 irrigated acres, which include: drains, canals, pipelines, and spring developments associated with farming, grazing, and wetland systems.

Within the *Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003* respondents were asked to evaluate the quantity and type of habitats and access acquired by the department, and well as evaluate the maintenance of facilities on agency properties. Overall, 39.5 percent of respondents were satisfied with the kind and amount of habitat being acquired. In terms of facility maintenance, 63.3 percent of respondents who had used the Wildlife Habitat Management Areas and 66.3 percent of respondents who had used the Public Fishing Areas were satisfied with the maintenance of facilities in these areas.

Within the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 90.1 percent of respondents that had interacted with the Habitat and Access Maintenance Branch indicated they were satisfied with the services provided.

## **Wildlife Habitat Protection**

Multiple Habitat Protection databases were maintained and made available for department-wide access in order to facilitate accomplishment of department objectives. During FY03, the Wildlife Habitat Protection program developed and maintained up-to-date narratives on the status of threatened, endangered, proposed, and petitioned wildlife

species. These narratives could be accessed by all department personnel and provided a quick and efficient means to find out what was happening on a given species at any time. The program personnel also assisted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in developing and implementing a statewide workshop on Section 10 actions under the Endangered Species Act.

Other accomplishments included facilitating the procurement of funding for a statewide high-way/stream crossing stability study and a study of raptor protection measures. The Wildlife Habitat Protection personnel field-evaluated numerous nominations for the annual Wyoming Hunting and Fishing Wildlife Heritage Exposition's Wildlife Stewardship Awards. This effort included reviewing write-ups on each nominated project and the preparation of letters.

During FY03, the Wildlife Habitat Protection personnel continued to be extensively involved in Endangered Species Act and coalbed methane issues. Wildlife Habitat Protection personnel took, and continue to take, the department lead on interstate and multi-agency coalbed methane workgroups, and continue to be involved in issues being addressed by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies by providing comments and recommendations on these issues to the IAFWA.

Within the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 89.7 percent of respondents that had interacted with the Wildlife Habitat Protection Staff indicated they were satisfied with the services provided. Likewise, 74.4 percent of those that had worked with the Wildlife Habitat Protection staff were satisfied with the process used to make assignments, obtain comments and recommendations, and provide feedback/assistance.

## **Property Rights (Lands) Management**

The Property Rights personnel were involved in a wide variety of real estate actions. These efforts included the acquisition of new access and easements, the disposal of surplus properties, the renewal of various leases, addressing encroachment issues, the trading of properties, monitoring of commission properties, and other miscellaneous activities.

During FY03, five principal acquisitions were made. First, applications were submitted to the State Land Office to secure public access roads and parking areas along several locations statewide. Second, documents were finalized on ponds associated with the Bud Love Wildlife Management Unit to facilitate future maintenance and use of the ponds for wildlife and access.

Third, a road right of way was acquired that will provide public access to over 5,000 acres of state lands near Buffalo. Fourth, agreements were signed

with Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities for access to Lower North Crow Reservoir. And fifth, agreements were executed to facilitate boating developments on various lakes and reservoirs around the state.

Regarding surplus properties, several surplus buildings located around the state were declared surplus, and have been disposed of. Also, a small parcel of land was sold to the Wyoming Department of Transportation to facilitate the new bridge replacement along Robertson Road in Casper.

The Property Rights personnel were responsible for 12 actions related to leases. The Game and Fish commission renewed the South Park Bridge river access south of Jackson, the Pick Bridge river access north of Saratoga, private leases for winter feedgrounds, the public access lease on 480 acres adjacent to the Springer Management Area and potential the Pitcher/Brokaw vehicular access near Arlington. Over 30,000 acres of state grazing lease lands were renewed. Leases were executed for the continued use of McNeel feedground. Finally, a lease was executed with the Fremont School District to allow them the use of the old Jeffery City Warden Station.

Similar to leasing activities, the Property Rights personnel issued a variety of Special Use Permits to grant temporary use of commission-owned lands. A private landowner was granted a permit to use a road across the Soda Lake Wildlife Management Area. SUP's were granted to the Wyoming department of Transportation to facilitate construction needs regarding the bridge replacement along Robertson Road Bridge in Casper. Quantum Geophysical was issued a SUP associated with Red Rim Unit. Finally, UW and a local 4H chapter were issued a permit associated with activities on the Springer Unit.

A permanent right of way across the Whiskey Basin Wildlife Management Area was granted to Dubois Telephone. Permanent easements were modified to re-align the access road into the Foote fishing easements north of Saratoga, and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Saratoga was established to allow placement of pipe in the Saratoga Inlet Ditch.

In efforts related to encroachments, the commission continued to protect the state's property rights by enforcing, through legal actions, the cessation of unauthorized use of commission owned and controlled property. The department actively pursued encroachment along the Wind River, Salt River, and Big Horn River easements.

Regarding property trades, the clarification of commission easement rights and re-alignment of roads and parking areas along the Green River near Big Piney are currently under negotiations. Also, the commission has authorized a trade with a private landowner adjacent to the Horse Creek Feedground, and once this trade is finalized it will provide administrative access to the feedground and public access to a large part of the adjoining national forest.

Finally, a trade is being investigated with the U.S. Forest Service to allow for the commission to participate in the campus complex proposal in Jackson.

The Property Rights (Lands) Management Section continued a rigorous schedule of monitoring all commission owned property rights. Attempts are being made to physically inspect all property right areas and commission owned lands to establish data photo points, which will set a new benchmark against possible future encroachments. Photo points are established utilizing digital photography and then downloading the digital information to a database for permanent storage and quick retrieval.

Other actions included: reviewing all tax assessment schedules prior to payment of the department's In-lieu of tax to each county, reviewing New Acquisition nominations submitted to the department, addressing staff and commission actions, maintaining certified appraiser credentials, meeting with British Petroleum personnel to discuss potential oil and gas development associated with the Chain Lakes Management area, reviewing and updating the department's rules and regulations associated with property rights, supplying field personnel and mineral companies with information involving commission owned lands, hosting and attending the Organization of Wildlife Lands and realty Specialists, and implementing property right efforts related to the Strategic Habit Plan.

Within the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 70.7 percent of the individuals that had interacted with the Property Rights Management Section were satisfied with the services provided. Likewise, as indicated within the *Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 39.5 percent of respondents were satisfied with the kind and amount of habitat being acquired, and 39.9 percent of respondents were satisfied with the level and amount of access acquired.

## **Wildlife Health and Laboratory Services**

The Veterinary Services Branch continued its efforts to understand Chronic Wasting Disease. Research included a study to determine the minimum infectious dose of the CWD infectious agent in elk, and a study examining how the infectious agent of CWD is transmitted from one deer to another. Finally, CWD surveillance was carried out in southeastern and northeastern Wyoming.

In efforts related to Brucellosis, a study to determine the efficacy of the strain-19 Brucellosis vaccine in elk continued. Likewise, the Veterinary Services personnel continue an integrated Brucellosis management program aimed at reducing the prevalence of Brucellosis in elk; particularly in feedgrounds. Finally, the Veterinary Services personnel continued to commit a great deal of time to the Greater Yellowstone Interagency Brucellosis

Committee which is recognized by many state and federal agencies and private organizations as the best process for resolving the problem of Brucellosis in the Greater Yellowstone Area. Personnel were active members of subcommittees and were responsible for the production of many scientific reports and analyses.

A total of 3,810 samples were submitted to the department's Disease Laboratory and/or the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory representing 219 diagnostic cases.

As part of the Laboratory Branch's charge to monitor disease in wildlife populations, the laboratory staff either mailed or hand delivered 1,350 elk hunter kits, analyzed approximately 180 coyote, ferret, fox, mountain lion, lynx, and badger samples for plague and distemper, analyzed 2,550 elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer samples for CWD, and analyzed six samples for rabies in raccoons, skunks and bats.

The Laboratory Branch staff continued teaching courses on the chemical capture and safe handling of wildlife for department biologists and wardens as well as other agency personnel. The course is necessary in order for non-veterinarians to be trained in the safe use of drugs used to capture wildlife. The course was very well received and will be repeated next year in order to accommodate those that were unable to attend.

Another responsibility of the Laboratory Branch is to provide analytical services for department personnel, other agencies, and the general public. In this capacity, a total of 35,132 tests were conducted on 14,134 samples in response to 752 requests. These services were conducted at the Game and Fish Laboratory and include; fish health inspections and disease diagnostics for hatcheries and natural waters in Wyoming; forensic analyses for law enforcement personnel; and other analytical services for management and enforcement personnel.

During FY03, a total of 118 fish disease cases were investigated. These included 29,292 diagnostic tests on 12,854 tissue samples collected from various fish species for bacterial, viral, and parasitic organisms. Forty-eight special annual/semi-annual fish health inspections were completed in a timely manner on 11 state fish-culture stations, six state isolation units, seven private hatcheries, and six free-ranging (wild) brood stock populations. A total of 44 disease cases involving various fish species were investigated. These included state fish hatcheries (23 cases) and natural habitats (21 cases). Fish in 26 cases were examined for whirling disease for the statewide survey, and low to moderately high levels of infection were detected in various trout species in reservoirs, streams, and rivers in Park, Johnson, Sublette, Sheridan, and Teton Counties.

Fifty-eight forensic cases were investigated for law enforcement personnel where 4,935 tests were conducted on 600 different samples. In seven cases defendants pled guilty or were found guilty when lab results were used as evidence. Additional consulta-

tions with other state conservation agencies on evidence analyses and procedure development occurred on numerous occasions.

Finally, in addition to typical functions, Laboratory Branch personnel exhibited a booth at the fourth Hunting and Fishing Heritage Exposition in Casper, provided assistance in instruction and training of students and other professionals in techniques on four occasions, made two formal presentations to Wyoming and Colorado law enforcement personnel on wildlife forensics, conducted 270 tests on 45 different biological samples in response to nine requests from various management personnel, processed and aged teeth from 635 game animals, predators, and furbearers, provided fish health training to hatchery personnel, received training on the use of computer software and mitochondrial DNA procedures, and continued to participate in the leadership development program.

Personnel working in this objective are divided between the Fish Health Staff, Forensics Staff, and the Veterinary Services staff. As indicated within the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 92.5 percent of those that worked with the Fish Health staff were satisfied with the services provided, 97.7 percent of respondents that worked with the Forensics staff were satisfied with the services provided, and 92.1 percent of those that worked with the Veterinary Services staff were satisfied with the services provided.

## **COOP Unit Research**

As identified within the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit's annual report, the unit's faculty and students completed 12 projects related to: a criteria to determine the effect of weight loss on the over winter survival of trout in Wyoming streams, the abundance and movement of the rainbow trout spawning stock in the Upper Naknek River, Alaska, the determination of factors affecting natural recruitment of Snake River cutthroat trout in spring streams tributary to the Salt River, the development of stocking guidelines for high-mountain lakes in the Bighorn Mountains, the movement and habitat use by cutthroat trout in the Shoshone River downstream from Buffalo Bill dam, the sport fish and habitat in the Salt River drainage, the techniques for watershed-scale trout management in Wyoming, the influences of elk on upland aspen, riparian willow, and associated land birds in and near Jackson Hole, Wyoming, an evaluation of high tensile electric fence design on big game movements and livestock containment, the coyote's (*Canis latrans*) habitat use, movement, and mortality patterns in Grand Teton National Park and suburban-agricultural areas of Jackson Hole, Wyoming, lead poisoning in birds of prey, and the black-backed and three-toed woodpeckers of the Black Hills.

As indicated by the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 78.5 percent

of respondents that had interacted with the COOP unit were satisfied with the quality of research being conducted or completed for the department. Likewise, 76.9 percent were satisfied with the quantity of research being conducted or completed for the department.

## **Feedgrounds**

The winter of 2002-2003 was mild with less than the average snow fall. The length of the feeding season was three days more than last year and one day less than the long-term average. Approximately 13,041 elk were fed, which is the lowest number fed since the winter of 1986-87. A total of 5,491 tons of hay was fed, which is about 1,232 ton less than the long-term average. Wolves were again a problem with feedground management.

There were 11 major work schedule elements and 16 minor elements, all of which were completed. The amount of time spent on each element varies between years, depending on the need.

## **Specialized Statewide Law Enforcement**

Eight contract personnel, comprising four crews, were trained in watercraft safety and enforcement issues. These reservoir crews contacted several thousand recreational boaters and anglers. Contacts were made to assure watercraft safety equipment and fishing regulation compliance. Approximately 99 people completed the Boating Basics course.

The Stop Poaching program received 521 tips that resulted in payment of \$1,800 in rewards. There were 29 cases successfully completed that resulted in 38 persons being convicted of wildlife violations with \$18,450 in fines.

Records compiled by the reservoir crews document the level of compliance of boaters with statutes and regulations reported to the U.S. Coast Guard each year. Records of the reservoir crews indicate 75 to 80 percent of boaters are in compliance with boating statutes and regulations.

Approximately 100 law enforcement investigations were initiated in FY03. In addition, the unit worked on many cases initiated by other officers.

## **Strategic Management**

During FY03, the Strategic Management Coordinator was responsible for coordinating and developing the department's contribution to the Wyoming State Government Annual Report, 2002. As part of this effort, the Strategic Management Coordinator designed and conducted the *FY02 Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey* and the *FY02 Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey*. In addition to surveys related to operational evaluation, the Strategic Management

Coordinator was responsible for developing and either conducting or coordinating surveys on Wyoming residents' attitudes toward and opinions on wolf management in Wyoming, and Wyoming social valuation survey. It should be noted that although the social valuation project had been designed and was ready for implementation, this project was terminated by the commission prior to the pre-test implementation.

Other projects conducted by the Strategic Management Coordinator included: conducting an analysis of public comment and co-authoring the department's *Special Report on Game and Fish Licensing Proposals and Other Funding Options*, conducting an analysis of public comment and co-authoring the department's *Special Report on Draft Wyoming Greater Sage Grouse Conservation Plan*, conducting an analysis of public comment and co-authoring the department's *Special Report on the Draft Wyoming Gray Wolf Management Plan*, working to develop guidelines on the use and creation of Citizen Advisory Committees to address complex wildlife issues, reviewing available federal programs to determine possible funding opportunities to address in-stream flow issues on the Shoshone river, serving as the department's liaison with the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies on two regional projects, and developing three internal surveys for agency purposes.

The Strategic Management Coordinator served as an active member of the Wildlife Legacy Trust Team, the Wildlife Legacy Trust Information and Education Subgroup, the department's Information Technology Oversight Committee, and Communications Strategy Team.

As indicated by the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003, 96.6 percent of respondents that had worked with the Strategic Management Coordinator were satisfied with the services provided.

## **Bird Farms**

Bird Farm personnel completed all major work elements for FY03. The elements were raising and releasing pheasants, facility maintenance, and vehicle maintenance. Minor elements were completed as drought conditions would allow. Work on the Private Lands Public Wildlife program, public relations, and helping at check stations was achieved. Habitat work on Wildlife Habitat Management Areas including prescribed burns, re-seeding efforts and new Dense Nesting Cover plantings were delayed another year due to extreme drought. In total 29,012 pheasants were raised and released from the department's bird farms.

## **Financial Management**

The Fiscal Division, through the efforts of Fiscal Managers, spent much of FY03 addressing issues related to licensing, new federal grant programs, legislation related to funding issues, and a re-write of internal accounting systems.

Several areas within the division faced challenges this past year. In mid-FY01, the department began working with State of Wyoming department of Administration and Information programmers to design, program, test and implement a point-of-sale licensing system to allow for license issuance information to be captured at the time licenses are sold. During late 2002, it was determined, through department pilot testing of the system, that the transaction cost of processing a license would be almost ten fold original estimates provided by A and I. At such time, A and I programmers were hopeful that costs could be reduced to be only slightly higher than original estimates by re-engineering several programs. After a three month period in which these changes were attempted, it became apparent, through continued testing by the Game and Fish department, that costs, while lowered, would not approximate original estimates and were still too excessive to consider completion of the system and implementation. Accordingly, the department, with commission concurrence, halted the project, and instead began a license review process using both internal and external stakeholders to discuss options and potential solutions related to the entire licensing process. A report from this group is due to the commission in February 2004. Licensing information, currently, continues to be available through the Internet from license results, demand indices, leftover license information in addition to application, and packet information.

During FY03, the department conducted all of its limited quota draws either on or before the published tentative draw dates. All licenses and refunds for the largest series of draw (resident deer, antelope, elk and nonresident deer and antelope) were in the mail prior to the beginning of the leftover application period, July 10th. During FY03 approximately 234,000 limited quota applications were received and processed by the division for over 50 different types of licenses and permits. This represents an increase of one percent in volume from the previous fiscal year and a five percent increase from three years ago.

The number of license selling agents administered by the division decreased by 18 agents, down from 381 to 363 active agencies. Although 16 new agents were approved by the commission, 6 agents were cancelled due to chronic problems related to either the timely filing or remittance of funds. The remainder of the decrease was due to voluntary terminations by agents. All new agents were provided department training. During FY03, the department continued to process search and rescue donations and distribute those donations to the Wyoming

Emergency Management Agency for their search and rescue programs. Additionally, the License Accounting section accounted for the predator stamp, the proceeds of which, minus department administrative costs were distributed to the Animal Damage Management Board. A new lifetime small game/game bird license and companion permit for disabled hunters were approved by the legislature. Both of these licenses required new forms and procedures which the Section implemented.

In the General Accounting section, significant time was devoted to two one-year federal grant programs approved by congress late in 2000 and 2001 respectively. The second piece of legislation, the State Wildlife Grant program, required the development of individual project proposals and more detailed financial and programmatic reporting than previous programs. A second year of funding for State Wildlife Grants was approved by congress late spring 2003 with the department required to prepare and again submit over 15 individual projects to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by June 2003 for their review and approval. These were approved in late August 2003. During FY03, the department's five year Application for Federal Assistance, which was written in FY02, was also approved. This five-year application, upon approval, allows the department to submit grant agreements and request funding on an annual basis. Finally, a project team, which included a Wyoming representative, completed the rewrite of the comprehensive planning portion of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *Federal Aid Handbook* and submitted it to USFWS in Washington DC for approval.

In the Disbursements section, the new-state wide purchasing credit card program continued to expand with approximately 100 employees utilizing this system. Major changes in State Auditor's office WOLFS system originally planned for summer 2002, requiring the rewrite of various internal accounting systems was delayed by the State Auditor which will mean that this project will need to, potentially, be worked on during FY04.

Finally, considerable divisional time was expended on rewriting six internal accounting systems which used 1980's technology. To date, the Deposits and Boating Registration are complete, the Voucher and Vehicle systems are in process with Personnel Management and Cost Accounting to be started before December 2003. It is anticipated that all systems should be complete by the end of FY04.

During FY03, approximately 38,000 expenditure transactions were reviewed by Disbursements personnel and processed directly through the State Auditor's office. Processing time for payment vouchers approximated 1½ days. In terms of processing money received by the department, over \$34.6 million was received from approximately 234,000 limited quota license applications during FY03. Due to a variety of circumstances, it takes the department an average of 14 working days to have funds processed



and deposited with the state treasurer.

In terms of transaction accuracy, keypunch and other errors resulted in approximately 62 of the 202 requests being considered by the License Review board between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2003. These requests constituted less than 0.1 percent of the 120,000 limited quota licenses, points and permits issued through the License draw system.

## **Personnel Management**

In addition to the standard human resource management actions, the Personnel Management staff were involved in four major projects during FY04. First, the Human Resource Manager continued to coordinate the Employee Development Program which provided eight training programs for approximately 150 employees. The second project involved an internal audit of At-Will Employee Contracts to determine which of these positions were being used appropriately and which should be converted into permanent positions. The third major effort involved conducting a nation-wide search for a new agency director. Finally, the Personnel Management staff continued to address staffing issues resulting from both retirements and employee turnover.

As indicated by the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 91.3 percent of individuals that worked with the Personnel Management staff were satisfied with the services provided.

## **Information Technology**

FY03 continued to be a pivotal year for the department with respect to Information Technology. The efforts of the IT staff were focused in four general areas: upgrading the department's network infrastructure, rewriting and developing new computer applications, Geographic Information Systems, and electronic attacks on agency computers.

In efforts related to the department's infrastructure, the IT staff were able to update and restructure the department's Internet website, and improve the agency's Intranet site. The GroupWise 6 e-mail system was upgraded to version 6.5 in order to keep up with new features, including an instant messaging system. The IT staff created shared calendar resources for several branches in the agency so personnel could begin to use the calendaring and collaboration features in GroupWise. Another major project involved upgrading the Local Area Network hardware and software in the Cheyenne Headquarters Office and several regional offices. All Novell NetWare servers were upgraded with the latest service packs and two new NetWare 5.1 servers were configured and installed in the Jackson and Green River regional offices. Finally, the implementation of the network switches expanded the department's ability to add workstations and printers to these LAN/s, while significantly increasing network performance.

With regards to application development, the IT staff worked to enable users to better utilize their time or use new systems that were not previously available. Those new applications either completed or under development include: an on-line test that constituents can take to assess their knowledge of the difference between Black and Grizzly Bears, on-line harvest survey questionnaires (maps and input forms), and a system to assist in gathering and reporting data relating to CWD surveillance throughout the Wyoming. Modifications and improvements were also made to the on-line interface so hunters can look up results of big game license drawings. Likewise, department personnel can query the license draw and hunter education databases. Finally, an on-line program enables department personnel to enter budget codes into the department Fiscal Credit Card system.

The department's Geographic Information Systems personnel largely focused on updating information related to big game species, addressing the spatial analysis needs of nongame species, and dedicating time to other needs as necessary. The work on big game data included updating seasonal ranges, herd unit boundaries, hunt area boundaries, parturition areas, and migration routes. Also worthy of note, considerable effort was made to map CWD data. Using a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, GIS personnel worked to address the spatial analysis needs related to species identified by the state as being in the greatest need of conservation. When able, GIS personnel completed various projects, mapping requests, data requests, and other activities related to the departmental coordination of geospatial data.

Finally, during FY03, the IT staff worked to cope with an increasing number of computer virus and Internet worm attacks on agency computers. Due to their destructive nature, these attacks required considerable IT staff time, both in continuing to secure department systems and in cleaning up computers that were impacted by these attacks. Network computers did not experience any problems, however many remote user machines were affected.

As indicated by the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 72.9 percent of individuals that worked with the Information Technology staff were satisfied with the services provided.

## **Support Facilities and Personnel**

The department maintains seven regional offices, plus a satellite office in Pinedale and the Cheyenne headquarters building. Two regional office managers are assigned to each facility for logistical support. Excepting hatchery biologists, game wardens, and some terrestrial biologists, the majority of department employees are located either

in regional offices or the headquarters facility. By FY97, the department had upgraded three quarters of the regional offices. Both the Green River and Laramie offices were renovated during FY97, with the goal to provide improved service areas for external customers, adequate working space for permanent employees, and a conference room for regional meetings in each facility achieved. A new Jackson regional office was opened in July 2002 leaving only the offices in Pinedale and Cheyenne to be upgraded. An evaluation and design for expansion was completed for the Cheyenne HQ building along with a detailed cost estimate. This project is on hold until funding can be made available.

As indicated by the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, depending upon their region, between 72.2 and 100 percent of individuals that worked in one of the department's regional offices were satisfied with the clerical and logistical services provided. Likewise, between 20 and 100 percent of individuals working in either one of the department's offices or the department's headquarters were satisfied with their workspace.

## **Legislatively Mandated Expenses**

The department administers several programs in which payments are required to be made to individuals or other state agencies in accordance with Wyoming Statute or specific appropriation. These programs include: Landowner coupons and Damage Claims, as well as specific appropriations from department funds for SALEC, Peace Officer and Early Retirement, and Cost Allocation. The department must insure these programs meet their statutory requirements, while minimizing the amount of department cost associated with administering these programs. During FY03, the department processed all payments and/or fund transfers to other state agencies as required, with no increased budget for administrative costs.

## **Mailroom**

Use of the inserting machine continues to pay dividends in the reduction of personnel time required to process large license mailings. More than 100,000 licenses were mailed in seven working days. Three people are needed for the process amounting to 21 man-days to process licenses. Prior to the using the inserting machine, a crew of 10-12 individuals would take ten working days for this same process (100-120 days). Mailroom personnel are responsible for handling some 1.2 million pieces of incoming and outgoing mail each year. This includes thousands of UPS packages and priority and express mail.

As indicated by the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 69.2 percent

of individuals that worked with the mailroom staff were satisfied with the services provided.

## **Conservation Engineering**

During FY03, Conservation Engineering personnel were responsible for conducting and/or completing a variety of projects related to construction, surveying, and drafting.

Construction efforts focused on improving the building and facilities at the state's fish hatcheries and rearing stations, improving boating access across the state, improving access and facilities on department properties, and remodeling various workspaces within the Cheyenne headquarters building and expanding and remodeling the related parking area.

With a purchase of a new Global Positioning System, the department's surveyors were able to complete considerable work in a much shorter time than was previously been possible. Surveyor time was largely divided between boundary surveys/fencing projects, topographic surveys, and water rights issues. During FY03, the department's surveyors conducted either boundary surveys or fencing projects on 11 agency properties. In terms of topographic surveys, surveyors conducted work related to the parking lot expansion in Cheyenne, surveyed the new water supply pipeline at the Dubois Fish Hatchery, and surveyed for new concrete brood ponds at the Tillett Springs and Ten sleep Fish Hatcheries. The land surveyor addressed approximately five water rights correspondence issues per month.

The Drafting personnel focused on implementing ArcGIS into their operations, working with the Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) program, creating signs and maps for the department, and consulting on various construction projects.

In efforts related to ArcGIS, drafting personnel designed the new State Geodatabase and all the standards for mapping and data access for the state in the software, created control files within the new CATS6 software used to convert all the AutoCAD maps into a ArcGIS format, designed, and created maps in ArcGIS for the entire state by county.

In efforts related to the PLPW program, Drafting personnel created all the maps for the Walk-in Fishing/Hunting and designed and created twenty different Hunter Management Area brochures. Likewise, Drafting personnel created a training manual and conducted a three-day training session to teach the new software/standards to the PLPW personnel. Finally, Drafting personnel helped the PLPW coordinator by reviewing the bid specifications and contracts for publications and signing. All publications and the PLPW website were designed and in place by the targeted dates.

The Drafting personnel drafted, designed, plotted, and mounted all the signs, banners, posters and numerous displays for the Wyoming Hunting

and Fishing Heritage Expo. In addition to this effort 20,333 signs were designed and ordered to address the department's varied information needs. In terms of mapping, the drafting personnel created maps for the hunt areas, regulation booklets, the harvest survey, and the new access areas. Existing maps continued to be updated with topography, land status, development, signage, and water rights on all department administered lands. Finally, many maps were converted into a digital format for inclusion on the department's Web site.

Drafting personnel worked with consultants on boating access improvement projects, and provided significant service to various construction and surveying projects.

As indicated by the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, 73.6 percent of individuals that worked with the Conservation Engineering staff were satisfied with the services provided.

## **Regional Information and Education**

Due to a number of personnel changes in the Information Branch, some of the Regional Information and Education records for the first half of FY03 are incomplete. As a result, the majority of figures provided for this document should be viewed as minimums. However, Regional I and E personnel assisted in media outreach, planning, and public information efforts on a weekly basis. Media releases included an average of three to five print releases per week for a total of 175; 266 radio spots, 173 radio programs, 36 television public service announcements and 13 Wyoming Wildlife News articles. During FY03, the format of the Wyoming Wildlife News changed, requiring less participation in article production than in the past. Regular, weekly, or monthly radio shows were hosted in Casper, Douglas, Cody, Worland, Kemmerer, Sheridan, Gillette and Evanston. Regional personnel either conducted or assisted in the production of approximately 200 programs and workshops.

As indicated by the *Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003*, depending upon the region, between half and 92.3 percent of individuals that worked with the Regional Information and Education personnel were satisfied with the specialists' ability to disseminate information to the public, and between 65.6 and 94.6 percent were satisfied with the specialists' ability to disseminate information internally. Depending upon region, between 52.8 and 93.1 percent of respondents that had worked with the regional specialists were satisfied with the education efforts conducted. Finally, depending upon region, between 63.1 and 97.7 percent of individuals that had worked with the regional specialists were satisfied with the overall services provided.

## **Education**

Education Branch personnel, both in Cheyenne and the various regions, conducted about 250 wildlife management programs for about 7,500 people. An additional 18,006 participants attended the 2002 Wyoming Hunting and Fishing Heritage Exposition, and over 7,000 individuals were contacted at other fairs and sports shows.

Volunteer coordination for the department is also a part of the Education Objective. Four hundred and thirty-six volunteer hunter education instructors conducted 241 hunter education classes; certifying 4,970 students. Volunteer hunter education instructors provided 8,279 hours of service to the department, and the department's volunteer program, which had 479 volunteers, provided 7,186 service hours. Wildlife In Learning Development facilitators conducted 17 workshops for 397 teachers. Two Water Education for Teachers (WET)/WILD/Project Learning Tree workshops were conducted for 67 additional teachers.

The Outdoor Recreation Education program was presented to 21 new instructors. One hundred seventy-five instructors now teach OREO in about 110 schools. Finally, about 160 Wyoming residents learned how to prevent conflicts with bears during seven workshops provided by Education personnel.

Over 32,000 Wyoming residents benefited directly from our education programs, camps, the Expo, fairs and workshops. Approximately 436 volunteer instructors assisted in the hunter education program and 479 volunteers assisted in wildlife and fish management efforts. Total volunteer hours are over 25,000. Over 95 percent of all participants in workshops, programs and camps rated program quality and content as acceptable to excellent. Availability and accessibility of services was not a hindrance to customer satisfaction. Educational and communication opportunities appear to be adequate for customer demand.

## **Information**

Information personnel are responsible for distributing department information via the mass media, agency publications, and the department's Telephone Information Center.

With regards to the mass media, Information personnel are responsible for the production of news releases, radio programs, and video productions. The 1-800 radio actuality line, which was added several years ago, has provided an additional dimension to the department's news dissemination efforts. That message is now also available via MP3 format which is being used more than the phone lines. The actuality line and the MP3 format allow radio stations access of a broadcast quality news message on a department subject. This message is updated weekly. Print news production has been greatly streamlined by reducing the number of hard copies being produced. Many

news releases are now sent electronically. More than 250 subscribers have converted from hard copy to e-mail which has effected a tremendous savings in printing, postage, and personnel time needed to process news release mailings. Finally, Information personnel produced approximately 12 radio and video public service announcements as well as feature length video productions.

In addition to distributing information to the mass media, the department produces two publications; Wyoming Wildlife Magazine and Wyoming Wildlife News. During FY03, 12 issues of Wyoming Wildlife Magazine were produced and mailed to over 30,000 subscribers. Six copies of Wyoming Wildlife News were produced (34,000 copies per issue) were provided, free of charge, to license selling agents within Wyoming and over 7000 paid subscribers..

Finally, during FY03, the department's TIC answered 80,413 phone calls from the public and approximately 4000 public email messages. The TIC personnel were responsible for distributing 17,500 newsletters per year, and providing telecommunications support services to the more than 800 phone numbers used by agency personnel.

Surveys of Wyoming media indicate more than 90 percent satisfaction with prepared information provided by information personnel. All have indicated the material reached them in a timely manner for use in publications and broadcasts. The department's video, radio and print news personnel are in continual contact with media outlets and receive a great deal of feedback on information efforts. In terms of Telephone Center operations, the *Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey, 2003* indicated that 86.4 percent of individuals that had contacted the phone center staff felt their information needs had been handled well.

## Agency Goals:

Manage all Wyoming's wildlife and conserve their habitat to maintain healthy ecosystems and provide a variety of quality wildlife-associated recreation opportunities, while addressing other human/wildlife interactions.

Continually improve service to both our external and internal customers through responsible management of our human, financial, and technological resources, and through efficient and effective provision of support services.

Maintain open, honest, and constructive communication with our constituents and within the department to foster understanding of and involvement and cooperation in wildlife management.

## Game and Fish Department organization chart

