

# Game & Fish Department

## Mission and philosophy

Conserving wildlife, serving people.

## Results of outcomes

### Objective: Department Administration

FY05 was a challenging and rewarding year for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (Department) and its administration. Under the leadership of Governor Dave Freudenthal, the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission (Commission) and Director Terry Cleveland, the focus of Department 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.

In FY05, a number of major accomplishments deserve mention. The Department's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy was completed and proposed for approval by the Commission. The relationship between the Department and the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of Wyoming (WHFW) continued to mature, and Governor Freudenthal again turned over his 20 complimentary hunting licenses to WHFW to administer their distribution for the benefit of wildlife. Efforts to develop an electronic licensing system and manage chronic wasting disease and brucellosis continued. The Department was an active participant in the Wyoming State Governor's Brucellosis Coordination Team.

The 2005 Wyoming Legislature considered a number of bills affecting the Department, wildlife and sportsmen across the state. The Legislature reduced the price of grizzly bear licenses from \$1,750 to \$500 for residents and from \$17,500 to \$5,000 for nonresidents. Although the Legislation will go into effect July 1, 2005, grizzly bear hunting could be years away, pending their removal from the federal threatened species list. The Department will now be required to notify local sheriffs' offices and citizens when a grizzly bear has been relocated. The Department must also publish an annual report on all grizzly relocation activities. The 2005 Legislature expanded a law creating special elk, deer, antelope, and turkey licenses for youth with life-threatening illnesses. Those youngsters will be able to hunt those animals over bait beginning fall 2005. The Commission will now have control over Commission owned mineral rights. The Commission has full or partial mineral rights on approximately 30,000 acres in the state. Beginning in 2006, persons participating in competitive hunts on licensed game bird farms in Wyoming will not be required to have a hunting license.

### General information

Terry Cleveland, Director

### Agency contact

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### Other locations

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

### Year established

1890

### Statutory references

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

### Number of authorized personnel

392

### Organizational 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.

### Budget information

Aquatic Wildlife Management.....	\$3,844,153 (8.9%)
Bird Farms .....	387,953 (0.9%)
COOP Unit Research .....	397,145 (0.9%)
Conservation Engineering.....	390,144 (0.9%)
Department Administration .....	2,525,424 (5.9%)
Education.....	547,050 (1.3%)
Feedgrounds.....	1,629,570 (3.8%)
Financial Management .....	2,258,533 (5.2%)
Fish Culture .....	4,362,049 (10.1%)
Habitat.....	4,261,529 (9.9%)
Information.....	1,228,018 (2.8%)
Information Technology Systems.....	1,606,715 (3.7%)
Legislatively Mandated Expenses .....	1,822,276 (4.2%)
Mailroom .....	611,020 (1.4%)
Personnel Management .....	288,705 (0.7%)
Property Rights Management.....	1,781,134 (4.1%)
Regional Information and Education .....	483,838 (1.1%)
Specialized Law Enforcement .....	777,815 (1.8%)
Strategic Management.....	496,772 (1.2%)
Support Facilities and Personnel.....	1,877,671 (4.4%)
Terrestrial Wildlife Management .....	10,309,021 (23.9%)
Wildlife Habitat Protection .....	277,574 (0.6%)
Wildlife Health/Laboratory .....	973,933 (2.3%)
Total.....	\$43,138,042

### Body to which agency 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.

Interim committee studies are planned for several topics, including the Department alternative funding and capital construction; fishing outfitters; intentional feeding of big game animals; and electronic hunting and fishing licensing.

The biggest news from the 2005 Wyoming Legislative session was the creation of a trust fund dedicated to the preservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat. More than 20 years in the making, the Wildlife and Natural Resources Funding Act established a trust fund to preserve and restore wildlife habitat and open spaces. The fund was enacted with \$15 million, but is expected to reach \$200 million in the next few years. The act places interest from the trust fund into an income account to be used to supply grants to non-profit organizations and government agencies, including the Department, for specific projects. A nine-member appointed board will administer the account and decide which grant proposals are funded.

In January 2004, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) rejected Wyoming's proposed wolf management plan, informing the Department that the state's dual classification of wolves as trophy game and predatory animals was not an option. The USFWS alleged that the wolf management plan and state law are inadequate and will need to be changed before the wolf can be delisted. In answer to the rejection of the plan, the State of Wyoming filed a lawsuit against the USFWS, alleging that the federal agency had no legal grounds to reject the plan. In March 2005, a Wyoming federal district court judge dismissed the state's lawsuit.

In 2004, following public requests, an internal department working group drafted a Grizzly Bear Habitat Occupancy Proposal to further refine guidelines on how bears would be managed within the potential occupancy outer boundary delineated in the plan.

A comprehensive public input process, including stakeholder and public meetings, yielded 17,542 written comments from individuals and organizations. The comments represent the largest response the Department has ever received in a public involvement process. Wyoming residents contributed 29.5 percent of the comments. All other states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and 38 foreign countries were represented in the other 70.5 percent of comments.

Based on public comments, the Department prepared six recommendations for the Wyoming Game & Fish Commission to consider. The recommendations included minimizing human/grizzly bear conflicts through outreach and education, regulating hunting seasons and management of conflict bears in areas of high conflict potential. In addition, the Department recommended eliminating the concept of a Secondary Conservation Area from the occupancy management program. The development of a population objective for grizzly bears in Wyoming through cooperation by the Department

and the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team and the finalization of protocols used to establish allowable mortality thresholds were also recommended. Ongoing information and education efforts should be expanded to help people better understand grizzly bear recovery and management in Wyoming. Finally, more citizen participation should be encouraged to identify potential causes of human/grizzly bear conflicts and the Department should work proactively to address those issues.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to identify their level of satisfaction with the Department's overall coordination and direction. Of the individuals that answered this question, 83.7 percent indicated they were either "Very Satisfied" or "Somewhat Satisfied" with the Department's overall coordination and direction. Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

#### **Objective: Terrestrial Wildlife Management**

Thousands of hours were spent collecting and analyzing big game population data, preparing hunting season recommendations, presenting them at public meetings, and preparing regulations and hunting orders.

The eight local sage grouse working groups, created with representation from industry, agriculture and sportsmen's organizations, worked on local sage grouse conservation plans and submitted a first round of project requests. All eight local conservation plans will be completed by June 30, 2006.

Work continued on developing a prairie grassland management plan. Despite losing the State Wildlife Grant funded prairie ecologist in FY05, most work was completed with a final plan expected in FY06.

Black-footed ferret inventories indicated good reproduction in the wild for a second year in a row at the initial Shirley Basin release site. Preplanning was initiated for additional releases in the Shirley Basin area to be completed in fall 2005.

The statewide grizzly bear occupancy management guidelines were completed and adopted by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission in July 2005. The occupancy guideline will be amended to the state grizzly bear management plan prior to release of the final delisting rule by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in fall of 2005.

Division personnel worked cooperatively with the Attorney General's office to create a delisting petition for the gray wolf. The petition has been submitted to the USFWS.

Veterinary Services program was moved from Services Division to Wildlife Division to address expanded veterinary services and sage grouse management responsibilities. Budgets for these programs were converted to general fund appropriations.

Monitoring the distribution of chronic wasting disease in deer and elk continues to be a major effort for the Division. These efforts will most likely continue into the foreseeable future.

In calendar year 2004, Division permanent law enforcement personnel worked 5,296 man-days and drove 581,794 miles on law enforcement activities. This effort resulted in the issuance of 1,989 citations, 1,848 warnings and documentation of 865 law enforcement actions in which there were no suspects.

The Division is providing the highest quality interview and interrogation training for law enforcement personnel. Several complex cases were resolved due to the expertise personnel have developed in this area.

Wildlife damage compensated under W.S. §23-1-901 continues to absorb considerable personnel time in the Division. In FY05, Division personnel expended 756 man-days and drove 104,598 miles on activities to prevent wildlife from causing damage to private property. They expended 411 man-days and drove 19,598 miles investigating, processing and handling damage claims and landowner coupon redemption. A total of 82 damage claims worth \$209,921.31 were filed and the Department paid \$141,871.00. In addition, personnel spend 1,522 man-days and drove 151,125 miles responding to nuisance wildlife issues that were not considered wildlife damage under W.S. §23-1-901. The increased distribution and abundance of grizzly bears resulted in the creation of an additional permanent human/trophy game conflict position in the Jackson/Pinedale Region.

Recommendations from the Recruiting/Screening/Hiring committee have now been fully implemented. Additional recruiting efforts included broader advertising and proctoring of exams at universities throughout the nation. Elements of our revised hiring process have been adopted by several other western states.

Division personnel worked cooperatively with the Buffalo Bill Historical Center to create an exhibit featuring the construction of the Department's Thorofare Patrol Cabin. Thousands of visitors viewed the popular exhibit. In addition, Division personnel presented evening lectures at the museum and an open house was held in the wilderness at the patrol cabin.

Other accomplishments included the training of over 200 Department personnel in wilderness first aid, with eight classes held at various locations throughout the state. Employee feedback regarding this training was extremely positive. Individual classes will be scheduled in future years to ensure that all personnel receive this valuable training.

The Department asks hunters to evaluate the quality of their overall hunt. As reported within the Annual Report of Big and Trophy Game Harvest, 2004, 86 percent of resident antelope hunters, 71 percent of resident deer hunters, and 66 percent of resident elk hunters indicated they were either "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with the

overall quality of their hunt. Likewise, 92 percent of nonresident antelope hunters, 80 percent of nonresident deer hunters, and 76 percent of nonresident elk hunters were either "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with the overall quality of their hunt.

A compilation of data from the Annual Report of Big Game and Trophy Game Harvest, 2004 and the Annual Report of Small and Upland Game Harvest 2004, the most recent year for which data is available, indicates that hunters spent 1,109,136 recreation days during the 2004 season.

The 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, the most recent year for which data is available, indicates there were 3,924,000 days of wildlife-associated recreation that did not involve hunting or fishing.

#### **Objective: Aquatic Wildlife Management**

During FY05, aquatic wildlife management work focused on providing diverse, quality fisheries resources and angling opportunities while working to conserve and enhance all aquatic wildlife and their habitats for future generations. A major emphasis during the last year was completion of the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. This required significant work with partners, a careful review of available information, and updating aquatic wildlife data systems. A primary management and communication tool is the Basin Management Plans. These plans provide the basis for resource management and are constantly evaluated and revised. Fisheries crews continued work in the Green River (Black's Fork River) and Sheridan (Powder River) fisheries regions to survey the distribution and abundance of native fishes. Regional fishery managers conducted angler surveys and responded to public requests for information on fish and fishing. A significant amount of time was invested in habitat protection related to natural gas development. This was particularly acute in the Powder River Basin and the Upper Green River Basin.

Regional fisheries crews invested more time working to define distribution and relative abundance of fish native to Wyoming waters. Work was particularly focused on streams. This is an important step in updating information on native fishes. Fisheries personnel worked with other state and federal agencies to complete status assessments for Colorado River and Bonneville cutthroat trout. Regional fisheries crews completed informational newsletters for the public that included information on fishing and aquatic resources in their region. The boating access program completed most major developments planned for the year.

Every indication from creel surveys, comments from angler groups, and reports received from other entities indicates that the angler satisfaction level reported in FY99 (84 percent) continues.

Within the 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported Wyoming waters provided anglers with almost 2.5 million fishing recreation days during 2001, the most recent year for which data is available.

**Objective: Fish Culture**

With the exception of a whirling disease infection at the Story Hatchery, all Wyoming state fish hatcheries maintained disease free status while producing the requested numbers, pounds, sizes and species of salmonid fishes requested by the Fisheries Management Objective. In addition to meeting fisheries management requirements, fish eggs and excess salmonid production were traded to other state and federal agencies; in return Wyoming waters were stocked with cold, cool and warm water species.

Cutthroat trout brood stock development continued for Colorado River cutthroat and Yellowstone River cutthroat in their native drainages with assistance from Wyoming fisheries management crews, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Park Service. These operations are essential in developing and maintaining captive brood stocks to produce eggs for native trout conservation and sport fish needs. In addition to cutthroat brood stock development, golden trout from the Wind River Reservation were successfully taken in efforts coordinated with the Northern Arapahoe and Shoshone Tribal Councils and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Legislative appropriations totaling \$3.3 million were received to address deferred maintenance at Dubois Hatchery, Speas Rearing Station, and Wigwam Rearing Station. With the addition of Department funding, a major renovation at the Wigwam Rearing Station was completed this year. Modernization of Dubois started April 2005. Both projects will greatly enhance the fish production and fish rearing capacity of the fish culture system.

**Objective: Habitat**

There are three distinct aspects to the Habitat Objective: Regional Aquatic Habitat Management, Regional Terrestrial Habitat Management, and Habitat and Access Maintenance.

The Regional Aquatic Habitat Management personnel completed 76 percent of their annual work plan elements. Any items that were not addressed were either a low priority or could not be completed due to the actions of others within or outside the Department. Six trust fund projects/grants were developed and/or implemented during FY05, 11 watershed inventories were either initiated and/or completed, 27 habitat projects were either initiated and/or completed, and personnel participated in numerous extensions/public education efforts. A significant statewide coordination and planning effort on fish

passage was initiated. Finally, aquatic habitat personnel received training related to stream restoration, geographic information systems, and vegetation ecology.

Regional Terrestrial Habitat Management personnel completed 72 percent of their annual work plan elements. Any items that were not addressed were either a low priority or could not be completed due to the actions of others within or outside the Department. Over 110 landowner habitat extension projects were developed and/or implemented during FY05, 23 trust fund projects funded, habitat inventories conducted on nine large landscapes, and satellite imagery used to detect and monitor changes to the shrub/steppe habitats in Casper, Sheridan, Pinedale/Jackson, Green River, and Lander Regions and completed in the Laramie region. A total of 122 habitat projects were implemented and 37 additional habitat projects were planned during this period. Due to budget constraints, the Department was forced to suspend the habitat grants program during FY04 and FY05, so no new grant projects were developed.

The Habitat and Access Maintenance Branch goal is to maintain and enhance terrestrial and aquatic habitat for wildlife and provide access for wildlife-related recreational opportunities on Department-managed lands. A total of 36 Wildlife Habitat Management Areas and 96 Public Access Areas were managed and maintained by 23 permanent employees with seven crews that averaged two employees per crew in FY05. The Branch completed approximately 84 percent of the planned maintenance and monitoring work on wildlife habitat management areas and public fishing access areas within the limits of existing personnel and manpower. Maintenance and monitoring was completed on all facilities, structures, fences, roads, trail systems, and wetland complexes. In addition, through the project request system, the branch received an additional 35 to 40 requests for aquatic and terrestrial projects statewide and assistance on 11 hatcheries and rearing stations. This amounts to 6,000 man-hours of work in addition to assigned responsibilities for all managed lands and access areas.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, agency employees were asked to evaluate the performance of personnel working within the Habitat Objective. Of respondents that had interacted with these individuals, 60.6 percent were satisfied with the number of terrestrial habitat projects, and 58.5 percent were satisfied with the number of aquatic habitat projects. Regarding the quality of projects, 72.7 percent of respondents were satisfied with the quality of terrestrial habitat projects, and 69 percent were satisfied with the quality of aquatic habitat projects. Regarding the quality of habitats on Department lands, 64 percent of respondents were satisfied with the quality of terrestrial habitats on Department lands, and 68.2 percent were satisfied with the quality of aquatic habitats on Department lands. Finally, 87.4 percent of these respondents were satisfied

with the maintenance of facilities on Department lands and access areas.

Within the Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, hunters and anglers were asked to evaluate the maintenance of Department lands and access areas. Of respondents that were familiar with the Department's Wildlife Habitat Management Areas, 64.6 percent were satisfied with the management and maintenance of the facilities within these areas. Of respondents familiar with the Department's Public Fishing Access Areas, 66.8 percent were satisfied with the management and maintenance of facilities within these areas.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 and the Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

#### **Objective: Wildlife Habitat Protection**

Multiple Habitat Protection databases are maintained and made available for Department-wide access in order to facilitate accomplishment of program objectives. In FY05, the program maintained up-to-date narratives on the status of threatened, endangered, proposed and petitioned wildlife; coal and uranium mine activity; statewide transportation problem areas; and the databases that track past and present environmental commenting. These databases can be accessed by all Department personnel and provide a quick and efficient means to find information on Department operations and positions at any time.

Other accomplishments included facilitating the compilation of effects of coal mining on raptor nest success, for the purpose of better describing necessary raptor protection measures. The program also field-evaluated the nominations for the annual Hunting and Fishing Heritage Expo wildlife stewardship awards, including write-ups of each nominated project and selection of winners. In FY05, the program continued to be extensively involved in U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) strategic planning efforts, Endangered Species Act issues, coalbed methane water and oil and gas development issues and planning. Program personnel are taking the Department lead on interstate and multi-agency coalbed methane workgroups, and in several natural gas activity plans on BLM land. Program staff continued to be involved in issues being addressed by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA), and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) by providing comments and recommendations on these issues to the IAFWA.

The Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004 indicated approximately 38 percent of respondents had interacted with the Wildlife Habitat Protection staff. Of these individuals, 74.3 percent were satisfied with efforts by the Wildlife Habitat Protection staff to coordinate with personnel on environmental

commenting, 74.4 percent were satisfied with the process used to make assignments, obtain comments and recommendations, and provide feedback and assistance, and 88.4 percent were satisfied with the services provided by the Wildlife Habitat Protection staff.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time to be included in this report.

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

This objective is composed of two distinct parts: the Lands Management Branch and the Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) program.

The Property Rights (Lands) Management Branch provides support and technical expertise to the Department relative to land acquisition, management, or disposal of surplus property rights. Current state and federal laws, rules, guidelines and policies have been incorporated into Rules and Regulations and Commission Policy. Acquisition or disposal nominations are evaluated utilizing the Habitat and Access Evaluation Process (HAEP), which incorporates the landscape-approach to habitat management and land acquisition priorities on a regional and statewide basis. Public access to landlocked public lands continues to be one of the Department's highest priorities.

The branch continues to monitor all Commission-owned property rights. Attempts are made to physically inspect all property rights and Commission-owned lands to establish data photo points, which will set a new benchmark for evaluating 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.

Branch personnel were involved in several high-priority projects, including: agreements executed to facilitate boating developments on various lakes and reservoirs around the state; acquired an easement for water well and pipeline to augment the water supply at the Speas Fish Hatchery near Casper; secured road easements through state lands from the Office of State Lands adjacent to the Rawhide Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WHMA) near Torrington, the Red Canyon WHMA near Lander, to Luckey Pond also near Lander and to the North Platte River at Big Muddy Bridge near Glenrock. The Rock Springs warden station was identified for disposal and the sale was completed. Grazing leases with the Office of State lands were renewed for the Teton and Red Rim/Grizzly WHMA. The annual lease was renewed with Kimbell, Inc., which allows public parking along the North Platte River near Pick Bridge north of Saratoga and a lease was renewed with the adjoining landowner associated with the McNeel feedground.

The branch issued Special Use Permits to: Fremont County Road and Bridge to get water from the Little Wind River on the Commission's Spence/Moriar-

ity WHMA; private groups for dog trials at the Soda Lake WHMA near Pinedale and at Saratoga Lake; and a private landowner for road access at the Soda Lake WHMA. Farming and grazing permits were issued for the following areas: Medicine Lodge; TenSleep; Whiskey Basin near Dubois; Spence/Moriarity near Dubois; and the Yellowtail WHMA near Powell. A buried fiber optic line easement was granted across the Spence/Moriarity WHMA near Dubois.

The Department continues with efforts to protect the state's property rights by enforcing authorized use of Commission-owned property. The Department actively pursued encroachment along the Salt River, Big Horn River, Jelm and the conservation easement at the Mexican Creek Ranch.

The branch worked with Lincoln County to secure county road easements, which will provide for public access to public lands near Kemmerer. In addition, the branch partnered with The Nature Conservancy to acquire a conservation easement on the Twin Creek Ranch near Lander.

Property rights monitoring continues on all Commission-owned areas. Encroachments are being addressed as they are encountered. Computerized data imaging is being utilized as a means to better document baseline information on property rights. Lands Administration continues to review all tax assessment schedules prior to payment to each county. New acquisition nominations continue to be submitted to the Department. Lands Administration personnel continue to be state certified appraisers and keep up with the required continuing education requirements. The branch reviewed and commented on proposed changes to BLM livestock grazing regulations.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate aspects of the Property Rights (Lands) Management objective. Of respondents that had dealt with these programs, 70 percent were satisfied with the services provided by the Lands Branch personnel and 82.4 percent were satisfied with the services provided by the PLPW staff. Of employees that had dealt with the PLPW program, 73.6 percent were satisfied with the easements obtained.

Within the Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, hunters and anglers were asked to evaluate the access and habitat acquired by the Department. Of all respondents, 39.8 percent indicated they were satisfied with the level and amount of access acquired by the Department. Of all respondents, 39.3 percent indicated they were satisfied with the kind and amount of habitat acquired by the Department.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 and the Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

#### **Objective: Wildlife Health and Laboratory Services**

This objective is composed of two distinct parts: the Veterinary Services Branch and the Laboratory Branch.

During FY05, the Veterinary Services Branch completed a study to determine if Shira's moose could be infected with chronic wasting disease (CWD). Captive moose were given a single oral inoculum of mule deer CWD prions. One female developed pathologic lesions of the nervous system characteristic of the transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. The CWD prion was also located in several nervous and lymphoid tissues. This was the first evidence that moose were susceptible to CWD. A major study was started this year to determine how elk shed the CWD prion. Thirty elk are placed in metabolic cages for three days where feces and urine are collected. Blood and saliva are collected also. Environmental samples, insects, and other small mammals are also collected. All these samples are used to develop and validate an assay to detect the CWD prion in collaboration with the University of Wyoming. This study should last 2-3 years and is funded by the Department of Defense. A third study in progress will determine the efficacy of the strain 19 brucellosis vaccine in elk. These elk were vaccinated as calves and won't be challenged until they are >5 years old. The purpose of this study is to determine how long the vaccine protects elk from abortion. A fourth study, conducted in collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey, is designed to harvest CWD-infected tissues to be used for further CWD research by scientists worldwide. Ten elk, 10 mule deer, and 10 white-tailed deer were orally infected with CWD. Every six months, two animals from each group will be euthanized, necropsied, and tissues preserved for future research projects. Another study was started in collaboration with the University of Wyoming to evaluate how pronghorn thermoregulate. Temperature data loggers were surgically implanted in male and female pronghorn. These loggers recorded internal body, vascular, and brain temperatures. Ambient temperatures are simultaneously recorded. The purpose of this study was to compare the thermoregulatory physiology of the pronghorn to African antelope species.

The Department's integrated brucellosis management program (Brucellosis-Feedground-Habitat; BFH) is aimed at reducing the prevalence of brucellosis in elk. A total of 573 elk were trapped and tagged at six feedgrounds during the 2004-2005 winter and 175 test-eligible female elk were bled for brucellosis evaluation. Adequate samples were collected at all state feedgrounds surveyed except South Park, where trapping operations ceased due to potential for increased elk/cattle commingling. A total of 15 trap days were recorded this winter between January 14 and March 11. Dell Creek feedground continues to serve as a "control" population as no vaccination has taken place since inception of the

vaccination program at the Greys River feedground in 1985.

Strain 19 calfhooed vaccination was again very successful this winter with a majority of the state feedgrounds reporting complete calfhooed coverage. A total of 3,674 calves were vaccinated on 19 state feedgrounds. The strain 19 elk vaccination program was again conducted on the National Elk Refuge (NER) during the winter of 2005. Due to the short feeding duration this winter, only calves were vaccinated in effort to achieve maximum coverage of this cohort. A total of 507 calves (nearly 90 percent of number classified) were successfully vaccinated this winter during a 26-day period. Since the inception of the strain 19 program in 1985, nearly 66,000 elk have been vaccinated on 21 of 22 state feedgrounds and the NER.

Implementation of habitat improvements projects was somewhat impeded in fiscal year 2005 due to federal land management agencies' lack of personnel to complete National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) documents and moist conditions that prevented several scheduled prescribed burns. The first phase of the New Fork-Boulder treatment was conducted in Sublette County with 1,260 out of 2,677 total project acres burned. The second phase of this project is scheduled for the upcoming fall. Coordination meetings with federal agencies continued throughout the year to implement future projects. Monitoring of ongoing projects continued throughout the year, including vegetation sampling and analysis.

BFH personnel also committed a great deal of time to the Governor's Brucellosis Coordination Team. The BFH supervisor presented data and reported on progress of various assigned projects at nearly all of the Team's meetings. One of the most time consuming of these projects was the development of elk herd unit Brucellosis Management Action Plans (BMAP). These plans collate all existing elk, feedground, and brucellosis management information, and present recommendations developed in consultation with local cattle producers, state and federal wildlife and livestock regulatory officials, and federal land managers that minimize risk of disease transmission from elk to cattle. The Pinedale elk BMAP was completed in April, 2005. Six other elk herd unit and two bison herd unit BMAPs are to be developed by July, 2007 and will likely involve tremendous time commitments from the BFH work unit into the foreseeable future.

A total of 1,659 samples were submitted to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department Disease Laboratory and/or the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory (WSVL) representing 352 diagnostic cases. As part of the Branch's charge to monitor disease in wild populations, the following surveys were conducted: (1) Over 2,500 hunter-killed elk kits were mailed or hand delivered to monitor Brucellosis prevalence. A total of 545 kits were returned to the laboratory, of which 371 were suitable for testing; (2) approximately 455 coyote, ferret, fox,

mountain lion, lynx, and badger samples were analyzed for plague, tularemia and distemper; (3) 4,191 elk, mule and white-tailed deer samples were analyzed for chronic wasting disease as part of statewide surveillance; and (4) 19 positive rabies samples were received and analyzed by WSVL from raccoons, skunks and bats.

The responsibility of the Game and Fish Laboratory Branch is to provide analytical services for Department personnel, occasionally other agencies, and the general public. A total of 41,612 tests were conducted on 14,256 samples in response to 1,715 requests (cases). These services were conducted at the Laboratory and include: fish health inspections and disease diagnostics for state and private hatcheries and natural waters in Wyoming; forensic analyses for wildlife law enforcement personnel; tooth aging for biologists and hunters; and other analytical services for management and enforcement personnel.

During FY05, a total of 89 fish disease cases were investigated. These included 29,068 diagnostic tests on 11,630 tissue samples collected from various fish species for bacterial, viral, and parasitic organisms. Forty-one special annual/semi-annual fish health inspections were completed on eleven state fish-culture stations, four state isolation units, six private hatcheries, and six free-ranging (wild) broodstock populations. Low levels of whirling disease parasites were detected in one of the cases. A total of 24 fish health inspection reviews were completed for out-of-state fish importation/exportation requests. A total of 23 disease cases involving various fish species were investigated. Physical trauma, malnutrition, bacterial and fungal diseases, parasites and gas supersaturation were identified. The conditions of most lots of fish located at the various facilities returned to normal after corrective measures (disinfectants, antibiotics therapy, or diet change) were taken. A total of 691 fish in 14 separate cases were examined for whirling disease for the statewide survey. No life stages of the parasite were detected in rainbow, cutthroat, brown or brook trout collected from various waters around the state.

Eighty-eight forensic cases were investigated for law enforcement personnel where 10,449 tests were conducted on 613 different samples. In 20 cases, defendants pled guilty or were found guilty when lab results were used as evidence. A minimum of \$224,339 in fines and restitution were assessed on cases submitted for testing to the wildlife forensic lab. Tests included identification of species and gender, matching and minimum number of animals present using serological and DNA techniques. Evidentiary items submitted included tissue, blood, hair, arrows, hide, antlers, horns, various clothing items, knives, etc. The forensic lab continues to be involved with the National Forensic Lab Proficiency Program. The lab received a 100 percent on two separate proficiency tests.

A total of 87 tests were conducted on 106 different biological samples in response to five requests from

Department personnel and other management agencies. These included identification of hair and scat for species identification and food items, as well as tissue for gender identification.

Additional consultations with other state wildlife agencies on evidence analyses and procedure development occurred on several occasions. Two formal presentations were given to Colorado Division of Wildlife law enforcement and management personnel on wildlife forensics. A lab display with a hands-on wildlife crime scene and fish identification was exhibited at the Hunting and Fishing Heritage Exposition in Casper.

Teeth from 1,901 game and trophy animals were processed and aged using the cementum annuli technique. This included 30 requests from the field biologists, wardens, regional office personnel and 1,501 hunters who were mailed cards informing them of the age of their harvested animals. Analysis was performed on nine different species with moose and elk comprising the majority of all the teeth analyzed. Ages ranged from young of the year to 20.3 years for the various species.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate the services provided by this objective. Of respondents that interacted with the Fish Health staff, 96.1 percent were satisfied with the services provided. Of respondents that interacted with the Forensics staff, all (100 percent) were satisfied with the services provided. Of respondents that interacted with the Tooth Aging staff, 91.3 percent were satisfied with the services provided. Finally, of respondents that interacted with the Veterinary Services staff, 90.5 percent were satisfied with the services provided.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

#### **Objective: CO-OP Unit Research**

As indicated within the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit's FY04 annual report, students completed nine projects that were either partially or wholly funded by the Department. These projects included evaluation of: development of sampling and assessment methods for warmwater streams in Wyoming; expansion of sonar estimates of trout abundance to the entire reservoir; mallard productivity on bentonite created wetlands surrounding the Black Hills region; gray partridge (*Perdix perdix*) habitat use and trends in Wyoming; pronghorn productivity and fawn survival in central and southeastern Wyoming; the influence of grazing management on sage grouse seasonal habitat selection and productivity; status of shrubland in southern Wyoming; minimum population size and concentration areas of mountain plovers breeding in Wyoming; development of a manual for Wyoming Habitat Assessment Methodology (WHAM) level I surveys; summer food habits

and trophic overlap of roundtail chub and creek chub in Muddy Creek, Wyoming.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate the work of the COOP unit. Of respondents that had interacted with the COOP unit, 75.9 percent indicated they were satisfied with the quality of research being conducted or completed for the Department by the COOP unit, and 77.6 percent indicated they were satisfied with the quantity of research being conducted or completed for the Department by the COOP unit.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

#### **Objective: Feedgrounds**

The number of elk attending feedgrounds (14,402 elk) declined 1,709 elk from the previous winter. Much of this can be attributed to mild winter conditions throughout the winter. About 82 percent of all elk in the regions influenced by state feedgrounds were fed. The total number of elk fed did not exceed the sum of all individual feedground Commission ceilings (14,934 elk). However, 10 of the 22 feedgrounds had elk numbers that varied in excess of 200 elk of the individual ceilings. The Patrol Cabin feedground had 1,015 elk over the Commission ceiling. Scab Creek was 438 elk over and Camp Creek, Fish Creek, and Black Butte were 346 elk, 306 elk, and 225 elk, respectively, over the Commission ceilings. Alkali was 800 elk under the Commission ceiling. The Alpine feedground was 398 elk under the ceiling. Green River Lakes, Soda Lake, and Fall Creek, were 303 elk, 300 elk, and 262 elk under the ceilings, respectively.

The length of feeding averaged 14 days less during 2004-05 when compared to the long-term average. The shortest feeding seasons were at Fish Creek and North Piney. These resulted from wolves moving the elk to other feedgrounds before feeding was completed for the winter. Other short feeding seasons were at Green River lakes, Soda Lake, and Fall Creek, which were the result of low snowfall.

The elk were fed 6,413 ton of hay, which is 2,035 ton less than the previous winter and 357 ton less than the 30-year average. The reduced amount of hay fed was the result of the lower number of elk that attended the feedgrounds, plus shorter feeding seasons. On the average, each elk fed was offered 0.45 ton of hay during the winter.

Feeders reported that 96 elk died on the feedgrounds. This is slightly higher than the 30-year average. The number of feedgrounds where wolves have killed elk continued to increase. Wolf predation has occurred on 16 of the 22 feedgrounds. The only feedgrounds where wolves have not made a kill are those adjacent to human activity (South Park, Alpine, Dell Creek, McNeel, and Dog Creek). The number killed on feedgrounds during

2004-05 (33 elk) by wolves does not appear to have a measurable effect on overall elk numbers, although there appears to be a general overall upward trend in the number killed since wolves were introduced. Calves continue to be selected by wolves and comprised over 50 percent of the elk killed.

The most significant effects of wolves on feedground management occurred in the Piney HU. Nearly half (16 elk) of all the elk killed (33 elk) were from the Jewett feedground herd. The elk were chased from this feedground on different occasions. On one occasion they were chased 6 miles from the feedground and were not located until two days later on private property. These elk were hazed back to the feedground by Department personnel. Wolves also hastened the movement of the North Piney elk to Bench Corral. This resulted in an early initiation of elk feeding at Bench Corral because of the additional number of elk. Wolves also chased the elk off the Finnegan feedground and onto private property. In the Pinedale Habitat Unit, about 700 elk were chased from the Black Butte feedground on two occasions. On one occasion, these elk bedded down in the right-of-way on Highway 353, which prompted several phone calls from motorists concerning highway safety issues.

#### **Objective: Specialized Statewide Law Enforcement**

This Objective is divided into three distinct parts; Law Enforcement Administration and Boating Safety, the Law Enforcement Investigative Unit, and the STOP POACHING Program.

Individuals involved with the Law Enforcement Administration activities focused their attention on permitting and the maintenance of enforcement data. Permitting efforts increased during calendar year 2004 with 465 Chapter 10 permits either issued or renewed, 181 Chapter 33 permits issued, and numerous Chapter 45 and Chapter 56 permits also issued. Wildlife Violator Compact, a database created in FY04, continued to expand and now includes 21 different states.

The Wildlife Law Enforcement Coordinator (WLEC) is now a member of Wyoming's Joint Terrorism Task Force and participates in training and information sharing with other law enforcement agencies. The Office of Homeland Security has coordinated these efforts and is proving to be a valuable information resource for our law enforcement program.

The Department experienced another successful year for the Boating Safety Program. During FY 2005, the Department registered more than 26,000 watercraft. A new patrol boat was purchased through a Homeland Security grant that will facilitate boating safety efforts in southwest Wyoming.

A new Case Management System (CMS) is in the final stages of preparation. Delays in getting all wardens hooked up with high-speed Internet service should be

completed this winter, with the CMS going on-line during the same time period.

In FY05 the unit was involved in hundreds of cases of varying sizes. Several undercover cases have also been worked. Investigators spent 6,136 hours investigating cases. The unit closed 71 cases and convicted 76 defendants. These defendants paid \$65,940.00 in fines and an additional \$106,910.00 in state and federal restitution. The total of these is \$172,850.00.

The Stop Poaching program is based on a calendar year, and during 2004 there was a total of 557 reports received. Of these reports, enforcement action results in 51 closed cases and over \$106,000 in fines. A total of \$5,900 in rewards was paid during 2004.

#### **Objective: Strategic Management**

Two major projects dominated the activities of the Strategic Management Coordinator in FY05. The first was the coordination and development of the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS). Involving many Department personnel in all divisions and dozens of partners and major stakeholders, this document will guide the Department's efforts to conserve 279 species of greatest conservation need and the associated habitats for the next five years. The CWCS was completed on time, and will be considered by the Commission in July 2005 and the National Acceptance Advisory Team (NAAT) in September 2005. It should be noted that Chris Burkett left the Department in July 2005 to serve as a state liaison to the NAAT.

The second major project was that of completing the content analysis from public input on the Department's Grizzly Bear Habitat Occupancy Proposal to further refine guidelines on how bears would be managed within the potential occupancy area. A comprehensive public input process, including stakeholder and public meetings, yielded 17,542 written comments from individuals and organizations. The comments represent the largest response the Department has ever received in a public involvement process. Wyoming residents contributed 29.5 percent of the comments. All other states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and 38 foreign countries were represented in the other 70.5 percent of comments.

In addition to these major tasks, the Strategic Management Coordinator was responsible for developing and either conducting or coordinating numerous survey projects. The Strategic Management Coordinator served as the Department's liaison with the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) on two separate regional projects, resulting in the completion of the Hunters' Responses to Chronic Wasting Disease and Wildlife Values in the West surveys. During FY05, the coordinator also assisted in the development of a telephone survey, Opinions of the General Population, Hunters, and Anglers on Funding for Wildlife Management in Wyoming. In addition, the coordinator provided

training sessions to local sage grouse working groups and served as an active member of the Department's Alternative Funding Team.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate the performance of the Strategic Management Coordinator. Of individuals that had interacted with the Strategic Management Coordinator, 86.7 percent indicated they were satisfied with the services provided by the Strategic Management Coordinator.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 survey were not available in time for this report.

#### **Objective: Bird Farms**

During FY04, the Department raised and released 29,926 pheasants from its bird farms. These birds were released on Department lands, private lands leased through the Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) program, and private lands where landowners allow public hunting access. Sheridan Bird Farm (SBF) accounted for 13,086 and Downar Bird Farm (DBF) for 16,840. SBF personnel continued to upgrade the facility as budget allowed, helped at check stations, collected chronic wasting disease (CWD) samples, and were active with spawning operations at local hatcheries. Personnel at both BFs help with signing of PLPW lands. Downar personnel maintained guzzlers on PLPW lands and conducted prescribed burns at Springer and Table Mountain Wildlife Habitat Management Area's (WHMA). Burned areas were re-seeded using Killough funds for seed and construction crew equipment and labor. DBF personnel continue to monitor lake levels and use irrigation water to maintain shelterbelts and pond levels. Personnel at both BFs conduct tours for school groups, 4-H and FFA classes, local classes, and clubs as requested.

#### **Objective: Financial Management**

The Fiscal Division, through the efforts of Fiscal Managers, spent much of FY05 developing software specifications for a new licensing system for license selling agents, developing grants for new federal grant programs, addressing legislation related to funding issues, and rewriting internal accounting systems.

The Division worked on several major projects this year in addition to routine accounting and licensing functions. The Department issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) in late fall 2004 for the development of a Point of Sale (POS) system for license selling agents and eventually a re-write of the license draw system for issuance of limited quota licenses. A team, representative of the Department's various divisions in addition to a Game and Fish commissioner and license selling agent representative, reviewed the vendor's responses and oral presentations in January 2005. In February, the Commission authorized the Department to begin contract negotia-

tions with the successful respondent. Over the next four months, the vendor developed a software specifications document that was reviewed and modified substantially by the Department. That document was incorporated into the vendor's contract, which was signed in early September 2005. Design and implementation work is planned to begin immediately with a phased rollout of the POS system anticipated by summer 2006. Upon completion of the POS system, a software specifications document will be worked on jointly by the vendor and Department for design and implementation of the license draw system.

License results, demand indices, leftover license information, and application and packet information provide licensing information that is available through the Internet.

In FY05, the Department conducted all of its limited quota draws either on or before the published tentative draw dates. All licenses 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. However, due to a problem with the state central mail service machine, approximately 40,000 refund checks for this draw were delayed approximately one week past the normal time frame for refund issuance. During FY05 approximately 225,000 limited quota application species fee types, in addition to access and search and rescue donations, were received and processed by the Division for over 50 different types of licenses and permits. This represents a slight increase of approximately 12,000 application species fee types or 6 percent over the previous fiscal year.

The number of license selling agents administered by the Division declined slightly due to agent cancellations and agents not renewing their bonds, changing from 365 to 353 agents by year end. The Commission approved 29 new agents. All new agents were provided Department training. In FY05, 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; in addition, the License Accounting section also accounts for the predator stamp. After Department administrative costs, the proceeds of the stamp were accounted for by the Department and were distributed to the Animal Damage Management Board.

In the General Accounting section, significant time was devoted to submitting new grants to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the State Wildlife Grant (SWG) program and completing the first financial and performance reports for completed projects under the SWG program. Allocation for FY05, under this program, was approximately \$620,000. Currently, the Department has over 25 projects either completed or still in process in the SWG program, which is funded at a 50 percent or 75 percent level with federal funds. Addition-

ally, the section worked with employees from the fish and wildlife divisions to draft a grant proposal to the USFWS under the Landowner Incentive Tier II program, which is competitive among all fifty states and territories. Of the \$11 million awarded in grants, the Department received the largest grant of any state, \$767,000. The Department continues to work with USFWS on one issue remaining from the 2003-2004 audit regarding land disposal. While there were no disallowed costs or other management issues, the corrective action plan on land disposal is still in process. A final area where significant time was expended within this section was on rewrite of the Daily Activity Report (DAR), a time reporting system. Results from this system now calculate and directly interface with the state payroll system, eliminating the need to enter information separately into the state payroll system, which increases efficiency and reduces error potential. Additionally, this system is accessible to all employees through the Intranet, eliminating the need for remote users to install monthly updates to their computers.

In the Disbursements section, employees continued to utilize the new Voucher Payment System (VPS) completed in FY04. Entry time for transactions remained relatively constant with the average of slightly under four days from document receipt to transfer to the state auditor's office for processing. The statewide purchasing credit card program has continued to expand with over 100 employees utilizing this system. Training sessions for employees interested in being a part of this program were held in conjunction with Commission meetings and new employee orientation sessions during the year.

Accordingly, much Divisional time was spent on either investigating or developing new systems. All systems, except the PPCAS cost accounting system, for which the design document has been completed but programming has not begun, are complete at this time. The PPCAS system was delayed to allow for the unplanned rewrite of the DAR time recording system necessitated by changes in the state personnel roles. Much of the time in the next year will be spent completing this system and beginning implementation of the new POS system, and developing a design document for the license draw system.

#### **Objective: Personnel Management**

The State of Wyoming transitioned to a new Human Resources Payroll system which, between training and working through numerous aspects that were not functioning correctly, took a great deal of time and effort to achieve the fundamental task of compensating employees. In addition, in conjunction with the Fiscal Division, a new Daily Activity Report (DAR) system, including implementation of the Bonus for Exempt Employees (BEE) program, was developed and instituted. Training on that new system included two sessions of video conferencing with employees able to participate at eight

locations around the state. Approximately 300 employees participated in this training.

A revised and streamlined process for supervisors to monitor and confirm annual and sick leave balances was implemented. Training on Personnel Profile Assessments was started and will continue into next fiscal year. The generation of vacancy recruitment notices processes were revised by the Department of Administration and Information (DAI) and are now being handled by in-house Game and Fish Department personnel. The Department Human Resources manager continued to spend a significant amount of time participating on the state-wide team reviewing and rewriting the State Personnel Rules, Chapters 9&10. The workload of routine human resource functions continued to increase due to turnover rates that exceed the historical average. The Human Resources manager visited every regional team meeting at least once to explain the changes in the Personal Rules impacting leave and compensation. In addition, the manager attended numerous supervisory and management meetings for the same purposes. Work was also completed on assisting DAI Human Resources Division staff in rewriting the benchmark descriptions used to gather data for market survey purposes.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate the performance of the Personnel Management section. Of respondents that had interacted with the Personnel Management staff, 92.1 percent indicated they were satisfied with the services that had been provided by this section.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

#### **Objective: Information Technology Systems**

Beginning in FY05, all Information Technology (IT) hardware (with the exception of telephones and cell phones), software, and technical services budget items were moved from individual budgets to the IT Branch budget. This change allowed the Department to maintain and support consistent technologies throughout the agency, leverage volume discounts, and ensure conformance with statewide standards and compliance with State of Wyoming Statutes.

IT staff installed 100 new computers, workstations and laptops throughout the agency in 2005. With advances in technologies and increased demands for sharing large data files, the speed of the Pinedale Regional Office communications line had become a significant issue, resulting in the installation of high speed DSL connection into the Internet.

Installation and licensing of the GIS Decision Support System using Microsoft Terminal Services technology was completed and the system was made available to agency personnel for testing, using the Wildlife Environ-

mental Review (WER) commenting process. This system can be accessed from anywhere inside the agency firewall and from remote locations using VPN technology and should improve the time necessary to complete WER commenting.

A significant improvement to network infrastructure came with the implementation of server clustering technologies. In addition, the backup hardware is gradually being upgraded to accommodate additional storage needs of the agency and looking into an off-site backup solution for the Cheyenne Office.

IT personnel continued to update the Symantec AntiVirus application on all file servers within the Department and upgraded all the client antivirus software. Significant improvements were made in accessibility and functionality of the Department website.

The IT branch worked on the on-line hunting and fishing license application process approved by the Commission in February of 2004. Two programmer positions for this project were filled to help develop and then support the system into the future. Several IT personnel worked with Fiscal Division and administrative staff to finalize the contract with a vendor to develop this system. The first phase of this project is targeted to go on-line in January 2006.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate the performance of the Department's IT personnel. Of respondents that had interacted with the IT personnel, 67.9 percent indicated they were satisfied with the services provided by the IT staff.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

#### **Objective: Support Facilities and Personnel**

The Department maintains seven regional offices, plus a satellite office in Pinedale and a small facility in Buffalo housing two biologists in addition to the Cheyenne headquarters building. Two regional office managers are assigned to each facility for logistical support. The majority of Department employees are located either in regional offices or the headquarters facility, excepting hatchery biologists, game wardens and some terrestrial biologists. By FY05, the Department was approximately 90 percent complete with its upgrade of regional office facilities begun in 1991 in which the Casper, Lander and Jackson offices were replaced and the Green River and Laramie offices were remodeled and expanded. Replacement of the Pinedale regional office and remodel/expansion of the Cheyenne headquarters building remain on the list with legislative capital facility funding being requested by the Department during the 2006 Legislative budget session for these two projects. Both of these facilities have little or no public access areas, meeting rooms and insufficient office space for permanent employees.

The Department had no major repairs or remodeling to office facilities during FY05. However, in addition to routine operational costs, the Department did expend \$20,971 on remodeling office space in Buffalo; \$11,455 converting space in the old Lander office to a shop and storage area; \$6,250 installing a separate air conditioning system to the basement computer area in the Cheyenne headquarters building; and \$3,300 for sewer line work at the Pinedale office.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate aspects of support personnel and facilities. Of respondents that worked in a regional office, between 76.2 percent and 100 percent, depending upon location, were satisfied with the clerical, budgeting, and logistical support provided by regional support staff. Of individuals that worked either in the Cheyenne Headquarters or one of the regional offices, between 18.2 percent and 95 percent of respondents, depending upon location, indicated they were satisfied with the workspace provided by the facility in which they worked.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

#### **Objective: 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. Included among these programs are: Landowner coupons and Damage Claims, and 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.

#### **Objective: Mailroom**

The Mailroom personnel are responsible for handling approximately 1.2 million pieces of incoming and outgoing mail each year. This includes thousands of UPS packages and priority and express mail. Use of the postal inserting machine continues to reduce the time required to process large license mailings. More than 95,000 licenses were mailed in a little over five working days. Three people are needed, amounting to 15 man-days, to process licenses.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate the performance of the mailroom personnel. Of respondents that had interacted with the mailroom staff, 79.4 percent indicated they were satisfied with the incoming and outgoing mail services provided.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

**Objective: Conservation Engineering**

Capital facility funding for FY05 was supplemented by the State Legislature with \$3.3 million going to hatchery renovation work and \$775,000 toward habitat infrastructure on the Yellowtail Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WHMA). The Wigwam Fish Rearing Station Rehabilitation Project was the first project completed with these funds. Projects at Dubois Fish Hatchery and Speas Fish Rearing Station are in progress. The Yellowtail "Big Fork Ditch" Tunnel By-Pass is under construction and work on Kane Pond 10 will be bid in FY06. Conservation Engineering also completed development of the Dave Johnston Plant-North Platte River access, the Sybille Wildlife Research flood damage repairs, carpet replacement in the Cheyenne headquarters IT room, and remodeling of the Buffalo field office. Boating accomplishments included widening the original ramp, new dock and comfort station at Grayrocks Reservoir; replacing the dock at "Wedding of the Waters" on the Big Horn River; full development of a boating access at Viva Naughton Reservoir; redevelopment of the boating access at the Flaming Gorge-Holmes Crossing; new docks at Glendo-Elkhorn and Whiskey access areas; and extending the low and high water boat ramps at the Pathfinder-Bishop Point access area. The development of three Public Fishing Access areas on the Green River near Big Piney was finally completed. Other Fish Division projects were completed at the Clark's Fork Hatchery and the Auburn.

The Survey Section completed numerous boundary and topographic surveys. The implementation of our Leica GPS RTK system has improved productivity. The Survey Section completed boundary surveys at the following units: Spence Moriarity, Wiggins Fork, Yellowtail (in cooperation with the National Park Service), Rawhide, Red Canyon, Springer, and Bud Love. The Section also completed topographic surveys at the Yellowtail Unit for Pond 10 and an access road at the Speas Hatchery. The Section also completed a utility location survey at the Wigwam Rearing Station. The surveyors assisted the Wyoming Department of Transportation in a fence location survey at Nugget Canyon, US Hwy 30, in an effort to divert wildlife to crossings under the highway and decrease the high mortality rate of deer on the roadway. Water rights issues were addressed throughout the year. The Section developed five instream flow maps and applications for filing with the State Engineer's Office and consulted with field personnel at the Wick WHMA on administering water rights. Surveying assistance was provided to Fish Division personnel in an aquatic mapping project associated with the Powder River Drainage.

The Drafting Section designed and ordered 1,705 signs for special regulations, parking information, regulatory, directional, boating access, new access and the Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) program. The Section learned more about CAD to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) conversions and wrote step-by-step instructions for the process. The supervisor researched GIS data needs and available data from various agencies; designed and built a GIS Data Model to use as a starting point for an agency wide GIS Enterprise System; and designed and built a new statewide Geodatabase to use as the base for GIS mapping and information needs. Using VBA and ArcObjects programming languages, the section began customizing ArcMap interface and maps for repetitive tasks and ease of use and installed a prototype of ArcIMS, Internet Map Server, to evaluate its potential and limitations for developing maps and information to the employees and the public via a web browser. Html, JavaScript, and ArcObjects were used to begin customizing the ArcIMS interface to provide the data/information. The drafting supervisor is actively working on the agency GIS Team that will design and implement a statewide GIS program. The section designed and updated the Internet sites for the PLPW Program with maps, information and printable PDF files for 26 Hunter Management Areas, Walk-in Hunting and Walk-in Fishing. The Drafting Section is mapping and updating information on all Department-administered lands to include: surveyed boundaries, land status/Federal Aid purchases, development, topography, signing, mineral ownership, irrigation, water rights, and utilities. Other drafting projects include: Hunt Area maps; boat dock assembly modification; float map for the Green River; Biologists, Wardens, Terrestrial Habitat Districts and new Regional Boundary maps; fence modifications for Habitat Extension Bulletin; graphics for various Internet sites including: E-Newsletter, Wildlife Permit Report System, Wildlife Observation System and the Game and Fish site headers. The section created GIS maps for the Wildlife Federation and the Department of Agriculture showing: crucial wildlife habitat, sage grouse leks, parturition areas, and roadless areas. The Drafting Section completed the layout, designed, plotted and mounted all the signs, banners, posters, and numerous displays for the Hunting and Fishing Heritage Expo. All Conservation Engineering personnel helped install the signs, helped at the Expo, and volunteered at various activities.

Conservation Engineering personnel represented the Department at the following national conferences: Association of Conservation Engineers in Indianapolis, Indiana and States Organization for Boating Access in Kalispell, Montana.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate the performance of the Conservation Engineering personnel. Of respondents that had interacted with the

Conservation Engineering staff, 75.9 percent indicated they were satisfied with the services provided.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

**Objective: Regional Information and Education**

The formerly vacated Casper Regional Information and Education position was filled in October 2004, bringing the work unit to full staff. Implementation of a work scheduling process that aligns Director, Division, and Regional priorities with work unit outputs is expected to advance time management, work unit direction, and coordination.

Within the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, respondents were asked to evaluate the performance of the Regional Information and Education Specialists. Of respondents that had interacted with the Regional Information and Education Specialists, depending upon location, between 52.6 - 92.3 percent were satisfied with the specialists' ability to disseminate information to the public, between 64.5 - 93.3 percent were satisfied with the specialists' ability to disseminate information internally and act as part of the regional team, between 58.8 - 88.8 percent were satisfied with the specialists' ability to conduct education efforts, and between 58.9 - 97.5 percent were satisfied with the overall services provided by the specialists.

Data from the Strategic Outcome Internal Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

**Objective: Education**

During FY05, Education Branch personnel in Cheyenne conducted conservation education programs, workshops and seminars for about 6,700 people. An additional 13,669 participants attended the 2004 Wyoming Hunting and Fishing Heritage Expo.

Volunteer coordination and work for the Department is also a part of the Education Objective. A total of 382 volunteer instructors conducted 238 hunter education classes, resulting in the certification of 4,546 students. Volunteer hunter education instructors provided 6,488 hours of service to the Department. The volunteer program, WILD WORK, had 388 volunteers provide 5,605 service hours. Project WILD facilitators conducted 23 workshops for 587 teachers. Four Water Education for Teachers (WET)/WILD/Project Learning Tree workshops were conducted for 79 additional teachers.

The Outdoor Recreation Education Opportunities (O.R.E.O.) program was presented to 31 new instructors. Two hundred and twenty-nine have now been certified to teach O.R.E.O. Approximately 100 schools or youth organizations incorporate O.R.E.O. into their curriculums or programs.

Aquatic Education assisted in 25 community-fishing clinics for about 7,000 Wyoming youth. In addition, 5000 Wyoming youth participated in the fishing skills activities at the Expo. The Aquatic Education Program completed 11 brochures on fish hatcheries and other high-priority Fish Division programs.

**Objective: Information**

Information personnel are responsible for distributing Department information via the mass media, agency publications, the Department's Telephone Information Center (TIC), and direct personal contact.

Information personnel are responsible for the production of news releases, radio programs, and video productions. Radio stories are available via the Internet as MP3 files, allowing immediate access of a broadcast quality news message on a Department subject; this message is updated weekly. Information personnel also produce radio and video public service announcements, and feature length video productions. Print news release packets are distributed weekly.

Two publications are produced: Wyoming Wildlife Magazine and Wyoming Wildlife News. During FY05, 12 issues of Wyoming Wildlife Magazine were produced and mailed to more than 30,000 subscribers each month. Six issues of Wyoming Wildlife News were produced (37,000 copies per issue) and provided, free of charge, to license selling agents within Wyoming and more than 6,000 paid subscribers.

The Telephone Information Center (TIC) fielded over 70,000 phone calls in FY05 and in some instances was the only contact that individuals had with the agency. The TIC assumed responsibility to fulfill requests for information via mail. The requests accounted for close to 20,000 mailings.

Personnel also worked information booths at the Hunting and Fishing Heritage Expo and check stations. Other projects included large mailings for other sections within the agency as well as the Wyoming Heritage Foundation. The TIC takes almost all phone orders for Alternative Enterprises (AE) products. A dozen new products were added to AE inventory. Product sales exceeded \$100,000 for FY05 and peaked during the holiday periods. Work began on an online store to be launched by the end of the calendar year.

The Customer Service Supervisor participated on the Electronic License team, attended numerous meetings and served as a Site Supervisor for Expo. The major effort was directed towards personnel issues within the section.

Telecommunications within the Information section is charged with communicating the agency's service needs of over 1000 billed numbers to the Department of Administration and Information (DAI). The ability to track all actions for existing, past and future billed numbers is in place. In addition, all internal customers needs have

been met. The telecommunications liaison has responded to 362 internal telecommunication requests.

Within the Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey, 2004, hunters and anglers were asked to evaluate the efforts of the Department's TIC. Of respondents that had contacted the TIC through the Department's 1-800 number, General Information Number, or 1-900 number, 85.9 percent indicated their information needs had been handled in a good fashion.

Data for the Strategic Outcome External Client Satisfaction Survey, 2005 were not available in time for this report.

## **Strategic plan 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 both to out 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 organizational chart

