

COLORADO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

Strategic Plan 2010-2020





Colorado Division of Wildlife Strategic Plan 2010–2020

It is the policy of the State of Colorado that the wildlife and their environment are to be protected, preserved, enhanced, and managed for the use, benefit and enjoyment of the people of this state and its visitors. It is further declared to be the policy of this state that there shall be provided a comprehensive program designed to offer the greatest possible variety of wildlife-related recreational opportunity to the people of this state and its visitors and that, to carry out such program and policy, there shall be a continuous operation of planning, acquisition, and development of wildlife habitats and facilities for wildlife-related opportunities. C.R.S. 33-1-101(1)

The mission of the Colorado Division of Wildlife is to perpetuate the wildlife resources of this state and provide people the opportunity to enjoy them.

Background and Purpose of the Strategic Plan

Why create a Strategic Plan?

The Colorado Division of Wildlife's (the "Division") Strategic Plan defines values and expectations, consistent with the Division's mission, that form a general roadmap for wildlife management in the coming years. In addition, the Strategic Plan provides a foundation for policy analysis and priority setting for current wildlife management issues and for unforeseen issues that will inevitably arise over the ten year period covered by the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan states publicly and clearly the expectations for the Division in the coming years. By describing those expectations, the Division, its Director and the Colorado Wildlife Commission are accountable for the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan.

How did this Strategic Plan take form?

The Division underwent an extensive public involvement process to create the 2002–2007 Strategic Plan that included the creation of 4 different work groups to address the following—Hunting, Fishing, Species Conservation and Stewardship and Awareness. These groups met over a four-month period to develop recommendations for these subject areas that were then evaluated by a steering committee comprised of the Division's Leadership Team, three wildlife commissioners and a representative from the Department of Natural Resources. This steering committee also considered input from the public and Division employees and the final draft of this plan was adopted in January 2002. Upon review prior to developing the 2010–2020 Strategic Plan, the Division and the Wildlife Commission determined that much of the plan created by the 2002–2007 process, and many of the issues addressed, were still valid and that the plan primarily required some modification to better correspond with the Division's budgetary structure.

How will this Strategic Plan be used?

The Strategic Plan is a valuable tool for the Division as it charts a path for the future. The Strategic Plan serves as a guide for the annual process of determining the Division's budget priorities. The Strategic Plan has several components. First, it provides high-level guidance by presenting the Division's management principles and by acknowledging several issues that are relevant to overall Division effectiveness. The Strategic Plan also outlines desired outcomes, objectives and strategies for managing the Division's four major program areas.

- **Desired outcomes**—the future condition the Division would like to achieve for a particular program area as a result of accomplishing the underlying objectives
- **Objectives**—broad statements of intent that are aimed at achieving the desired outcomes
- **Strategies**—intended to be a more detailed list of tasks that will accomplish the stated objective.

It is important to recognize that the Strategic Plan is not intended to be an exclusive list of activities to be undertaken by the Division over the next 10 years. Rather, it is intended to highlight those issues that will be at the forefront of Colorado's wildlife management in the next 10 years and allow the Division to budget effectively to address those issues.

MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Management principles are the core beliefs that guide the Division in fulfilling its mission and creating its management strategies and inform the decision-making processes at all levels of the organization. The following principles reflect the Division's most deeply held values and ideals.

1. Wildlife conservation, use and enjoyment, including the rich traditions of fishing, hunting, trapping and wildlife viewing, are part of Colorado's outdoor heritage, economic future and overall quality of life.
2. A primary consideration in wildlife management decisions is to maintain healthy, diverse and abundant wildlife.
3. The quality, quantity and conservation of wildlife habitat are essential to maintaining the state's diverse wildlife populations and wildlife-related uses.
4. Science-based management decisions are essential to the conservation and management of Colorado's wildlife. Wildlife management decisions will include consideration of impacts to local communities as well as other social and economic concerns.
5. Partnerships and the involvement of private property owners, other agencies, local governments, public and private groups, citizens and volunteers are critical to the protection and management of Colorado's wildlife and wildlife habitat.
6. Wildlife education and information enhance the public's ability to be wise stewards of wildlife, exhibit a strong conservation ethic and support sound principles of wildlife management.
7. Quality customer service is vital to the Division's success.
8. The Division will manage itself and its wildlife areas to be models of effective, efficient, responsible and responsive public service.
9. Hunting and fishing license fees are expected to continue to be the major source of revenue for wildlife programs in Colorado. The Division recognizes that new and different funding sources are, however, critical if the Division is to fulfill its mission. The Division will allocate funds, consistent with law, based upon priorities established to maximize the Division's ability to fulfill its mission.
10. The Division respects and values its employees and will endeavor to enhance their performance and success in service to the people of Colorado.

Fish, Wildlife and Habitat

PROGRAM AREA: Fish, Wildlife and Habitat

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Quality fish and wildlife habitat is protected from loss.

Fish and wildlife disease does not significantly impact fish and wildlife.

Colorado citizens are satisfied with the diversity and health of the state's native fish and wildlife.

Hunters, anglers and trappers are satisfied with the number and variety of fish and game available for harvest.

The Division is regarded as a comprehensive source of objective, scientifically based information on fish and wildlife in Colorado.

Colorado's fish and wildlife is managed such that the need for federal listings under the Endangered Species Act are minimized, and the state retains primary management authority.

OBJECTIVE

Protect, restore and enhance habitat for fish and wildlife.

STRATEGIES

- Develop measurable and achievable management objectives for fish and wildlife habitat
- Assess and prioritize habitats for protection, restoration or enhancement
- Provide analysis and recommendations to improve fish and wildlife habitats and reduce impacts from threats to those habitats (including, but not limited to, those impacts associated with energy development, climate change, urban and exurban development and invasive species)
- Seek mitigation for adverse impacts to fish and wildlife
- Acquire interest in property where Division management can provide exceptional benefits to fish and wildlife and associated recreation
- Develop partnerships with landowners, land management agencies and others to restore, enhance, and conserve fish and wildlife habitats
- Provide incentives and assistance to landowners to improve habitat on private land
- Develop cooperative efforts to gather and exchange information on fish and wildlife



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■ OBJECTIVE

Manage proactively to prevent and control fish and wildlife diseases and introductions of invasive species to protect fish and wildlife populations.

STRATEGIES

- Intentionally introduce non-native fish and wildlife only if they do not pose genetic, disease, or competitive/predatory risks to native or desirable fish and wildlife
- Reduce the risk of transmission of disease between captive and free-ranging fish and wildlife
- Aggressively research, identify, detect, contain, & eliminate, when possible, diseases that could negatively impact terrestrial and aquatic wildlife populations
- Monitor fish and wildlife populations for disease
- Prohibit the importation of fish and wildlife that pose an unacceptable disease risk
- Ensure that propagation, stocking, and translocation of fish and wildlife do not contribute to the introduction or transmission of diseases
- Develop risk assessment, public information, and response strategies for fish and wildlife disease threats
- Collaborate with other agencies and educational institutions on disease control, prevention and research





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■ OBJECTIVE

Ensure the long-term viability of native fish and wildlife and strive to maintain the broadest representation of the diversity of native wildlife in suitable habitats across the state.

STRATEGIES

- Maintain a list of species of greatest conservation need, priority threats and conservation actions necessary
- Regularly measure and report on conservation successes
- Inventory, monitor and assess the status of native fish and wildlife and the habitats upon which they depend
- Restore native species where they have declined or disappeared
- Provide information on the distribution, abundance and conservation of native fish and wildlife
- Collaborate with interested and affected parties to develop and implement plans to recover threatened and endangered species and conserve native fish and wildlife
- Develop cooperative efforts to gather and exchange information on fish and wildlife
- Develop and implement standardized sampling and data collection protocols
- Assist public and private landowners in the conservation, restoration and enhancement of native fish and wildlife
- Work in cooperation with other agencies and local governments to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species
- Assess climate change impacts to wildlife and habitat and develop monitoring schemes to track changes and trends in distributions and abundance of key wildlife species, as well as adaptation strategies for key species as appropriate

■ OBJECTIVE

Maintain healthy and viable game and sport fish populations sufficient to meet the demand for hunting, fishing and trapping, while minimizing landowner conflicts.

STRATEGIES

- Develop measurable and achievable management objectives for game species
- Set harvest rules and regulations to achieve long-term sustainability of populations and habitat
- Regularly inventory, analyze and report on game populations and habitats
- Assess game populations and harvest numbers and adapt regulations to achieve recreation and population objectives
- Collaborate with tribes, private landowners, and agencies to manage populations and harvest for long-term sustainability
- Alleviate wildlife damage to agriculture and compensate landowners for unavoidable losses as provided by law
- Use artificial propagation, stocking and translocation where appropriate and cost effective
- Stock and transplant fish where appropriate and cost effective
- Restrict the use of technological advances in fish and wildlife recreation when they compromise fair chase and management objectives

A person wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and olive green pants is shown from the waist down, holding a fishing reel. The reel has a black handle and a gold-colored spool. The person is standing on a rocky bank next to a blue river. In the background, there are rolling hills and a large, snow-capped mountain under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is a scenic outdoor setting for fishing.

Fish and Wildlife Recreation

PROGRAM AREA: Fish and Wildlife Recreation

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Hunters, anglers, trappers and other wildlife enthusiasts are highly satisfied with fish and wildlife recreation opportunities.

Landowners allow access for fish and wildlife recreation wherever these activities can be responsibly conducted.

Recreational opportunities are adequate and well distributed around the state and conflicts among recreationalists are minimized.

■ OBJECTIVE

Provide a variety of hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities and maintain or increase current levels of hunter and angler satisfaction and participation.

STRATEGIES

- Provide opportunities and experiences based on demand and Colorado's habitat and wildlife resources
- Assess participation, demand and satisfaction with hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities. Adjust management to achieve objectives

■ OBJECTIVE

Increase access to private land for fish and wildlife recreation.

STRATEGIES

- Assess opportunities to access private land
- Provide incentives and services to landowners who allow public access
- Collaborate with landowners and commercial operators to provide public recreation opportunities on private lands
- Assess participation, demand and satisfaction with access opportunities. Adjust management to achieve objectives





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■ OBJECTIVE

Maintain and enhance fish and wildlife recreational opportunities on public lands.

STRATEGIES

- Collaborate with land management agencies to provide a variety of recreational opportunities, maintain or increase access, reduce impacts and conflicts and achieve objectives for recreation and fish and wildlife populations
- Provide fish and wildlife-based recreation on lands owned or managed by the Division
- Collaborate with user groups to promote sustainable fish and wildlife recreation, reduce conflicts and achieve objectives for recreation and fish and wildlife populations
- Protect the public's right to use public waters for hunting, fishing and trapping
- Obtain public access across private lands to public lands
- In partnership with land management agencies, provide information on fish and wildlife recreational opportunities and access on public land

OBJECTIVE

Create and enforce regulations necessary to protect fish and wildlife populations.

STRATEGIES

- Develop regulations that increase opportunity and variety while reducing conflicts among user groups
- Enforcement of regulations and licensing requirements will be an integral part of ensuring healthy and viable game populations, and providing appropriate funding for Division programs
- Enhance and enforce laws to protect fish and wildlife populations from disease
- Improve management of recreation and enforcement of rules on state and federal lands through partnerships with state and federal agencies and local governments

OBJECTIVE

Provide convenient, user-friendly and cost effective license purchase opportunities.

STRATEGIES

- License management strategies will involve local communities
- Implement an electronic licensing system that is reliable, adaptable, user friendly and cost effective



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Public Outreach



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PROGRAM AREA: Public Outreach

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Colorado citizens are well-informed and knowledgeable about fish and wildlife resources.

Hunters, anglers and trappers enjoy broad public support for their recreational activities.

There is broad recognition and support in Colorado for the economic and social benefits of fish and wildlife recreation and management.

Colorado citizens and visitors are actively engaged in outdoor wildlife activities.

A broad spectrum of the public participates in and supports management decisions.

OBJECTIVE

Maintain and increase public knowledge of, and support for, the Division's mission and wildlife management activities.

STRATEGIES

- Provide timely and accurate information on management actions and important news related to fish and wildlife
- Develop effective methods for conveying and distributing information about fish and wildlife, including ways to minimize conflict between people and wildlife
- Publicize resource management issues and Division programs that address them
- Publicize the Division's and Wildlife Commission's public involvement and decision-making processes
- Promote the social and economic benefits of wildlife-based recreation
- Promote hunting, fishing and trapping as legitimate uses of fish and wildlife and compatible with conservation of wildlife
- Emphasize ethics, safety and fair chase in hunting, fishing, trapping and other wildlife education programs
- Develop effective partnerships to assist in outreach efforts
- Evaluate all public outreach efforts and determine the needs, expectations and interests of the public. Adjust programs to meet objectives



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OBJECTIVE

Continue to provide and improve opportunities for the public to participate in decision-making processes.

STRATEGIES

- Monitor and assess public support for fish and wildlife recreation and management
- Notify interested and affected stakeholders of opportunities to participate in decisions
- Provide a variety of convenient opportunities for citizens to be involved in Division and Commission decisions
- Provide quality and timely response to input from citizens and include rationale for decisions.
- Improve coordination, effectiveness and quality of public involvement efforts
- Assess participation in and satisfaction with public involvement processes. Adjust programs to improve performance



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OBJECTIVE

Maintain and increase public awareness of and participation in outdoor wildlife activities, including hunting, fishing, trapping and viewing.

STRATEGIES

- Inform the public about the importance of hunting and fishing to wildlife conservation, including continued collaboration with and support for the Wildlife Management Public Education Advisory Council
- Expand opportunity to take mandatory hunter education classes
- Provide a variety of “how to” hunting and fishing classes as well as other fish and wildlife educational opportunities
- Provide timely, accurate and user-friendly information on recreational and educational opportunities
- Promote and market the Division’s wildlife-based recreation programs to new as well as existing customers
- Provide materials and professional development training for formal educators to conduct effective field investigations with their students
- Develop partnerships to provide formal and informal outdoor wildlife opportunities specific to the needs of beginners, youth, people with disabilities and families
- Develop partnerships to create and enhance existing mentoring programs for wildlife-based recreation



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Management Support

PROGRAM AREA: Management Support

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Information related to Colorado's fish, wildlife, plants and ecosystems is easily accessible in a variety of formats.

Employees are recognized and respected for public service and leadership in fish and wildlife management.

The Division attracts and keeps highly qualified personnel.

The Division is recognized as an effective and efficient state agency.

Funding is sufficient to manage fish and wildlife and to serve the public.

Everyone who enjoys or benefits from wildlife contributes to supporting wildlife and habitat.

Facilities, equipment and information systems are safe, reliable and cost effective.

OBJECTIVE

Attract, support and retain a diverse and professional workforce.

STRATEGIES

- Promote and provide access to quality, applicable training opportunities for employee growth and leadership development
- Provide career development and promotional opportunities for all employees
- Provide a safe, supportive and respectful work environment leading to high employee satisfaction and productivity
- Ensure the Division is recognized as an employer of choice
- Maintain customer service excellence to meet and exceed employee expectations
- Provide up-to-date and accurate information for individual employees and supervisors and ensure consistent application of personnel rules and policy
- Devise and implement ways to enhance teamwork, internal communication and decision making



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OBJECTIVE

Provide equipment and facilities for excellent service to the public and for agency management effectiveness.

STRATEGIES

- Maintain and upgrade facilities and equipment
- Design and locate offices for customer service and convenient access
- Partner with other agencies to combine offices where feasible
- Provide a safe, pleasant and well-equipped work environment

OBJECTIVE

Increase funding as needed to meet legal mandates and public expectations.

STRATEGIES

- Continue to use revenue generated by hunters, anglers and trappers for programs that benefit hunting, fishing and trapping
- Evaluate funding mechanisms to keep pace with the cost of managing hunting and fishing programs
- Obtain funding through grants and partnerships that support the Division's mission
- Develop new funding sources for fish and wildlife programs that benefit all Colorado citizens
- Seek efficiencies and cost savings in all programs
- Use research and marketing to enhance license sales

OBJECTIVE

Improve information management and business systems.

STRATEGIES

- Develop and implement a long-term plan for information technology and management
- Improve tools for entry, storage, retrieval, reporting and dissemination of biological and business data
- Provide access to and training in the use of information management systems
- Continually review, adapt and improve business practices to enhance effectiveness and accountability
- Effectively use innovation and technology in the Division's management decision making, planning and operations
- Balance operational effectiveness and cost efficiencies in the Division's use of information technology

OBJECTIVE

Maintain a skilled and knowledgeable volunteer workforce to augment the Division's staff and programs.

STRATEGIES

- Recruit and train volunteers to assist Division employees
- Further the goal of wildlife conservation through volunteerism
- Ensure that Colorado citizens are active participants in furthering the Division's mission



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Keeping Colorado Wild

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The Colorado Division of Wildlife is the state agency responsible for protecting and managing wildlife and its habitat, as well as providing wildlife-related recreation. The Division is funded by hunting and fishing license fees, federal grants and Colorado Lottery proceeds through Great Outdoors Colorado.