



2014 – 2015 Annual Report on the Administration of Colorado Parks and Wildlife February 2016

To:

Joint House Agriculture, Livestock and Natural Resources Committee
Senate Agriculture, Natural Resources and Energy Committee

I. Executive Summary

On June 6, 2011, Governor Hickenlooper signed Senate Bill 11-208 into law, merging the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and the Division of Wildlife into the Division of Parks and Wildlife, referred to herein as Colorado Parks and Wildlife or CPW. On June 4, 2012, House Bill 12-1317 was signed into law to finalize the merger of the Divisions and to create the Parks and Wildlife Commission. A primary goal of the merger was to create more efficient and effective services through economies of scale and use of shared resources while creating a more comprehensive outdoor recreation mission for the agency. Since then, a great deal of work has been undertaken to plan and implement the merger.

At this point in time, annual savings of 22 FTE and \$1.7 million have been realized as a result of the merger.

The Division continues to seek out and implement efficiencies made possible through the merger. This includes standardizing and streamlining processes, consolidating programs, eliminating duplication, capturing economies of scale and other strategies to integrate the two former agencies to the greatest extent feasible. Throughout these efforts, CPW has continued outreach to key stakeholders to ensure the agency continues to meet their needs in accordance with our mission to perpetuate the wildlife resources of the state, to provide a quality state parks system, and to provide enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities that educate and inspire current and future generations to serve as active stewards of Colorado's natural resources.

II. Statutory Requirements

Among the requirements of H.B. 12-1317 is the delivery to the Legislature of an annual report, more fully described below:

C.R.S. 33-9-106 (2)

“Beginning in 2013 AND NOTWITHSTANDING SECTION 24-1-136 (11), C.R.S., the executive director shall report annually to the joint house agriculture, livestock, and natural resources committee and the senate agriculture, natural resources, and energy committee, or any successor committees, regarding the administration of the division, including an evaluation of division resources and their utilization and an identification of opportunities for efficiencies. Each such report must summarize stakeholder outreach conducted during the prior year and must also identify disposition of assets and cost savings, both planned and realized, since the previous year, including savings pertaining to personnel, equipment, services, and provisioning.”

III. Historical Context



Prior to the merger, the former Division of Wildlife implemented a series of budget reductions to address declining revenues. One-time reductions in capital expenditures of \$15.7 million and \$11.5 million were made in FY 09-10 and FY 10-11, respectively.

During the several years prior to the merger, State Parks had also taken aggressive steps to address reductions in revenue. As recently as FY 08-09, State Parks received \$6.7 million in General Funds, but by FY 11-12, this had dropped to zero. To adapt, Parks took the following steps: eliminated 5 percent of its permanent positions and 10% of its seasonal employees; increased fees for daily passes, camping reservations and boat registration; significantly reduced administrative costs; cut services at Bonny Lake State Park during the winter months; and redirected certain funds to cover operating shortfalls. State Parks also considered repurposing or closing four parks, but the move proved to be unnecessary as the result of the merger.

On July 1, 2011, Colorado Parks and Wildlife was created from the merger of Colorado State Parks and the Colorado Division of Wildlife. From July through February 2012, the agency developed a Merger Implementation Plan, which was approved by the Parks and Wildlife Commission on February 9, 2012.

The Parks and Wildlife Commission was reorganized in 2012 to reduce its membership from fourteen to eleven Commissioners, yielding annual savings in associated costs.

In 2013, 22 positions were defunded creating annual savings of \$1.7 million.

IV. Division Resource Utilization

CPW continually seeks to maximize its resource utilization by implementing cost savings measures and capitalizing on efficiencies realized in part from the Parks and Wildlife merger. Examples of steps taken to increase utilization and efficiencies include:

A. \$10 million Budget Reduction. In 2013, the Parks and Wildlife Commission directed CPW to begin reducing wildlife-related expenditures by approximately \$10 million/year to address a projected gap between expenditures and revenue. This amount represented a 12.3% reduction of CPW's total budget. The \$9.9 million reduction approved by the Commission in November 2013 is being distributed in the following fashion:

- Statewide programmatic reductions: 53% (\$5.25 million; 0 FTE)
- Research/science capacity: 26 % (\$2.63 million; 10.2 FTE)
- Remaining headquarters units: 12.5% (\$1.20 million; 3 FTE)
- Regions: 8.5% (\$0.84 million; 4 FTE).

Examples of the reduction measures taken under these categories are available on the [Commission's website](#).

B. Commission Meetings. The Parks and Wildlife Commission created by HB12-1317 meets a maximum of 12 times each year. In 2014, the Commission met 10 times and in 2015 there were eight meetings. In comparison, the Parks Board and Wildlife Commission pre-merger collectively met 18-24 times annually. Having fewer meetings provides savings in per diem, lodging, mileage, printing and associated costs. Eight Commission meetings are planned for 2016.



- C. Strategic Plan.** HB12-1317 called for the Commission to formulate a strategic plan based on meaningful statewide input. On November 9, 2015, the Commission adopted the [2015 CPW Strategic Plan](#) which sets a high-level vision, overarching goals, objectives, and strategies that will guide CPW's work into the future. The plan reflects a shared vision that was developed with extensive input from the Commission, staff and citizens of Colorado who utilize CPW services. The [Public and Staff Engagement Report](#) describes in detail the extensive input gathered to formulate the strategic plan.
- D. Volunteer Program.** The former Divisions' two volunteer programs have been merged into one. CPW has more than 6,000 active volunteers who contribute around 300,000 hours per year. To put this in perspective, 1 out of every 10 outdoor volunteers in Colorado volunteers for CPW, and a quarter of all outdoor volunteer hours in Colorado are donated by CPW volunteers. Volunteer hours donated equal about \$6.7 million (calculated by the Independent Sector Rate) and roughly equate to 145 FTE per year. Significant efficiency has been realized through the following accomplishments:
- Creation of a single merged volunteer database where all CPW volunteers and potential volunteers can find information, report hours and find service opportunities
 - Adoption of a CPW volunteer uniform
 - Publication of a CPW volunteer newsletter
 - Implementation of consistent and standardized orientation, guidelines, and processes.
- E. Website Merger.** Since the merger, the former wildlife website and parks website have been merged into a single website. The CPW website uses current best practices to create a more effective communications platform for outreach and better information service for internal and external customers. Improvements include:
- Responsive web design that provides an optimal user experience across a variety of mobile devices.
 - Website infrastructure enhancements that leverage server redundancy and load balancing to increase uptime and overall website performance.
- F. Intranet Integration.** Before the merger of Division of Wildlife and Colorado State Parks, the two agencies had three aging intranet servers providing a way for each individual agency to communicate internally. CPW identified the need to merge all three servers into one central unified intranet. CPW, working with OIT through Common Policy, created CPW's new intranet named CPWNET and launched it in December 2013. Using current SharePoint technology, CPWNET provides a shared work space that enables CPW employees to collaborate using one server instead of three. CPWNET features Mega Menus to make navigation easier, an improved search engine, an eLibrary and the ability to use work flows.
- G. GIS Integration.** The separate GIS systems pre-merger have been integrated into a single system for Parks and Wildlife. This has allowed improved species management, natural resource/habitat management, recreational opportunities and natural areas work.
- H. Budget and Finance Integration.** In 2013, budgets and finances were integrated into single systems. Throughout that process, attention was paid to insuring that funding sources remain



segregated as required and are restricted to uses allowed by statute.

- I. **Law Enforcement.** As a result of the merger, law enforcement was able to put several efficiencies into effect:
- Several required law enforcement training topics for CPW officers have been combined, resulting in both cost savings and a more consistent training message. Training topics include skills such as firearms, baton use and driving and classroom presentations on community partnerships, use of force and de-escalation.
 - All Park Manager and Wildlife Manager trainees are hired and trained at the same time. The combined hiring and background process, and the subsequent field training allows all trainees to attend combined training together.
 - Parks and wildlife investigators work closely together on joint investigations, providing support for uniformed staff.
 - One Fleet coordinator acts as a liaison with the Division of Fleet Management to order all CPW vehicles and associated equipment.
 - The Recreational Boat Safety program is providing support not only for state park waters and outside entities, but also waters on state wildlife areas.
 - The Law Enforcement and Public Safety branch is working on combining two legacy law enforcement records databases. This will result in a product that all field officers will be able to use and view all internal law enforcement reports.
- J. **Real Estate.** In 2014, CPW disposed of the Boyd Ponds SWA, a Wildlife Area that no longer met the goals and objectives of the agency (it sold for \$400,000). The sale brought funds into CPW and freed up several hundred hours of staff time to focus on other work. In 2015, CPW exchanged 80 acres of fee title land in Two Buttes SWA for a much more highly-utilized access easement. CPW is currently in the process of looking into disposing of six easements which do not meet the goals of the agency, the disposal of which will save at least 18 days of staff management time.

In addition, CPW is looking into a new, merged database platform which will merge 3-4 of the agency's like-kind real estate databases, which include databases from both the prior Parks and the prior Wildlife divisions. This system should result in reduced maintenance costs and better information services for CPW staff.

V. **Planned Savings and Efficiencies of Merged Division Resources**

The following are plans and opportunities for savings and efficiencies that CPW is actively pursuing.

- A. **IPAWS Update.** CPW and its vendor continue working on launching the "Integrated Parks and Wildlife System" (IPAWS) which will integrate eight CPW systems into one system. The eight systems included in IPAWS are the Total Licensing System (TLS), Hunting Reservation System (HRS), Vehicle Registration System (VRS), Internet Vehicle Registration System (IVRS), Electronic Stores (Shop@DOW & parksstore.state.co.us), Parks Automated Record Keeping System (PARKS), Campground Reservation System (CRS) and the CPW Cash Management System.

The vision for IPAWS is a modern web-based system that provides one-stop shopping for CPW recreationists. The information gathered from the customer will be product driven giving a personalized web user experience. IPAWS will replace manual processes with automation, allowing CPW to give consistent methods of business operations and customer processing



across the State. IPAWS will provide a centralized CPW products and sales cash management using a PC based hardware and software system that supports customer management and sales of CPW products. The PC based hardware supplied by the IPAWS vendor will be deployed to internal and external agent locations statewide. The combined customer database will allow CPW to utilize customer demographic information for communicating, planning, forecasting and customer outreach.

The potential cost saving for CPW that IPWS may bring are value added time spent on less manual processing, for hunt and fish licenses a transaction fee based on the cost of the product rather than the method in which the product was obtained and some decline in printing costs.

- B. Administrative Directives and Commission Policies.** CPW continues its review of the administrative directives and policies of the former Parks and Wildlife divisions to integrate them into a single set of policies and directives that reflect the requirements of the merged Commission and agency. To date, 18 administrative directives and four policies have been finalized.

VI. Stakeholder Outreach Efforts

In addition to the extensive stakeholder outreach conducted to inform CPW's Strategic Plan, the agency engages in a variety of stakeholder outreach efforts including, but not limited to:

- A. CPW Financial Outlook.** CPW's revenue model is primarily dependent on user fees, not tax dollars, to support programs and operations. User fees were increased several years ago, but basic operational costs have continued to rise. In addition to the overall reduction in spending power of annual income dollars, CPW has experienced declines in hunting and fishing participation which reduce revenue. At the same time, CPW faces a growing number of required expenses that could add up to more than \$130 million in additional costs in the coming years. Examples include essential dam repair, keeping fish hatcheries functional, mitigating environmental damage at Chatfield, shooting ranges, implementing the Mule Deer Strategy, implementing CORE, unemployment insurance, and ensuring CPW law enforcement officers have working radios.

CPW is reaching out to stakeholders to share this information about the agency's financial outlook. Presentations have been made to the Commission, Sportsmen's Roundtable, Habitat Partnership Program Conference, and other audiences.

- B. Partners in the Outdoors.** CPW began the Partners in the Outdoors initiative with the goal of bringing diverse outdoor interests together to have a collective impact on promoting responsible recreation, stewardship and conservation leadership in Colorado. The first Partners conference was held in February 2012 and identified shared concerns over declining outdoor experiences among the nation's youth as well as declining hunting and fishing participation.

In February 2014, nearly 200 individuals representing 73 partner organizations came together to meet new partners, network and explore new ways to collaborate. 2015 marked the third year for the Partners conference with nearly 270 participants representing over 110 partner organizations. Participants strengthened commitments across the state to promote stewardship, enhance partnerships, grow environmental education, and network with outdoor recreation industry representatives.