



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Conserving New Mexico's Wildlife for Future Generations

FISCAL YEAR 2015
**Annual
Report**



Did you know . . .



As an enterprise agency, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is able to conserve wildlife and provide, recreational opportunities, food and much more through a "users pay, everyone benefits" funding model.

The services provided by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish bring nearly \$1 billion a year to the state's economy without receiving any money from the state's General Fund? It's true. That money generated from hunters, trappers and anglers allows our department to provide a multitude of services to all New Mexicans.

It allows us to employ highly qualified biologists who use the best science available to manage the state's wildlife for more than 100,000 hunters, 250,000 anglers and 800,000 wildlife watchers who enjoy those resources every year. Many of those biologists are working to conserve non-game and endangered species—sometimes even suckers, toads and snails.

We stock millions of trout, catfish, walleye and other fish for the enjoyment of more than 250,000 anglers who visit our state's lakes and streams.

We partner with landowners, land management agencies, conservation groups and others to improve habitat that allows populations of elk, deer, game birds and other wildlife species to thrive.

About 90 highly trained conservation officers patrol the state year-round to protect wildlife and other natural resources and prosecute those who abuse the state's natural resources by poaching or other illegal activities. Officers also respond to and resolve complaints about human-wildlife encounters that put people, property or wildlife in jeopardy.

The department's commitment to restoring threatened and endangered wildlife recently resulted in two native species, the desert bighorn sheep and Gila trout, being down-listed from endangered species lists. We also are continuing our efforts to restore our state fish, the Rio Grande cutthroat trout, to more of its native streams and keep it off endangered species lists.

Every year, department staff and volunteers educate thousands of youngsters to hunting, fishing and shooting sports through hunter safety courses, the National Archery in the Schools Program and fishing clinics statewide. We're also reaching out to students in our public schools with a program to teach fourth- through seventh-graders about the value of wildlife.

By managing the state's Off-Highway Vehicle Program, the department helps keep riders safe through permit requirements, safety training and enforcement. Our Aquatic Invasive Species Program is working not only to protect our state's fisheries, but also the infrastructures that deliver drinking water to cities and towns across the state.

The sale of hunting and fishing licenses is the department's primary income source, providing two-thirds of our revenue for our annual budget. The other third comes from the federal Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration program, matching state dollars three-to-one.

What does all this mean to New Mexicans? Besides creating hunting, fishing and wildlife watching opportunities, the work of our professional and dedicated staff helps bring millions of dollars into the state's economy, much of it to rural areas that need it most.

As a steward of some of our state's most precious natural resources, I invite you to get to know us better and learn what we are doing every day to conserve our wildlife heritage.

Alexandra Sandoval, Director

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Above: Headquarters entrance of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish in Santa Fe, N.M.

Cover: Pronghorn antelope grazing near Springer, N.M.



NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF
GAME AND FISH

1932-2015

Administration

The department's administration is composed of its director, a deputy director, two assistant directors and the department's general counsel. The director serves as Secretary to the State Game Commission, a seven-member body appointed by Governor Susana Martinez. The administration's primary role is to provide agency staff guidance and the necessary resources to successfully implement legislative and commission directives.

In response to the direction provided by the legislature and the commission, the department focused on the following priorities during FY 2015:

- Developed and implemented partnerships with outside entities for the purpose of enhancing fish and wildlife habitats.
- Provided and enhanced public hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities that are sustainable, scientifically based and socially acceptable.
- Developed new initiatives and enhanced the department's existing information, education and outreach efforts.
- Enhanced recruiting efforts that attract the most qualified employees capable of providing the best possible services to the public.
- Addressed internal compensation issues and made suitable pay adjustments to ensure employees are being fairly and appropriately compensated.
- Retained executive and legislative branch confidence in the department by maintaining continuous interaction in an effort to foster open communication and sharing of information.
- Ensured that the department's information technology (IT) resources were maintained and upgraded as needed to ensure functionality and security.



Governor Susana Martinez and Director Alexandra Sandoval at the dedication ceremony for a San Juan River trout habitat restoration project.

Opposite: Since 1932, the black bear has symbolized the department's commitment to conserving New Mexico's wildlife for future generations.



Wildlife Management Division

Wildlife Programs

Elk: Over 36,000 elk licenses were issued during the 2014-2015 hunting season, with a statewide hunter success rate of 39 percent. The harvest was 7,851 bulls and 6,383 cows. Elk herds statewide are stable with some regional differences. The population is estimated to be between 70,000 and 90,000 statewide. New elk hunting rules for the 2015 to 2019 hunting seasons include an increase in archery hunt dates and more archery and bull hunts on the popular Valle Vidal. Staff biologists have conducted studies of the elk herds around Mount Taylor, the Jemez Mountains and the Valles Caldera, and the Valle Vidal areas to assess herd health and drive management decisions. New Mexico continues to be one of the top elk hunting destinations in the nation.

Deer: Mule deer populations have declined throughout New Mexico and the western United States in recent decades. The department has responded with several projects to increase deer numbers and better manage existing populations. The statewide population is estimated at 90,000 to 110,000. Staff caught and moved 87 deer to two new locations in February-March 2015. Another 293 deer were translocated in the previous two years. This improved deer populations in desired locations while reducing problems around farms and in urban areas. A two-year study indicates that translocated deer survived and adapted well to their new environments. The department also has been working with private landowners through a new incentive program to improve habitat for deer. The number of hunting licenses issued for deer has been reduced.

Pronghorn: New Mexico's pronghorn population has declined in recent years because of habitat loss, predation and drought. The population statewide is estimated at 40,000 to 45,000. In response, the department has worked to improve pronghorn habitat and survival. Projects include fence modifications, supplemental water sources and brush management. Staff recently caught and moved 103 pronghorns, while another 400 were translocated in previous years. This bolstered breeding populations in select areas while relieving issues with landowners near the capture sites. The department is studying the effectiveness of its efforts and will modify its management as needed.



Top: In FY 2015, the department resolved 508 nuisance wildlife complaints.

Bottom: Rio Chama Wildlife Management Area is one of 58 WMAs operated by the department statewide.

Opposite: The elk population in New Mexico is estimated between 70,000 and 90,000.

Bighorn sheep: The department relocated 45 Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep from the Wheeler Peak Wilderness area to prime habitat created by recent forest fires in the Cochiti Canyon of the Jemez Mountains. A fledgling population of desert bighorn sheep in the Big Hatchet Mountains received 68 new members from the Armendaris Ranch and from the Red Rock State Wildlife Area. Radio collars were attached to 20 Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep near Red River that will help monitor and manage a self-starting herd there. A record number of 39 bighorn sheep ram permits were available to the hunting public in the 2015 draw. The auction and raffle of four bighorn sheep hunting licenses brought in close to a half million dollars for the department's bighorn sheep program this year. The population statewide is estimated at 1,200 to 1,400 Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and 800 to 900 desert bighorn sheep.



Bear and cougar: Mast surveys and timely precipitation this year and last year resulted in good forage for bears and fewer nuisance reports. Data generated from a noninvasive DNA study on bears in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Sacramento Mountains and Sandia Mountains indicates higher populations in some areas than previously thought. The bear population statewide is estimated at 8,000 to 9,000. Cougars are estimated at 3,123 to 4,269.

Nongame mammals: The department provided technical support to other agencies and the general public on issues related to nongame mammals of conservation concern. Major activities included support in the development of the revised State Wildlife Action Plan for New Mexico. Department staff also participated in several conservation-oriented organizations such as the swift fox and prairie dog conservation teams, the jaguar and black-footed ferret recovery teams, and the New Mexico bat working group. Field studies included surveys for the endangered New Mexico meadow jumping mouse, inventories of wildlife on recently acquired department land, and monitoring and compilation of observations of river otters in the Rio Grande and San Juan basins. The program biologist also co-authored four chapters for the upcoming book "Wild Carnivores of New Mexico."



Top: Deer populations have declined in New Mexico in recent decades. Hunting licenses issued have been reduced as a result.

Bottom: Reintroduction and relocation programs have helped re-establish Rocky Mountain and desert bighorn sheep populations in the state.

Bird Program

Turkeys: The Peloncillo Mountains of southwestern New Mexico became home to 24 rare Gould's wild turkeys from Arizona as the department continues its efforts to re-establish the threatened species to its native range. The translocated turkeys join a growing population inhabiting the Coronado National Forest, now estimated at more than 100.

Nongame birds: The department's continues its conservation research and work on nongame birds, including lesser prairie chickens, Bendire's thrashers, Cooper's hawks and many species of greatest conservation need.

Quail: The resident game bird biologist began work in a long-term upland game management plan intended to provide direction and management

of New Mexico upland game in the upcoming years. The plan will include population surveys, areas for potential transplants and increased promotion of upland game hunting opportunities in the state. The first quail surveys will start in the spring of 2016.

Migratory waterfowl: The department worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to adjust the regulatory schedule for migratory game birds. This will allow regulations to be developed and authorized much earlier in the year. Department biologists conducted aerial waterfowl surveys from October through January to acquire data to develop future waterfowl management strategies.

Department staff collaborated with the New Mexico Youth Conservation Foundation to develop a new youth-only hunting area at the Bernardo Wildlife Management Area. This area is expected to be available for use in the 2015-2016 season, allowing the Pond Unit to return to general waterfowl hunting on all open days.

Sandhill cranes: The department is working with federal agencies on a management plan to address declines in greater sandhill crane populations. The department also continues to work with partners on a crane study in the Rio Grande Valley. In the study's first year, 194 cranes were banded and 31 greater sandhill cranes were fitted with satellite transmitters, allowing biologists to track their movements and survival.

Doves: Department staff completed statewide banding of mourning doves and white-winged doves as part of a national effort to improve mourning dove management. New Mexico is part of the Central Management Unit for mourning doves. Although the unit is experiencing declines in mourning dove abundance, New Mexico shows an increasing trend over the last 10 years.

Avian Influenza: The department will continue to assist in the hunt for evidence of avian flu among populations of migratory birds that frequent the state's wildlife refuges. To date, only one bird has showed any sign of the disease, but the monitoring will continue.

Habitat and Private Lands

Nuisance wildlife control: The department works with private property owners to reduce human and wildlife conflicts. During the 2014–2015 fiscal year the department received 535 nuisance wildlife complaints and resolved 508. The balance remain under investigation. The top five nuisance species were bears, raccoons, elk, deer and beavers.

Open Gate: The department's Open Gate Program pays for public access on or across private property for hunting, fishing and trapping. It improves access to federal, state and private lands. Funding comes from the sale of Habitat and Access Validation stamps, required with the purchase of most hunting and fishing licenses. The program involves



Top: A noninvasive DNA study on bears indicated higher populations in the Sangre de Cristo, Sacramento and Sandia mountains.

Bottom: The department released Gould's wild turkeys to re-establish the threatened species to its native range.



Above: The department is working with federal agencies to address declines in greater sandhill crane populations.

Opposite top: Last fiscal year, the department stocked more than 500,000 native Rio Grande cutthroat trout.

Opposite bottom: Stream habitat improvement projects were completed in Pecos Canyon and the Red River.

23 properties, providing an estimated 53,197 hunting acres, 68,000 acres of improved access, 56 acres of surface water for fishing and another 4.25 miles of riverfront access for anglers.

Habitat restoration: The Wildlife Management Division uses habitat stamp funds, big-game enhancement funds, habitat management and access validation funds, federal Pittman-Robertson funds, and capital outlay authorizations to support wildlife habitat restoration projects statewide. The division works with a variety of partners to efficiently leverage funds, increase the scope and scale of restoration work and formulate new strategies. The Department spent about \$2.5 million in fiscal year 2015 on such projects, while our partners spent millions more. Restoration not only improves habitat for wildlife, but also benefits watershed health and can reduce the severity and impact of wildfires. Treatments include thinning and prescribed fires in forests and woodlands, shrubland rejuvenation and diversification, native grassland reseeding, riparian and wet meadow restoration, noxious weed control, fence modification and water development.

Private Land Use System: The Private Lands Use System (PLUS) works with New Mexico landowners to manage elk and pronghorn antelope on private lands. During the 2014-2015 license season, 20,698 elk hunting authorizations were issued to 3,989 private landowners and 3662 antelope hunting authorizations were granted to 1,242 participants in the program.

Fisheries Management Division

Fish Stocking

The department's Fisheries Division manages six fish hatcheries, including a warm water hatchery. Division biologists conduct routine fish surveys and make management recommendations on more than 160 waters around the state.

In fiscal year 2015, the department stocked more than 3.5 million triploid rainbow trout. The Division also stocked more than 500,000 each of channel catfish, Rio Grande cutthroat trout and striped bass and 4 million walleye. To a smaller degree, the division stocked largemouth and smallmouth bass, Gila trout, bluegills and tiger muskies. The division grew thousands of larger trout to add to catchable-size deliveries under a new program that proved very positive with anglers. This program will be a regular part of the department's fish-stocking efforts.



Habitat Improvements

Division biologists focused significant effort on habitat improvement projects and species recovery efforts. Stream habitat improvement projects were completed on department- managed properties in Pecos Canyon the Red River and San Juan River, all of which will improve habitat for maintaining stocked fish and increasing wild trout populations.



Native Fish Restoration

Rio Grande cutthroat restoration projects in the Rio Costilla watershed played a big role in the species not being listed as endangered. Gila trout, Gila chub, and Texas hornshell mussels were restored to appropriate habitats, thereby improving the overall status of those species.

Invasive Species Control

The division inspected more than 10,000 watercraft in an effort to prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species (AIS). New Mexico remains free of AIS, but continued diligence is required.

Angler Satisfaction

Our annual angler satisfaction survey indicated more than 70 percent of all anglers were satisfied with their angling experience in New Mexico, and 36 percent were very satisfied. Fifty-six percent of anglers report a preference for cold-water species like trout, while 19 percent expressed a preference for only warm water species. Twenty percent of anglers fish for both cold and warm water species.

Fish Stocked in FY 2015

Triploid rainbow trout	624,291
Channel catfish.	49,213
Rio Grande cutthroat trout	4,224
Gila trout	650
Largemouth bass.	199
Smallmouth bass.	108
Bluegill	88
Walleye.	47
Tiger muskie	14
Striped bass5
<i>(pounds of fish stocked)</i>	



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Caring for New Mexico Wildlife for Future Generations

License 2015 - 2016
 04/01/2015 - 03/31/2016

MARTINEZ, JOE
 123 SUERTE AVE.
 SANTA FE, NM 87501

License: 0000000 0001 1418
 25 - HMAV
 63 - Habitat Stamp
 36 - Game Hunt/Fish
 License: 0000000 0001 1418
 00 - HIP - 0000000

Special Hunt
 Hunt: ELK-1-186
 Species: Elk
 Hunt Dates: Nov 21 - Nov 25
 Bag Limit: 1 antlerless elk

Hunt Description:
 100 ELK

Alexandra Sandoval
 Alexandra Sandoval
 Director and Secretary to the Commission



License No: 1109562 0002 1414
 Name: MARTINEZ, JOE
 Registration: N44 0000 0000 0000
 DOB: 04/24
 Gender: M
 Height: 5' 10"
 Weight: 185
 Hair Color: Brown
 Eye Color: Brown
 Driver's Lic: E30000000

Licensees shall immediately return all points or check-out the license in form of fee form immediately upon ending or resending of trip. Licensees shall mark the date and time of kill. The license shall automatically be voided if 30 days of kill storage.

20
 Date Issued/Expires: Time (Hours: Min.)

Signature: _____
 Signature is an electronic record of the user.
 Game & Fish storage authorized for one year from date of kill.



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Caring for New Mexico Wildlife for Future Generations
 P.O. Box 25112, Santa Fe, NM 87504



MARTINEZ, JOE
 123 SUERTE AVE.
 SANTA FE, NM 87501

Administrative Services Division

The Administrative Services Division (ASD) manages all financial operations and transactions for the department, which includes all accounts payable, procurement, budget and department licensing operations. ASD also is responsible for the department's human resource operations.

License Sales

The Licensing Section manages all sales of hunting and fishing licenses through its online licensing system, department offices and at 147 participating vendors.

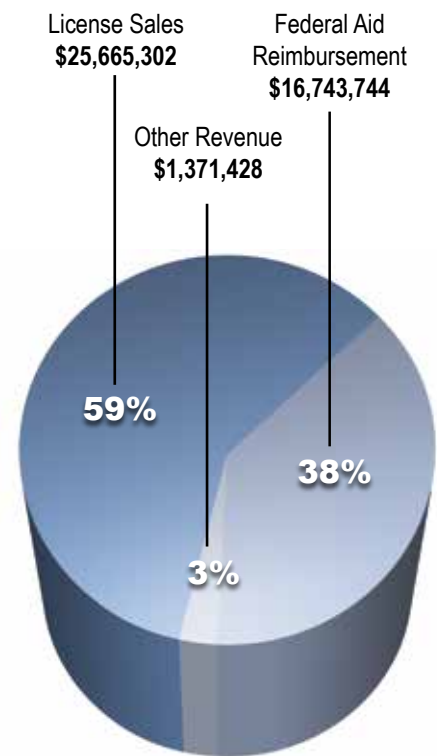
The sale of hunting and fishing licenses continue to represent the largest source of revenue. In FY2015, the department sold 178,897 fishing licenses, 48,384 combination small-game hunting and fishing licenses, and 56,895 small-game hunting licenses. The department also sold 90,229 big-game, 12,492 turkey, and 1,830 trapping licenses. An additional 488,855 stamps and other validations were sold or issued during FY2015.

License Year 2015 (LY15) is the second year that 100 percent of the department's licenses were sold entirely online. During LY15, the department processed 170,642 special draw applications. More than 160,000 of those special draw applications were processed by our customers without department assistance.

Budget

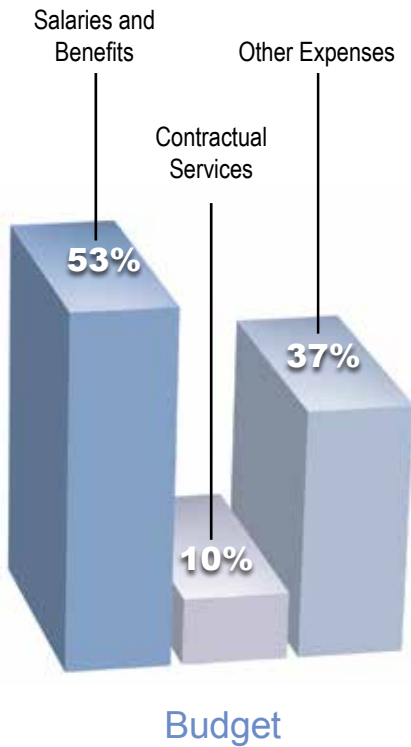
The Budget Section manages and tracks the budget for the department. The New Mexico Legislature appropriated an operating budget of \$38,630,800. Employee salaries and benefits accounted for \$20,284,700 of the FY2015 budget. Contractual services accounted for \$3,979,700 of the FY2015 budget. Other expenses accounted for \$14,366,400 of the FY2015 budget.

The Department's expenses for FY2015 are grouped into 3 categories: employee salaries and benefits, contractual services, and other expenses.



Department Revenue Sources

Opposite: 100% online licensing has streamlined the license sales and application processes.



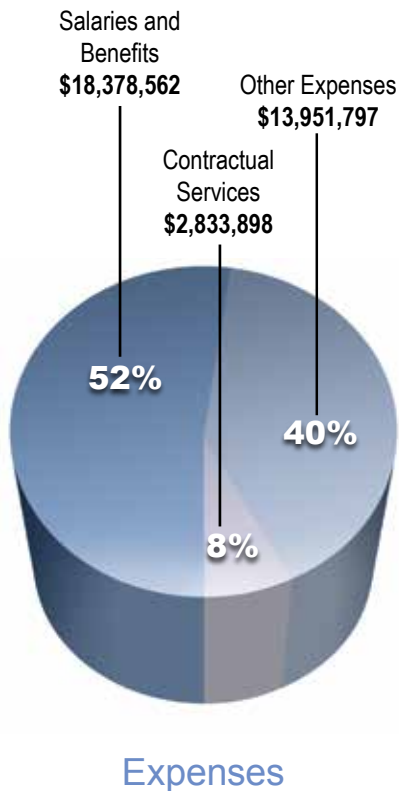
Employee salaries and benefits include salaries and employee insurance. Contractual services include anything that involves the furnishing of labor, time or effort. An example of a service would be engineering services. Other expenses can be anything from equipment, office supplies or vehicles to the transfer of money to another state agency, provided such transfer benefits New Mexico's wildlife (i.e. habitat restoration).

Federal Assistance

The Department is reimbursed for projects approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Sportfish and Wildlife Restoration Program, funded in part by excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment and motor-boat fuels. ASD's Federal Aid Section has implemented a new web-based Federal Aid Cost Tracking System (FACTS). This system will streamline the way the department manages its federal grants and will maximize federally reimbursable dollars and reduce the time it takes to process federal reimbursements.

The Federal Aid Section manages 77 active grants. Some of the projects for FY2015 included aquatic invasive species management, habitat restoration, hunter education, wildlife surveys and lesser prairie chicken management.

Share with Wildlife funds generated by license plate sales supported numerous grant-funded projects in FY2015. Other grants funded agency work to conserve and recover species in danger of becoming threatened in their native habitats. Work was focused to set priorities and develop recovery plans, which included studies of the Mexican spotted owl, Chiricahua leopard frog, Gila trout, Pecos pupfish and more.



Accounts Payable

The Accounts Payable section is responsible for submitting payments to the Department of Finance and Administration and deposits to the State Treasurer's Office. During Fiscal Year 15, the Accounts Payable section processed nearly 10,000 individual payment vouchers for the purchase of goods and services. The total of the individual payment vouchers, including capital outlay payment vouchers, was greater than \$21,978,615. In FY2015, the Accounts Payable section deposited \$30,941,783.55 with the state treasurer's office.

Procurement

In FY2015, the Procurement Section issued five requests for proposals, 45 statewide price agreements, 47 professional service contracts, and issued approximately 6,200 purchase orders totaling more than \$17,614,864.56. The Procurement Section also purchased and outfitted 40 new vehicles that replaced vehicles that were at the end of their useful lifespan.

Annual Financial Audit

During FY2015, the department's financial statements for the previous Fiscal Year (July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014) were audited by an independent, third party auditing firm. The auditor's report issued an unmodified opinion stating that the department had no material weaknesses, significant deficiencies or noncompliance issues material to the department's financial statements. The auditor's report also issued an unmodified opinion with no identified findings regarding the department's single audit pertaining to its federal assistance reimbursements. The FY2015 audit is underway.

Human Resources

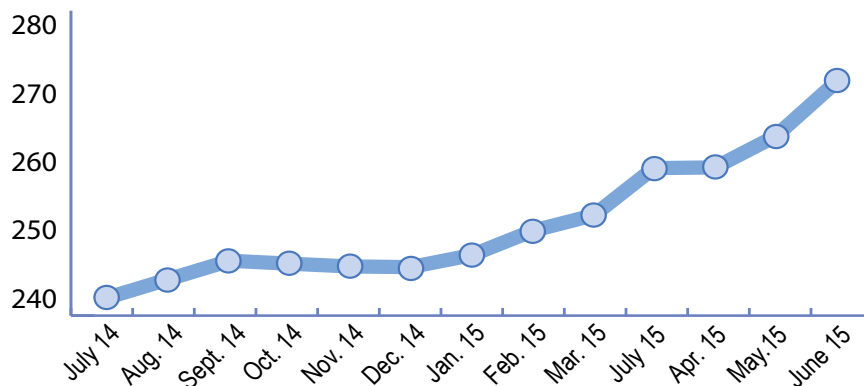
For FY2015, the Human Resources Division aided and supported the department's mission by focusing its efforts to improve employee retention and recruit and hire qualified, talented candidates to fill vacancies in the department's 309 full time positions. Efforts also focused on completing numerous tasks associated with a department-wide reorganization which occurred in 2012, position reclassifications and addressing compensation issues within the agency.

During FY2015:

- Human Resources processed more than 1,500 applications.
- More than 100 employment advertisements were posted (including reposted positions).
- 90 positions were filled.
- 30 of the 90 filled positions were internal promotions.

The achievements of Human Resources can be measured by the number of successful recruitments conducted, the overall positive responses to employee satisfaction surveys and the number of terminations handled for employees leaving due to dissatisfaction. Human Resource staff meet bimonthly to track productivity, manage workflow, identify important issues and develop corrective measures where necessary.

As we enter FY 2016, the Human Resources Division has been tasked to continue to align and further develop its operation in support of the overall operational goals of the department.



Fiscal Year 2015
Total Number of
Employees



Information and Education Division

The Best in the Nation

The Association for Conservation Information presented the department with a first-place award for our redesigned website. Webmaster Aaron Wiley accepted the prestigious national award at the group's annual meeting July 13–16 in Flagstaff, Arizona. The website was selected among entries from state wildlife agencies nationwide.

Wildlife Conservation Outreach

The department hosted The Governor's Special Hunt Auction and Banquet to a full house and raised over \$200,000 for wildlife conservation. The February event ran in conjunction with our New Mexico Outdoor Adventures Show featuring 100 exhibitors, including hunting and fishing guides, lodges, outfitters, artists, firearm and archery equipment salespeople, recreational vehicles, campers and nonprofit organizations dedicated to the outdoors. More than 5,000 people attended.

Teaching Future Hunters

The department's Hunter Education Program trained 2,784 students in fiscal year 2014-15 and conducted 178 standard and field-day courses statewide. The department hosted an inaugural Youth Hunting Camp at New Mexico's Armendaris Ranch, owned by Turner Enterprises and introduced 10 youth hunter education graduates to the joys of upland bird hunting.

The department conducted its annual New Mexico Outdoor Expo, which attracted more than 4,000 children and their families to the Albuquerque Shooting Range Park, where they learned how to shoot, cast and other outdoor and wildlife-related recreational skills.

Angling for Our Youth

Our aquatic education program conducted 75 fishing clinics and 150 fishing skills presentations statewide, providing instruction to 11,000 students and adults in angling skills and ethics. Clinics and workshops



Opposite / above: More than 4,000 children and their families attended the New Mexico Outdoor Expo to learn shooting, casting and other outdoor skills.



were presented at 50 schools, scout groups, 4-H clubs, home-schoolers and youth groups. Activities were conducted at 95 events statewide and six fishing clinics were conducted on a statewide Free Fishing Day in June. An additional 13 schools and 2,900 students also received training in fisheries management practices, water-quality monitoring and angling skills.

The department partnered with Trout Unlimited in the Trout in the Classroom program, in which students raise rainbow trout eggs to the fry stage and then release them into public fishing waters. Department staff trained 100 teachers how to use wildlife to meet state standards and benchmarks in math, science and language arts instruction and conducted 240 conservation education and bear/cougar awareness presentations to 7,000 students at K-12 schools statewide. More than 4,300 students and adults were contacted statewide at a variety of annual career days, science fairs and wildlife-related outdoor recreation festivals.

On Target for the Future

Mescalero Apache School became the first Native American team in the country to win a state championship at the National Archery in the Schools State Tournament. Almost 300 archers from across the state braved stormy weather and difficult travel conditions to compete in the annual event at the Santa Ana Star Center in Rio Rancho on Feb. 28, 2015. In all, 35 schools competed in three divisions.



Know Before You Ride

The Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Program staff attended more than 15 events this year, including county and state fairs, outdoor shows and expos and other events. Department staff conducted 48 OHV safety classes statewide and certified 210 students. An additional 436 riders completed an online course and received certification. Staff conducted four OHV instructor workshops, certified 17 new instructors and conducted eight classes for law enforcement officers on OHV laws and certified 410 officers.



Shooting range development

The department is working with communities and other partners to develop new shooting ranges and enhance existing ranges to provide the public with quality, safe places for recreational shooting. Current efforts include establishing or enhancing firearm shooting ranges in Cibola County, Clovis and Santa Fe, and an archery range at the Albuquerque Shooting Range Park.

Information Systems Division

The Information Systems Division (ISD) develops, deploys and maintains numerous web applications and business systems that serve hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts while also meeting the data and information needs of the department. All of these applications and systems are designed and implemented in-house by an applications team using a process that enables rapid development and deployment of high-quality products.

The division's responsibilities also include server, printer, network and PC management and support, coordination of landline phones and cellular devices, Internet connectivity at all department offices and officers' homes, software installation and licensing, network operations, information security, regulatory compliance, data integrity, technical quality assurance and control, technology purchasing oversight, and user help.

The department's online sales web application allows the public to purchase licenses and permits from any computer or wireless device, such as cellular smart phones and tablets. ISD built and supports a web application used by 147 license vendors (e.g. Walmart), the department's Information Center and each area office to sell licenses and permits. During the last hour before the license application deadline for the 2015 hunting year, the department saw a 43 percent increase — from about 3,500 to about 5,000 — in the number of users simultaneously accessing the online sales web application.

ISD has developed two projects to improve system reliability, increase access to our website and applications and provide our employees the connectivity necessary to complete their tasks without technical issues:

- Replaced the data connectivity lines between the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) which provides Internet access and area offices with links to headquarters. The old lines were obsolete, slow and had a high risk of failure. ISD replaced them with new data connectivity lines that are 13.3 times faster. ISD also implemented a system to update personal computers remotely instead of having to physically travel to the computer's location. This has saved significant time and money.



The Information Services Division helps maintain numerous web applications and business systems that serve hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts.

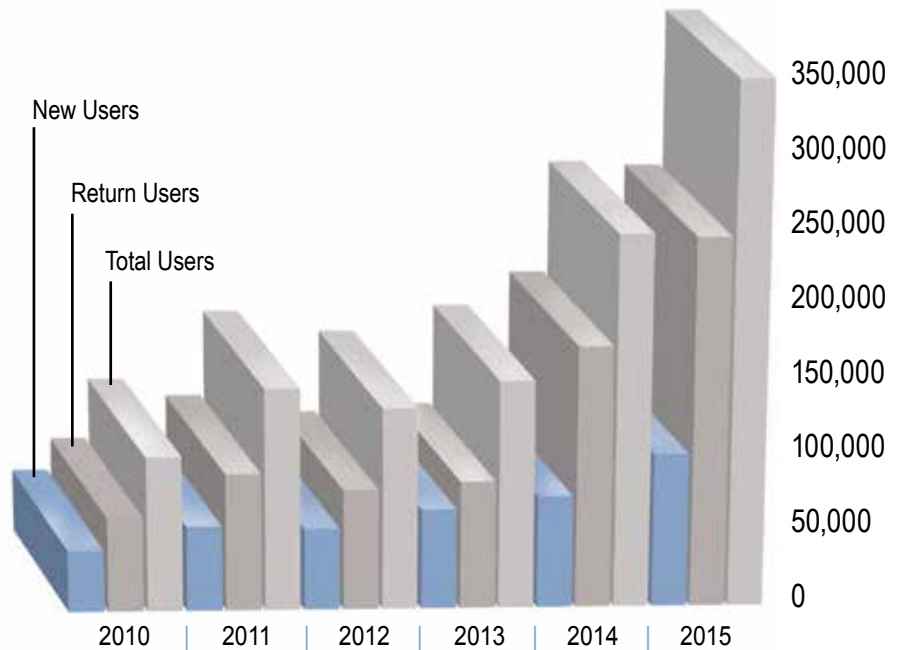


– Started a project to be completed in FY2016 that will establish a secondary data site and replace/upgrade the components of the network. A secondary site at DoIT will allow continued operation of department systems if there is an issue such as a utility outage or fire at headquarters. ISD will increase the amount of file storage capacity to accommodate growth and archiving/retention requirements. Other improvements include increased storage space for data, an improved backup strategy and enhanced security components.

In conjunction with Field Operations Division, ISD has provided hardware, software and training to conduct digital forensics to extract evidence from computers and cell phones seized during investigations of wildlife crimes.

ISD has been replacing employee computers that are no longer under warranty with newer models that have three-year warranties. The plan is to continue replacing one-third of all department computers each year. The result has been a significant reduction in the amount of down time for employees.

ISD plans to increase the amount of storage to accommodate growth.



Increase in Public Usage of Online Licensing

Opposite top: A lesser prairie chicken performs its courtship dance.

Bottom: Jemez Mountains salamander.

Ecological and Environmental Planning Division

The Ecological and Environmental Planning Division coordinates the department's environmental review process. Staff provides technical assistance to municipal, state and federal government agencies and private landowners in protecting and enhancing wildlife habitat. The division maintains a database of New Mexico's wildlife species. It also provides representation to regional and statewide initiatives to develop and apply wildlife-related information management and planning tools.

Technical Guidance

The Technical Guidance Section works with private sector, state and federal agencies, community, nongovernmental organizations and other project proponents to provide information about wildlife and habitats within project areas, and provide recommendations on projects to mitigate adverse effects to wildlife and habitats. Section biologists review and comment on environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, scoping documents, forest plan revisions and amendments, resource management plan revisions and amendments, renewable and nonrenewable energy development and transmission projects, and a wide variety of other types of projects. Recent projects include conservation work with Jemez Mountains salamanders, lesser prairie chickens and dunes sagebrush lizards. Ecological assessments include the Chihuahuan Desert and southern Great Plains, and wildlife-vehicle collision mitigation projects.

Share with Wildlife and BISON-M

The Share with Wildlife program initiated in 1981 has funded over 100 projects in the last 10 years. They include habitat enhancement, biological and ecological studies, wildlife rehabilitation and wildlife education projects. Last year the program spent \$160,000 on 13 new projects, including seven biological studies, funding for two wildlife rehabilitation centers, and four wildlife education programs. Our Biota Information System of New Mexico (BISON-M) database now contains more than





6,500 species, including all vertebrates and selected invertebrates in New Mexico. Information includes the taxonomy, status, distribution, habitat associations, life history, management practices and scientific references of the species. The database is available to the public at www.bison-m.org.

Planning Initiatives

The division is responsible for revision of the New Mexico State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The SWAP is a required component of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service program that allocates funds to each state to benefit at-risk wildlife species and their habitats and prevent listing on threatened and endangered species lists. The division worked extensively on revising and prioritizing the list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need, tabulate the ecoregions and habitats across the state that provide habitat for wildlife, and identify threats and conservation actions associated with those wildlife habitats in each ecoregion.

The division assisted with grant development, purchase and writing of conceptual management plans for new department-managed wildlife areas at River Ranch and Double E Ranch, and drafted a comprehensive management plan for River Ranch.

Division staff assisted with the preparation of three State Wildlife Grant applications. One grant provided funding to complete the review and revision of the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for New Mexico. The other two grant amendments were prepared to provide matching funding to purchase the Double E Ranch in southwest New Mexico as part of a Natural Resources Damage Assessment based on the mortality of migratory birds using settling ponds at copper mines. In addition to preparation of the amendments, staff assisted the Habitat Section of the Wildlife Management Division in completing the purchase.



Top: New Mexico meadow jumping mouse.

Center: Brazilian free-tailed bat.

Bottom right: Department-managed wildlife area at Double E Ranch.



Field Operations Division

The Field Operations Division enforces fish and wildlife and off-highway vehicle laws through four regional offices staffed by 54 district officers and 13 sergeants. Highlights of our operations include:

Law Enforcement Contacts and Citations

Conservation officers made 65,864 field contacts last year while checking licenses and patrolling public and private lands, streams and lakes. They issued 3,174 citations or criminal summons and conducted 256 special operations, including roadblocks, artificial wildlife sets, saturation and off-highway vehicle patrols. Officers arrested 73 individuals on outstanding arrest warrants and conducted 32 search warrants. Officers compiled 47 cooperative cases with other law enforcement agencies.

Operation Game Thief

Operation Game Thief received 234 tips from the public last year, resulting in 97 charges being prosecuted with 25 convictions. The program paid \$3,400 in rewards and received \$22,500 in donations.

Outfitter and Guide Registration

The department registered 261 outfitters last year, generating approximately \$131,000, and registered 1,359 guides, producing an estimated \$97,000. Officers investigated 12 complaints against registered outfitters. Four of the complaints were found to be valid and eligible for license revocation.

Special Permits

The department issued 592 special permits for activities and operations such as private fishing lakes and hunting preserves, falconry, fur dealers and wildlife importation.

License Revocations, Reinstatements

The State Game Commission revoked the license privileges of 324 wildlife law violators and suspended license privileges of 969 hunters and anglers who failed to comply with the Parental Responsibility Act.



*The nation behaves well
if it treats the natural resources as
assets which it must turn over
to the next generation
increased, and not impaired in value.*

— Theodore Roosevelt



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Conserving New Mexico's Wildlife for Future Generations

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