



STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

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January 2021 Progress Report

Serving People, Conserving Fish and Wildlife

It is more than a catchphrase. It is our commitment. Our commitment - to you and to the fish and wildlife resources of our Commonwealth. The 2020-2021 Strategic Plan for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources reflects that commitment.

On the following pages, we are pleased to report on the department's progress toward the overarching goals and more specific, strategic initiatives and actions described in the plan.

Despite the onset of a global pandemic that required substantial adaptation to agency operations statewide, the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources remained true to its mission during 2020.

Staff adjusted to new norms and were innovative to meet the new and unique needs of stakeholders at a time when those stakeholders – young, old, new and experienced – turned to the outdoors in unprecedented numbers and looked to the department for trusted information, educational programming and much more.

Hunting. Fishing. Trapping. Boating. Shooting sports. Wildlife viewing. Interest and participation in these activities and outdoor recreation in general soared during the entire year of 2020. Social distancing became a motivation to connect or reconnect with the outdoors. In light of cancellations and other effects of the pandemic, many people had more free time and fewer distractions, leading to increased enjoyment of the Commonwealth's fields, woods and waters.

We appreciate your interest in our mission, and the work we've undertaken to accomplish it as described in this report.



2020-2021 Strategic Plan Initiatives

2020-2021 Strategic Plan Initiatives			
Goal 1	Manage for sustainable fish and wildlife populations and habitats		
Initiative 1	Expand the use of 'active management' conservation practices on public lands and waters.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
1.1.a.	Manage 5,000 acres of forests annually on WMAs with the use of prescribed fire, selective harvest, and forest stand improvement	In progress	Over 4,000 acres completed and 200 acres delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions.
1.1.b.	Manage 13,000 acres of open lands on WMAs annually with prescribed fire, disking, herbicide treatments and other methods	In progress	Completed 52 prescribed fire burns on 3,961 acres; other open land management numbers will be added as reports are submitted by field staff
1.1.c.	Manage 4,500 acres of wetlands on WMAs annually using water management, disking, planting and other methods	In progress	Wetland management acres are currently unknown but requested update from staff. Ballard and Boatwright total about 4,000 acres.
1.1.d.	Update WMA management plans on Tier I WMAs* by December 31, 2021	In progress	Wildlife Division leadership will be discussing short and long term plans; WMA Working Group will also be discussing.
1.1.e.	Update lake-specific management plans for all major public waters by June 30, 2021	Delayed	With the formation of species-specific management working groups within the Fisheries Division, their work will form the basis for the lake management plans. This process will delay the lake-specific management plans past 2021.
<p>* WMAs will be categorized into Tier I, II and III. Tier I WMAs will be staffed and intensively managed, while Tier III WMAs will have no staff housed on the area and will receive little or no active habitat management for wildlife, but will still be available for hunting, hiking, wildlife watching, etc.</p>			
Initiative 2	Expand research on species and habitat management efforts statewide.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
1.2.a.	Conduct research on elk populations to better understand their population and management needs. Establish more precise population models, population estimates and long term growth rates. Determine hunting and viewing goals by December 31, 2021	In progress	The first season of fieldwork on adult/yearling natality rates and calf survival estimates research has been completed; the second season will begin in January 2021.
1.2.b.	Conduct research on bear populations to monitor their population growth across the state and develop long term population goals, harvest strategies and objectives by December 31, 2021	In progress	The fieldwork portion of a major mark and recapture project to determine the abundance and density of black bears in the core of the Kentucky population was completed in summer 2019. Final results expected in fall 2020."
1.2.c.	Conduct research on non-game species to determine management needs and population trends for the states most at risk species	In progress	We are currently investigating Virginia big-eared bats, eastern hellbenders, various mussels, fish and bird species to help determine management needs and causes of declines. Determinations will be used to implement corrective management actions in the field.
1.2.d.	Conduct research on hunter effort for various wildlife game species to help us better set population models, season dates and bag limits on hunted species by December 31, 2021	In progress	In spring 2020, the Small Game Program submitted a request for proposals to complete hunter participation and harvest telephone surveys, but it did not make it through the state procurement process prior to the close of the fiscal year.
1.2.e.	Conduct research on WMA use methods (electronic check-in, WMA permit, etc.) to better determine needs for resource allocations, habitat management levels and season structures by December 31, 2021	In progress	This is being reviewed as part of the new license system RFI , the WMA working group and the Alternative Income working group processes.

1.2.f.	Initiate a research project to evaluate the effectiveness of different fish habitat structures and materials by June 30, 2021	In progress	Collecting anecdotal data on habitat differences. Study design on track for completion in 2021.
1.2.g.	Evaluate the effects of bass tournament exemptions and make a recommendation to the Commissioner for future exemptions by June 30, 2021	In progress	Black bass technical working group has been formed and is evaluating several proposed actions.
Initiative 3	Evaluate native fisheries species restoration efforts.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
1.3.a.	Monitor and evaluate project success of lake sturgeon restoration efforts by June 30, 2021	Completed	Monitoring is underway; project milestones have been set.
1.3.b.	Monitor and evaluate project success of alligator gar restoration efforts by June 30, 2021	Completed	Monitoring is underway; project milestones have been set.
1.3.c.	Monitor and evaluate project success of native walleye restoration efforts by June 30, 2021	Completed	Monitoring is underway; project milestones have been set.
Initiative 4	Expand reservoir fish habitat initiatives.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
1.4.a.	Initiate 1 new large-scale reservoir fish habitat project by December 31, 2020	Completed	Enhanced habitat project initiated with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and local angler groups on Lake Barkley.
1.4.b.	Enhance fish habitat sites on 3 existing reservoirs by end of June 30, 2021	Completed	Major fish habitat enhancements were completed on Benjy Kinman Lake, Barren River Lake, Taylorsville Lake, Carr Creek Lake, Elmer Davis Lake, and Cave Run Lake plus many other regular habitat efforts.
Initiative 5	Carefully prioritize projects, evaluate effectiveness and adaptively manage agency Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs).	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
1.5.a.	Critically evaluate WMA plans based on short term and long term goals, staffing levels and operational budgets by June 30, 2021	In progress	WMA Committee has held one virtual meeting and are in the planning stages of scheduling a tour of various WMA in September/October.
1.5.b.	Implement a concise WMA naming criteria based on the level of active management activities being implemented by June 30, 2021	In progress	Staff have identified Tier I, II, and III WMAs and are working with the Information and Education Division to produce video segments on each type to be added to the WMA page. Will work with WMA Working Group on updates and next steps.
1.5.c.	Evaluate additional forestry and open lands management through contracting to maximize wildlife habitat management objectives	In progress	Northeast Region has successfully hired a forester, and Green River Region is in the process of interviewing candidates. Staff foresters will greatly increase division ability to prioritize forest management.
Initiative 6	Identify critical needs for enhancing Kentucky Wild species diversity consistent with the State Wildlife Action Plan.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
1.6.a.	Begin updating revision to the State Wildlife Action Plan (fully complete by 2023)	In progress	Kentucky Wildlife Action Plan Executive and Advisory Committees met in fall 2020. In November 2020, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service was notified and acknowledged the initiation of our Plan's comprehensive review and revision.

1.6.b.	Plan twelve Kentucky Wild member experiences in 2021	In progress	Pandemic restrictions called for cancellation of events through fall 2020; four small group events were held September-December 2020.
1.6.c.	Continue revision of the State Wildlife Action Plan to reflect changes in fish and wildlife species status by June 30, 2021.	In progress	Initial step in the revision process is to determine/reassess conservation status for each KY wildlife species, and identify species of greatest conservation need.
Initiative 7	Improve facilities at fish hatcheries and WMAs to allow staff to better manage fish and wildlife populations.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
1.7.a.	Renovate 3 office buildings by December 31, 2021	In progress	Fish Annex completed. Peter W. Pfeiffer Fish Hatchery in design phase. Murray office in final design phase and will go out for bid in 2021 first quarter
1.7.b.	Facilitate sediment removal from 2 hatchery ponds annually	Completed	Two hatchery ponds have been cleaned out in 2020 and have started on others.
Initiative 8	Revise and update species management plans.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
1.8.a.	Review and update the 2030 Elk Management Plan and identify next step goals and objectives by December 31, 2021	In progress	Elk Program staff will continue to monitor the progress and identify ways to improve the 2030 Elk Management Plan.
1.8.b.	Publish the final report for the existing 10-year quail plan by December 31, 2020	Completed	The "Road to Recovery: Ten Year Restoration Report" was formally released to the public in digital format in July 2020. Printed copies are available upon request.
1.8.c.	Work to identify priority areas to achieve 15% of selected habitat goals set forth in the 2017 grouse plan by December 31, 2021	In progress	Progress toward habitat goals in the 2017-2027 Kentucky Ruffed Grouse and Young Forest Strategic Plan is underway through commercial and non-commercial forest stand improvements on wildlife management areas, on private lands through USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) contracts, and on the Daniel Boone National Forest through recently approved management plans for Integrated Resource Management Areas.
1.8.d.	Form 5 internal fisheries management committees by June 30 2020, which meet at least quarterly through 2021	Completed	Seven internal fisheries management working groups have been established. Each working group has met multiple times.
Goal 2	Increase opportunities for and participation in fish and wildlife recreation		
Initiative 1	Increase and promote boating and fishing opportunities on underutilized waters.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
2.1.a.	Write at least one Kentucky Afield magazine article annually about a fishing or boating opportunity on underutilized waters	Completed	The cover story of the spring 2020 issue details the history and opportunities of Elkhorn Creek. An article on Tradewater River is planned for the summer 2020 issue.
2.1.b.	Host an R3 event on one underutilized waters location annually	Delayed	Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it has been difficult to have guests in the small recording studio. But podcast hosts Chase Winger and Lee McClellan did discuss opportunities on streams, creeks and rivers to encourage stakeholders to visit underutilized bodies of water as a way of social distancing.
2.1.c.	Produce two segments on Kentucky Afield television detailing opportunities on underutilized waters	Completed	A segment fishing in Drennen Creek aired in August, and a segment fishing the Green River aired in September.

2.1.d.	Produce a Kentucky Afield podcast with fisheries and wildlife biologists detailing opportunities on underutilized waters and WMAs by June 30, 2021	In progress	Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it has been difficult to have guests in the small recording studio. But podcast hosts Chase Winger and Lee McClellan did discuss opportunities on streams, creeks, and rivers encouraging folks to visit underutilized bodies of water as a way of social distancing. The plan is to have biologists on the Podcast in early spring to discuss these topics.
2.1.e.	Evaluate the feasibility of a paddlecraft program by meeting with legislators and members of the outdoor recreation industry by December 31, 2021	Delayed	Due to COVID-19 restrictions.
Initiative 2	Expand our management efforts on public land in partnership with federal agencies and private landowners.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
2.2.a.	Work closely with the US Forest Service to better manage both the Daniel Boone National Forest and the Land Between the Lakes Recreation Area	In progress	We have two Good Neighbor Agreements active with the U.S. Forest Service. Purchase Region regional coordinator serves on advisory board at Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area.
2.2.b.	Continue to work with the US Army Corps of Engineers to manage areas around some of the major lakes throughout the state	In progress	Three Corps property license agreements were recently approved for extension.
2.2.c.	Expand our partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to help landowners take advantage of the conservation provisions of the federal Farm Bill Program	In progress	We have met with NRCS leadership and have agreed to expand our partnership to 18 positions by the end of the year.
2.2.d.	Work with local US Army Corps of Engineers project offices to implement large-scale habitat improvement projects at two reservoirs by June 30, 2021	In progress	Barren River Lake in final stage; Rough River Lake Project in progress; Maintaining two previous projects at Carr Creek Lake and Cave Run Lake .
2.2.e.	Update WMA mapping to include habitat maps and area video overviews on all Tier I WMAs* by December 31, 2021	In progress	Currently Clay WMA has active habitat mapping available online.
* WMAs will be categorized into Tier I, II and III. Tier I WMAs will be staffed and intensively managed, while Tier III WMAs will have no staff housed on the area and will receive little or no active habitat management for wildlife, but will still be available for hunting, hiking, wildlife watching, etc.			
Initiative 3	Enhance agency effectiveness by implementing the Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) plan for Kentucky.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
2.3.a.	Conduct an R3 summit with agency staff and partners by December 31, 2021	Delayed	Due to COVID-19, the 2020 summitt was conducted virtually in September 2020. An in-person event (if possible) is planned for 2021.
2.3.b.	Make a presentation to the entire Law Enforcement Division during their training on KDFWR's R3 Initiative	Delayed	Due to COVID-19 restrictions.
2.3.c.	Exhibit at the Fish and Wildlife fair annually for the 22,000+ archers and spectators at the NASP Kentucky State Tournament	Delayed	Due to COVID-19 restrictions the 2020 tournament was canceled; planned event for 2021.

Initiative 4	Improve mentor, coach and instructor development to strengthen R3 efforts.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
2.4.a.	Train 50+ UK Cooperative Extension Agents to conduct their own Field to Fork and Hook and Cook classes	In progress	Trained 43 in February 2020. Planning another training in January 2021.
2.4.b.	Certify Trooper Island Staff as hunter education volunteers so they can teach hunter education as part of the Trooper Island Camp Experience	In progress	Initial meeting with Trooper Island staff has been conducted. Any additional efforts have been delayed due to COVID-19.
2.4.c.	Certify 4-H Camp Staff as hunter education volunteers so they can teach hunter education as part of the 4-H camp experience	In progress	Initial meeting with 4-H staff has been conducted. Any additional efforts have been delayed due to COVID-19.
2.4.d.	Evaluate the potential for providing online hunter education curriculum to high school agriculture and FFA programs by December 31, 2021	Delayed	Due to COVID-19 restrictions.
2.4.e.	Evaluate the potential for providing online hunter education curriculum through school resource officer (SRO) safety programs by December 31, 2021	In progress	This initiative is in the investigation stage.
2.4.f.	Conduct a survey of coaches, instructors and volunteers in outdoor and shooting sports programs in Kentucky to establish a baseline of knowledge and help determine next steps for improving R3 planning	Completed	Survey complete; final report pending.
Initiative 5	Improve access to quality areas for hunting, fishing and other wildlife related recreation.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
2.5.a.	Construct 1 new fishing ramp by December 31, 2020	In progress	Construction of Shawnee Park Boat Ramp is complete and the parking area's completion by the City of Louisville is approximately eighty (80) percent complete. The site should be open to the public in the spring of 2021.
2.5.b.	Install 2 accessible kayak launches by December 31, 2021	In progress	Forty (40) percent completed. Launch components were recently acquired and should be installed in 2021 first quarter.
2.5.c.	Construct 1 fixed wooden fishing pier by December 31, 2021	In progress	Currently on hold due to COVID-19 working restrictions.
2.5.d.	Build relationships with large landholders in the east to develop 5 new hunting access areas by December 31, 2021	In progress	We continue to work and identify potential partners. 1 agreement is in the works with a planned release date in 8/21.
2.5.e.	Develop a prioritized list of access improvement opportunities by June 30, 2021	In progress	Staff is developing this fall and will be prioritized and worked into the budget development and capital construction requests in spring 2021.
2.5.f.	Create a WMA access mobile app for public use by December 31, 2021	In progress	This initiative is in the investigation stage.

Initiative 6	Develop new public facilities that provide additional hunting, fishing and recreational shooting opportunities.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
2.6.a.	Conduct surveys of Kentuckians and license holders to determine current participation in shooting sports and demand for range opportunities across Kentucky by June 30, 2020 to facilitate shooting strategic planning for range development	In progress	UK completed "Report on 2020 Survey about Wildlife Recreation in KY" in June 2020, which included questions and findings regarding participation in target shooting.
2.6.b.	Increase recreational shooting opportunities through construction of a new pistol pit at Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area by June 30, 2021	In progress	Complete
2.6.c.	Increase recreational shooting opportunities through the completion of a plan and design for upgrades to existing rifle range berms and facilities by June 30, 2021	In progress	A new design is being developed for Veterans. This design may be implemented to retrofit existing rifle ranges.
2.6.d.	Increase recreational shooting opportunities through the development of a new design for future shooting needs by December 31, 2021	In progress	A new design is being developed for Veterans. This design will be further considered for future implementations.
2.6.e.	Apply for 2 grants for the creation of a public archery range by December 31, 2021	In progress	Range designs have been created. One grant application has been completed and will be submitted when the application period opens. The first range is proposed to be on Kentucky Fish and Wildlife's campus in Frankfort.
2.6.f.	Make improvements to 2 existing WMA rifle ranges, including renovation of shooting berms and shooting facilities by December 31, 2021	In progress	In progress with Kleber WMA and one additional under consideration.
2.6.g.	Complete design and scoping phase of new shooting range at Veteran's Memorial WMA by December 31, 2020 and secure bid for construction by end of June 30, 2021	In progress	There was delay in the design which was recently resumed; won't be complete until early 2021 second quarter
2.6.h.	Partner with existing private shooting range facilities to secure public access	In progress	Progress is being made on a draft to present including plans to explore alternative means of allowing increased range opportunities for Kentucky sportsmen and sportswomen
2.6.i.	Develop at least 2 ADA-accessible facilities by June 30, 2021	In progress	Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area pistol pit, ADA parking and sidewalk complete and open
Initiative 7	Evaluate and improve all aspects of the customer experience.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
2.7.a.	Improve the bear exhibit at Salato Wildlife Education Center by enhancing fencing and enclosure facilitates by June 30, 2021	Completed	Complete
2.7.b.	Improve the bear exhibit at Salato Wildlife Education Center by improving the pool by June 30, 2021	In progress	Project on hold due to estimated completion costs.

2.7.c.	Improve facilities at camps through replacing dated materials and equipment by June 30, 2021	In progress	Camp Webb cooler in design phase; Camp Webb waste water treatment plant in design phase; Camp Webb superintendent house renovation completed; Camp Currie superintendent house renovation in progress; Camp Webb swim dock replacement in progress.
2.7.d.	Develop a newly designed website by June 30, 2021	In progress	Kentucky Interactive has test site in place with basic layout.
2.7.e.	Perform a customer satisfaction survey related to the presentation of regulations by December 31, 2021	Delayed	Initial project discussion has taken place, but no action has been taken to date.
2.7.f.	Work with staff to develop and implement a customer satisfaction survey by June 30, 2021	Delayed	Initial project discussion has taken place, but no action has been taken to date.
2.7.g.	Investigate the feasibility to publish the Kentucky Afield magazine, with the aid of sponsorships, free to the public in a digital platform to vastly expand its reach by December 31, 2021	In progress	Initial scoping complete. Creating a timeline for implementation.

Goal 3

Increase public awareness, engagement and partnerships

Initiative 1	Increase transparency of management and finances.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
3.1.a.	Show before and after pictures of construction projects on the department's website	In progress	Current projects are being documented and will be shared once completed.
Initiative 2	Expand participation in Kentucky Wild and opportunities for other wildlife-related activities.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
3.2.a.	Create Kentucky Wild mobile education events throughout the state	Delayed	Events postponed due to COVID-19. Will resume when permissible (Marketing).
Initiative 3	Broaden and strengthen project management collaboration with governmental, private and corporate partnerships on public and private lands.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
3.3.a.	Implement annually scheduled meetings with each local US Army Corps of Engineers lake project office to facilitate communication and collaboration by June 30, 2021	Completed	Annual meetings with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about reservoirs are required for district Fisheries biologists.
Initiative 4	Grow our base by expanding our education and outreach approach to reflect a changing society.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
3.4.a.	Launch a Kentucky fishing and boating app by December 31, 2020	In progress	Fisheries Division determined best launch date to be early spring 2020 to match up with peaked angler interest
3.4.b.	Complete a draft Request for Proposal process for a license delivery system featuring a robust app and customer relationship management functions by December 31, 2020	In progress	Request for Information (RFI) process completed. Evaluation of RFI submittals in progress to facilitate determination of solutions to be included in the Request for Proposal (RFP)

3.4.c.	Create a webpage cataloging how-to videos to explain fishing, hunting and boating techniques for public use, with all major species groups, fishing techniques, with meat preparation and cooking instruction, by June 31, 2021	Delayed	Part of Communications Internal Collaboration Initiative. Communications team will initiate next quarter.
3.4.d.	Produce 5 short videos that highlight WMAs and wildlife habitat improvement practices by December 31, 2021	In progress	One video was produced on T.N. Sullivan WMA and another at Sloughs WMA. A segment focused on a prescribed burn at Taylorsville WMA aired in December. One segment on small game habitat (quail, rabbit, etc.) was planned but had to be canceled due to COVID.
3.4.e.	Expand our use of GovDelivery to capture and activate contacts to improve communications and increase sales	Delayed	Due to COVID-19 restrictions.
3.4.f.	Facilitate at least 2 annual youth fishing events servicing at least 50 youth each by June 30, 2021	Delayed	Due to COVID-19 restrictions.
Initiative 5	Continue to develop and expand agency sponsorship programs.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
3.5.a.	Expand sponsorships to include at least 1 sponsorship for the Fisheries Division by June 30, 2021	In progress	1 sponsor so far – Academy Sports and Outdoors
3.5.b.	Expand sponsorships to include at least 1 sponsorship for the Wildlife Division by June 30, 2021	In progress	2 Sponsors so far – FoxPro and RealTree Outdoors
3.5.c.	Expand sponsorships to include at least 1 sponsorship for the Information and Education Division by June 30, 2021	In progress	1 sponsor so far – Federal Premium
Initiative 6	Develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
3.6.a.	Continue collaboration among marketing, public relations and communications specialists	In progress	Unified collaboration much improved.
3.6.b.	Work collaboratively across multiple divisions to create a plan that outlines all groups working on public relations and define their roles	In progress	Designated division communications coordinator planned.
3.6.c.	Coordinate efforts to maintain consistent messaging through all communication platforms	In progress	Better but still room for improvement.
3.6.d.	Create press releases that can be shared on multiple social media platforms by June 30, 2021	In progress	Already being done. Repurposing content across multiple channels.
3.6.e.	Promote the work of staff across the realm of conservation in multiple media platforms and increase our reach by 10% by June 30, 2021	Delayed	Communications team will initiate next quarter.
3.6.f.	Maintain at least eight social media accounts for the Fisheries Division by June 30, 2021	Completed	Currently have eight accounts, and are maintaining annually.

3.6.g.	Evaluate and update signage at headquarters by June 30, 2021	In progress	Signs have been designed and will be ordered soon; a replacement sign for entrance kiosk is being researched; quotes being obtained.
Initiative 7			
Initiative 7	Enhance the Department's ability to facilitate and quantify public input when making management decisions.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
3.7.a.	Create a mechanism to allow the public to provide input on management actions on multiple social media platforms	In progress	Researching best system to deploy.
3.7.b.	Use the GovDelivery platform to solicit public input on topics for which they have expressed an interest	In progress	Researching best system to deploy.
3.7.c.	Conduct at least one live social media call-in style show related to the management and policy decisions being considered by the agency	In progress	Planning for implementation in 2021.
3.7.d.	Increase the use of customer surveys to obtain direct input and interaction with the public at shows where the agency exhibits and sells licenses, permits and Kentucky Wild memberships	In progress	Tablets purchased. Need to construct Kiosk that will allow self-help to execute.
3.7.e.	Expand opt-in opportunities through the department web pages and social media channels	In progress	Exploring but very complicated. Need to purchase additional software and staff to manage.
3.7.f.	Implement a system for Fisheries Division representatives to attend at least ten public events annually that are hosted by sportsmen's groups, NGOs or department affiliated entities by June 30, 2021	Completed	Despite slowdowns due to COVID-19, Fisheries staff attended and presented at more than 20 meetings in 2020.
Goal 4			
Enhance the Department's responsiveness and effectiveness			
Initiative 1			
Initiative 1	Provide effective employee management and a positive work environment.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
4.1.a.	Conduct an employee communications and morale survey by June 30, 2021	Delayed	Not complete due to COVID-19 related reduction in staff work hours; Plan to continue development in early 2021.
4.1.b.	Develop a program for staff to mentor or mentee as hunters or anglers as part of their official job duties	In progress	Final stages of project design are underway.
4.1.c.	Provide proper safety training and personal protective equipment to all staff by June 30, 2021	In progress	Written programs and job hazard analysis reviews were completed and located on Sharepoint. This is the first step to being able to provide training. Salato was subject to a Labor Cabinet consultative visit so they received all training required for this visit. Delayed in part due to Covid.
4.1.d.	Perform safety inspection on 50% of KDFWR facilities by December 31, 2020 and on the remaining facilities by December 31, 2021	In progress	Inspections are complete on headquarters structures, Taylorsville Lake WMA, Murray, Camp Wallace. Internal pipe inspections were performed on the Arnold Mitchell Building and Salato Wildlife Education Center. The COVID-19 pandemic and loss of our safety administrator have temporarily postponed additional progress on this task.
4.1.e.	Increase number of employees with OSHA 10 & 30-hour training certification by having on-site OSHA trained trainer	Delayed	New Safety Administrator will begin 02/2021 and will work to develop training plan to continue progress toward this goal.

4.1.f.	Review Fish and Wildlife specific job class specifications and update as necessary. Create additional classifications as needed to increase employee longevity	In progress	The Conservation Educator series was completed by Oct. 16, 2020. We plan to review the FW Technician series next and continue until each classification has been reviewed.
4.1.g.	Create an updated salary comparison regionally, or of surrounding states, to compare Kentucky to other state fish and wildlife agencies	Delayed	Staff shortage of hours due to COVID-19, and school and childcare closings have temporarily postponed additional progress on this task.
Initiative 2	Enhance recruitment to ensure a diverse, inclusive, well-suited workforce that relates to all customers.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
4.2.a.	Improve programs at the camps and in the schools that will appeal to a broader range of children while maintaining our mission focus	In Progress / Delayed	Working to get all programs to meet Kentucky Academic Standards. However, delayed due to Pandemic related cancellation of camps and in-person classes.
4.2.b.	Uniformed officers and other staff will attend a minimum of 3 career fairs each year and work closely with area universities to attract diverse applicants	Delayed	Recruiting events have been cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19.
4.2.c.	Human resources staff will attend at minimum 3 recruitment events by June 30, 2021	Delayed	Recruiting events have been cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19. We are pre-registered for a Law Enforcement-specific recruitment event that was to occur in February 2020 but has been postponed to May 2021.
4.2.d.	Human resources will research options and produce staff recruitment materials by December 31, 2020	In Progress	We are putting the final touches on our specific classification brochures and are working on a general recruitment brochure. We expect completion of both by the target date of Dec. 31, 2020.
Initiative 3	Offer opportunities for professional development to ensure operational effectiveness.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
4.3.a.	Provide customer service training to Information Center staff, Salato staff and other pertinent personnel to develop better responsiveness and communication to the public	In Progress	All Information Center staff and Salato Center staff has completed training opportunities through My Purpose. Those opportunities will continue to be sought out and taken advantage of when they arise.
4.3.b.	Provide media relations training to Law Enforcement and other pertinent personnel	Delayed	COVID-19 has not allowed this training to take place, as the Department of Criminal Justice Training (DOCJT) canceled their classes. The intention is to create our own class in the future, if necessary.
4.3.c.	Evaluate and expand employee cross training across workstations to increase operational effectiveness by June 30, 2021	Delayed	Due to COVID-19.
4.3.d.	Increase the use of on-line trainings available through MyPurpose by 25% by December 31, 2020	In Progress	With COVID-19 related absences, many supervisors increased use of the MyPurpose trainings to permit employees to work from home. Improvements made on additional online trainings as part of new employee orientation. Working on additional training recommendations for 2021.
Initiative 4	Improve private lands, water conservation and stream and wetland restoration programs.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
4.4.a.	Be a trusted leader in conservation by participating in diverse and effective projects such as lead reclamation projects	In progress	Lead reclamation project on Miller Welch-Central Kentucky WMA is 50 percent complete.

4.4.b.	Work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to help landowners take advantage of the conservation provisions of the federal Farm Bill	In progress	Working with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to implement Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wetland Reserve Easement Program (WRE), and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).
4.4.c.	Define private lands program goals and objectives by species and region and set program measurable goals	In progress	Working to hire a program coordinator to work with regional and program coordinators.
4.4.d.	Review and update information on the department's "Managing Your Farm Pond" page by June 30, 2021	Completed	The webpage has been reviewed and updated.
4.4.e.	Work with the Finance Cabinet and other state partners to improve stream and wetland mitigation project processes and cut project timeline in half by December 30, 2020	Completed	Land contracts secured properties for 11 projects with 5 being purchased in 2020, reducing delivery time by approximately half for this year; directly related to the new 3-person delivery team jointly created by Finance, TAHC, and KDFWR in March 2020.

Goal 5

Protect Kentucky's fish and wildlife resources and promote user safety

Initiative 1	Control, reduce and eradicate invasive species.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
5.1.a.	Work to eradicate invasive species on WMAs	In progress	Ongoing.
5.1.b.	Work with private landowners to control, reduce and eradicate invasive species on their property	In progress	Working with NRCS through the EQIP program to eradicate invasive species.
5.1.c.	Update the Statewide Aquatic Nuisance Species Plan for Kentucky by June 30, 2021	In progress	Plan has been reviewed internally. Working to reach out to other partners for the revision.
5.1.d.	Continue to work with the private industry to increase removal of Asian carp to 10 million pounds annually	In progress	Although COVID-19 has slowed down efforts, the industry is continuing to work towards the goal of 10 million pounds.
Initiative 2	Increase public safety for hunting, fishing, boating and recreational shooting.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
5.2.a.	Require landowners to have hunter education certification, if required by date of birth, while hunting on their own property	Delayed	Regulation amendment was withdrawn and is on hold.
5.2.b.	Conservation officers will routinely patrol public hunting and fishing areas and the public waterways of the state each year, observing for unsafe conditions and illegal activity	In progress	Officers regularly patrol public hunting and fishing areas.
Initiative 3	Protect fish and wildlife resources through increased regulation compliance.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
5.3.a.	Conservation officers will increase the annual number of compliance checks conducted by 10% by June 30, 2021	In progress	Officers are conducting more compliance checks due to increased participation due to COVID-19.

5.3.b.	The Law Enforcement Division will continue to promote public assistance with regulation compliance by offering 24-hour dispatch	In progress	Kentucky State Police is dispatching officers on a daily basis.
5.3.c.	The Law Enforcement Division will continue to promote public assistance with regulation compliance by offering Tip411	In progress	Tips are being received daily. This app is being continuously promoted using publications and social media.
5.3.d.	The Law Enforcement Division will continue to promote public assistance with regulation compliance through social media channels	In progress	Social media posts are promptly responded to in regards to regulation compliance. Agency social media posts promote reporting of violations by citizens.
Initiative 4	Provide professional law enforcement services to the Commonwealth through mission-focused policing.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
5.4.a.	Maintain all levels of supervision across the Law Enforcement Division by promptly filling any supervisor vacancies that occur	In progress	Personnel actions have been requested to fill current supervisor vacancies due to retirements. SGT promotions just announced. Interviews will be conducted for CPT and LT positions in January 2021.
5.4.b.	Implement a new policy manual by June 30, 2021 to ensure clear, consistent expectations to maintain the desired level of professionalism	In progress	Cabinet has approved policy manual. Final review and edits taking place during January 2021.
5.4.c.	Require a minimum of 6 detailed and organized Law Enforcement operations from each district during peak seasons to ensure mission focused efforts	In progress	Officers continue to focus on enforcement efforts consistent with the seasons. Numerous decoy deer details were conducted during the fall. Also, special details focused on bear, elk and waterfowl enforcement were also conducted and will continue into 2021.
Initiative 5	Promulgate clear and concise fish and wildlife regulations for anglers, hunters, trappers and boaters.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
5.5.a.	Ensure safety and improve access to public waters by maintaining statewide boat ramps, launch sites, dams and fishing sites, and informational signage to educate the public and promote safe use	Ongoing	Inspected 168 boat ramps and 32 dams. Conducted maintenance on one fishing access site, 1 courtesy dock, 3 boat ramps, and 5 dams. Performed 40 dam mowing's on 18 different dams. Ordered 32 new or replacement signs for boating and fishing access sites.
5.5.b.	Work closely with the Commission and the other divisions to ensure the regulations are concise, not in conflict with Kentucky Revised Statutes and enforceable	In progress	The regulation process committee consists of a large team, including attorneys and division directors.
5.5.c.	Provide the Commission with clear and concise regulation recommendations for the hunting of wildlife species	In progress	Ongoing.
5.5.d.	Establish a working group to review fisheries regulations prior to proposal to the Commission by June 30, 2021	In progress	Fisheries staff is reviewing, compiling potential regulation changes. On target for completion in 2021.
Initiative 6	Enact proactive measures in response to existing and emerging fish and wildlife health threats.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
5.6.a.	Continue surveillance efforts for the Asian longhorned tick (Haemaphysalis longicornis), particularly in high-risk counties	In progress	Ongoing surveillance includes collecting ticks opportunistically from captured and road-killed wildlife species and submitting samples to diagnostic laboratories for identification.

5.6.b.	Continue Chronic Wasting Disease prevention and surveillance activities	In progress	Transition to a weighted sample surveillance scheme for 2020 and are initiating a voluntary hunter-harvested head donation program utilizing freezer drop-off locations.
5.6.c.	Continue ongoing elk surveillance and health assessments	In progress	Active surveillance and collection of biological samples from both sick and healthy animals is being conducted throughout the year.
5.6.d.	Continue COVID-19 and wildlife review and response	In progress	Emergency regulations regarding the handling and rehabilitation of wildlife likely susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) is awaiting approval.
5.6.e.	Continue monitoring and surveillance of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease	In progress	Informational letters have been sent to stakeholders regarding the risk of introduction of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV) into Kentucky. Emergency regulations to mitigate the risk of potential introduction have been written and are awaiting approval.
5.6.f.	Pursue federal grants or other sources of funding for increasing capacity of disease monitoring and abatement	In progress	We have collaborated with other agencies on multiple disease grant proposals for this year that are still pending.

Initiative 7	Promote safe and enjoyable experiences for all recreational boaters.	Status	December 31, 2020 Update
5.7.a.	Conservation officers will spend a minimum of 30% of their patrol hours on public waterways surveilling for violations and unsafe conditions	In progress	Officers logged over 1,000 hours patrolling waterways observing for violations and assisting recreational boaters during the last 6 months of 2020. This effort will once again become priority when recreational boating activity picks up during 2021.
5.7.b.	A minimum of 3 public safety announcements will be produced or activated each year to focus on the most dangerous aspects of boating to increase public awareness and safety compliance	Completed	Released public service announcements (PSAs) focused on lifejacket wear, alcohol use while boating and water safety (drowning) awareness.
5.7.c.	The boating education coordinator will teach a minimum of 10 boating education classes in multiple locations (or virtually) across the state by December 31, 2021	Completed	Boating education coordinator has taught 13 virtual classes so far.



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