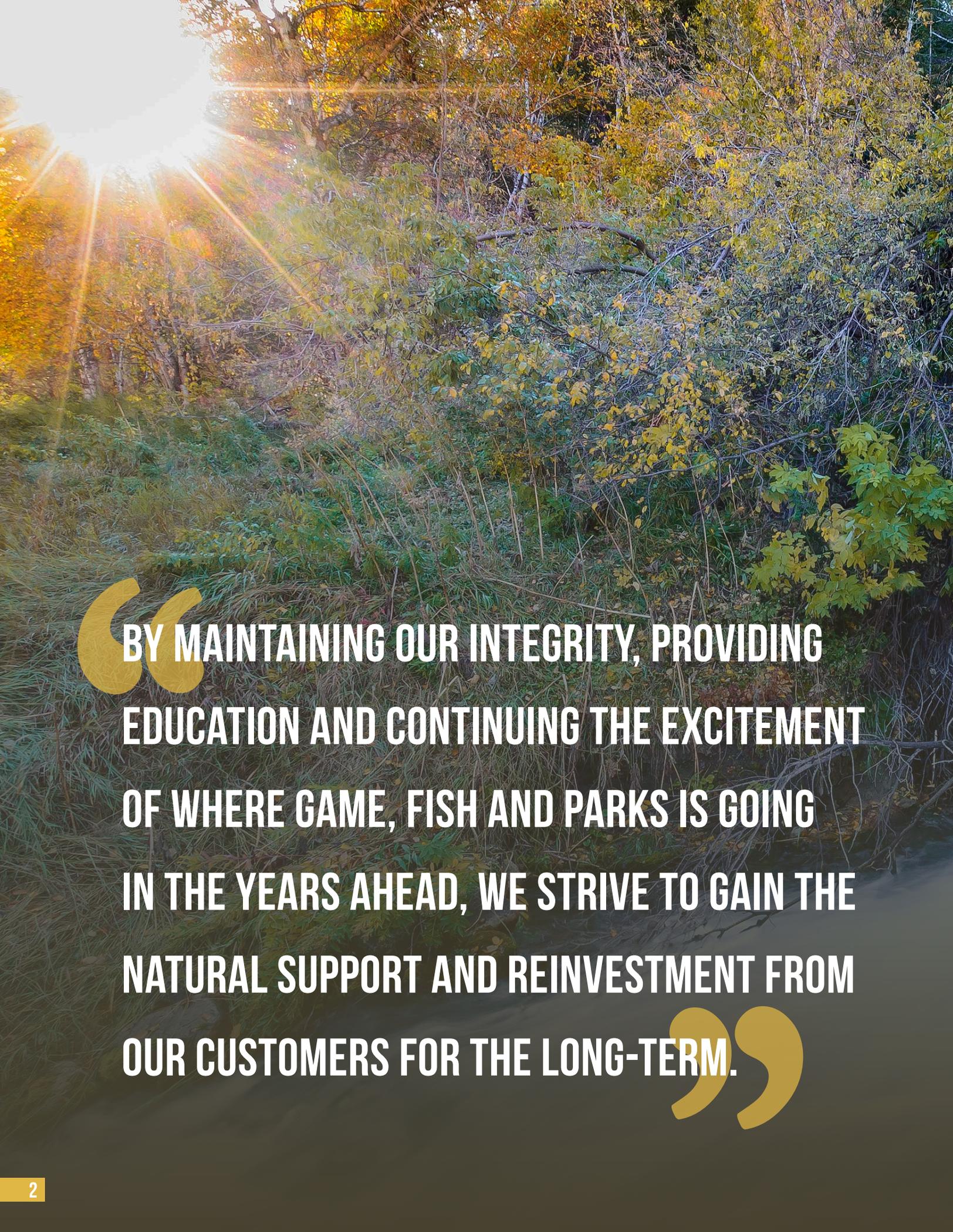


2016 - 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

SOUTH DAKOTA GAME, FISH AND PARKS

We provide sustainable outdoor recreational opportunities through responsible management of our state's parks, fisheries and wildlife by fostering partnerships, cultivating stewardship and safely connecting people with the outdoors.





“ BY MAINTAINING OUR INTEGRITY, PROVIDING EDUCATION AND CONTINUING THE EXCITEMENT OF WHERE GAME, FISH AND PARKS IS GOING IN THE YEARS AHEAD, WE STRIVE TO GAIN THE NATURAL SUPPORT AND REINVESTMENT FROM OUR CUSTOMERS FOR THE LONG-TERM. ”

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A NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY

WHAT IS THE NEXT BIG THING FOR GFP?

I have been blessed to have South Dakota play an important role in my life. I was born in the Black Hills and the landscape honed my passion for the outdoors. After my career in Alaska, Governor Daugaard gave me the chance to return to my home state and honored me with my dream job, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP).

This agency has a history of serving as the environmental and resource stewards for South Dakota's parks, fish, wildlife and outdoor recreational activities. Our quality of life in this state is directly tied to the outdoor opportunities available here.

The challenges of maintaining and expanding South Dakota's outdoor heritage can be daunting. As a department secretary, I want a clear vision for our staff describing who we are, where we are going and how we get there. That is simply good business practice. To help guide us in the years ahead, I appointed 45 staff to represent a strategic planning team; propelling the department to the next level, through the development of a strategic plan.

This strategic plan includes long-range goals and proactive objectives with shorter-term strategies for effective, measurable and accountable implementation. The strategic plan serves as a roadmap, leading us from the current to the desired position, by providing ongoing direction and focus for the department. It is a living, breathing document that will guide us in what we do, why we do it and how to do it. It is an organic, "from the ground up" plan.

A strategic plan is never truly completed. Plans change and adapt. This plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis to track progress and monitor its effectiveness. I know this is hard work, but it is work that I believe in.

The vision, mission, values, goals and objectives documented here should resonate with every South Dakota citizen, visitor and GFP staff member. I am proud of the work we accomplished and look forward to the guidance and growth that this plan will unveil.

Respectfully,
KELLY HEPLER



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategic planning can be defined as never ending and never boring; yet vital to the direction of any organization. This plan will continuously cycle; focusing on the department's vision and mission as we incorporate the strategies and measurable outcomes in to our day to day business functions. A planning culture has been established. The department is committed to using this plan as a measuring tool for success which allows staff to continuously evaluate what is working and what is not working.

Throughout the strategic planning process, the planning team identified four aspirational goals to drive the focus of what needs to be addressed within the department for the long-term.

OPPORTUNITIES: Provide outdoor recreational opportunities.

RESOURCES: Serve as stewards of our state's outdoor resources.

CONFIDENCE: Inspire confidence.

EXCELLENCE: Foster professional excellence.

STRATEGIC PLANNING CULTURE EMBRACES THE FOLLOWING:

- Direction outlining priorities.
- Decision-making standards and applied business best practices.
- Improved operational efficiencies and accountability.
- Engaged department leadership.
- Improved communications.
- Leveraged resources.
- Upgraded levels of customer confidence and loyalty.
- Enhanced partnerships and outreach initiatives.
- Amplified GFP mission and essential attributes for South Dakota's quality of life.

PLANNING PROCESS TIMELINE

2016

FEBRUARY	Announcement of GFP Strategic Planning Process and Identification of the Planning Team Members
MARCH	Staff Focus Group Sessions
APRIL	Planning Retreat #1 at Custer State Park Resort
JUNE	Planning Retreat #2 at Cedar Shore Resort
JULY	Planning Retreat #3 at Cedar Shore Resort
AUGUST	Strategic Plan Staff Roll Out
SEPTEMBER	Stakeholder Input Sessions and Strategy Development Kick-off
OCTOBER	GFP Commission Presentation
DECEMBER	Leadership Review and Strategy Prioritization

2017 AND BEYOND

There are still unknowns, but one thing that is certain, is the plan will never be completed. It will evolve, change and grow over time. In January 2017, implementation of the plan will begin. The department will also undergo a three, six and twelve month detailed review process in the first year of implementation.

The plan provides a measuring tool to evaluate programs and processes. Going forward, staff will work to complete strategies within the timelines assigned and report out on progress and successes at least every quarter. The annual reporting process will serve as the baseline for all accomplishments within a year's time. Other agency internal and external communications platforms will also provide routine progress updates.

FROM THE GROUND UP

The strategic planning process truly started at the ground level. In March 2016, nine staff focus group sessions were conducted in Rapid City, Fort Pierre, Watertown and Sioux Falls with over 86 percent of employees attending (416 of 488). These focus group sessions provided staff with the opportunity to share their thoughts, opinions and concerns from the very beginning.

FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS ASKED EMPLOYEES THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. Imagine that you have been made king or queen for a day. What changes (internal or external) would you make in the department to make it an even better organization?
2. What do you think are the biggest issues facing the department in the next 12 months?
3. In the next 5 - 10 years, what are the successes you would like to see the department accomplish in the following areas?
 - Perpetuating wildlife resources
 - Quality state park system
 - Enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreation
 - Active stewardship of current resources
 - Customer service –both internal and external
4. Can you think of something the department is not currently doing that we should be doing? Are there processes or procedures that other state agencies or other partners are doing that we could be doing?
5. Historically, the Department operated in a way where Parks and Wildlife were independent of each other. In reality, that has resulted in a duplication of efforts, divisions not heading in the same direction, miscommunication and more. Do you have ideas on how the department could reduce overlap and better integrate among all three divisions (Parks, Wildlife and Administration)?
6. What changes do you think the department needs to make in order to proactively respond to customer needs and trends?
7. We know our nation and state are becoming much more culturally diverse. What do you think the department should be doing to meet the needs of our state's diverse cultures?
8. How can the department best encourage new and continued participation in outdoor recreation while promoting the conservation of our natural resources?
9. Can you identify 3-5 changes the department could undertake to make this an even better place to work?

The information from the focus groups was compiled into a 360 page document. Nearly 80 hours of staff time was spent on transcribing, analyzing and grouping the data from these sessions into common themes, or nodes. These nodes were used by department leadership and the strategic planning team to frame the plan's vision, mission, values, goals, objectives and the preliminary strategies. This plan starts and ends with our staff.

PLANNING RETREAT OVERVIEWS

PLANNING RETREAT #1 AT CUSTER STATE PARK RESORT | APRIL 19 - 20

Presented strategic planning concepts and customized elements for GFP.

Reviewed GFP's strategic planning objectives, approach, timelines and the planning team members' roles and responsibilities.

Established initial vision statement, values and mission statement concepts. Work continued in each of these areas in the weeks that followed as small groups formalized them prior to the next retreat.

Introduced highlighted concepts from the Focus Group sessions. Work continued as staff teamed up to compile and analyze this data.

Conducted internal and external department assessments to identify strengths, limitations, opportunities and threats in addition to what came out of the focus group sessions.

Explored and developed preliminary long-range goals and proactive objectives. A goals group was identified to further define these broad goals.

PLANNING RETREAT #2 AT CEDAR SHORE RESORT | JUNE 9 - 10

Developed near final drafts of the vision, mission and value statements along with the four goals and definitions as well as the objectives and potential strategies.

Began stakeholder meeting discussions with the project team and division directors about how to proceed in September.

PLANNING RETREAT #3 AT CEDAR SHORE RESORT | JULY 13

Focused on refining the existing measurable outcomes for each objective within the four goals.

45

GFP STAFF MEMBERS

3

ACROSS THE STATE RETREATS

33

HOURS OF FOCUS

DEFINITIONS

VISION

A vision statement expresses the agency's hopes and dreams for the future while posing challenges that motivate the entire department. The vision is a description of GFP's ultimate success from the 30,000-foot level. GFP's vision statement will be the agency's verbal portrait of success.

MISSION

A mission statement defines the department purpose through action-oriented objectives and describes what each staff member does on a daily basis. The ground level phrases describe measurable steps to accomplish the vision.

VALUES

The values statements serve as the ethical foundation for the department; they are the core principles in how we conduct business. These values represent the non-negotiable convictions when making decisions and are the defined truths that guide our actions.

GOALS

The goals outlined in the plan are broad aims and long-term aspirations that target a specific direction or issue in an effort to fulfill the vision and mission. The goals guide our long-term purpose and help us focus on what needs to be addressed.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives narrow the focus further to help us focus on what strengths needs to be maximized, what opportunities and limitations lie ahead and what threats can be mitigated.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Measurable outcomes are the achievements and results.

STRATEGIES

The strategies are the heart of the plan and are developed as action items to execute each objective.

At the time of publication, the development of measurable outcomes and strategies remained in draft form. It is important to understand that the strategies and measurable outcomes remain fluid throughout the life of the strategic plan as internal and external factors may result in a shift of focus and offer new opportunities for these to be refined even further. In late August, objective team leads were identified to ensure small teams were created to help formulate the strategy development process. Those teams will also determine and refine the measurable outcomes. The objective leads will report to department leadership regularly between September 1 and December 1 on the progress of the strategy development for each objective. In December 2016, department leadership will determine what strategies and measurable outcomes take priority to ensure they align with the operational and fiscal obligations going forward.



WHO DO WE STRIVE TO BE?

VISION

We will conserve our state's outdoor heritage to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

WHAT DO WE DO?

MISSION

We provide sustainable outdoor recreational opportunities through responsible management of our state's parks, fisheries and wildlife by fostering partnerships, cultivating stewardship and safely connecting people with the outdoors.

WHAT ARE OUR BELIEFS?

VALUES

EXCELLENCE

We believe in a culture of professionalism and accountability to meet the expectations of our customers and empower staff to succeed.

STEWARDSHIP

We believe in applying biological and social sciences to conserve and respectfully manage our state's outdoor resources for current and future generations.

INTEGRITY

We believe in being transparent and honest by promoting high ethical standards.

COMPASSION

We believe in the dignity of each person and genuinely care for the people we serve.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

PROVIDE OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Optimize the quantity and quality of sustainable hunting, fishing, camping, trapping and other outdoor recreational opportunities.

- Enhance fishing opportunities.
- Enhance hunting and trapping opportunities.
- Enhance the activities and experiences within the state park system.
- Expand and promote diverse recreational opportunities.
- Maintain and improve infrastructure and facilities.

SERVE AS STEWARDS OF OUR STATE'S OUTDOOR RESOURCES

Maintain and improve our outdoor resources to ensure sustainability.

- Manage park lands and facilities to optimize outdoor opportunities within social, fiscal and biological constraints.
- Manage wildlife within social, fiscal and biological constraints.
- Manage fisheries within social, fiscal and biological constraints.
- Utilize partnerships with private landowners and public land managers to collaboratively manage fish, wildlife and associated habitats.
- Manage habitat on GFP lands for sustainability of natural resources.
- Manage GFP lands to preserve and protect cultural and historic resources.

INSPIRE CONFIDENCE

Instill trust from the people we serve through transparency and accountability.

- Enhance citizen awareness of agency mission, services and programs.
- Maintain open and transparent fiscal processes that align expenditures with priorities.
- Provide opportunities for meaningful public input.
- Maintain and improve agency accountability.
- Develop and improve partnerships and relationships.
- Maintain and improve customer service by remaining responsive to customer needs.

FOSTER PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Develop and empower highly engaged and well-trained staff.

- Facilitate staff development.
- Facilitate supervisor development.
- Expand collaboration within the department.
- Recruit and retain quality staff.
- Properly equip staff.

STAFF ROLL OUT

Department leadership rolled the strategic plan out to all staff statewide very similar to how the focus group sessions were conducted. At the end of August 2016, Secretary Hepler and the three directors traveled to Rapid City, Fort Pierre, Watertown and Sioux Falls to present the strategic planning process and the plan's direction going forward. This was also a time for staff to ask questions and learn more about the work involved with how their feedback in the focus group sessions will lead the strategy development portion of the plan.

STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS

In September 2016, the Department hosted four stakeholder engagement sessions across the state in Rapid City, Fort Pierre, Sioux Falls and Watertown to gather input from stakeholders about the plan direction. These were invite-only sessions in which over 300 stakeholders from across the state were invited to attend.

Each stakeholder session included a presentation on the Department's strategic plan followed by large and small group discussions. The large group sessions solicited individual feedback about the participants' satisfaction with the Department's current work while the small group discussions generated ideas about what future success looks like and what strategies would be needed to achieve success with an emphasis on strengthening partnerships.

The majority of participants reported having had favorable experiences as partners and customers of the Department. They also reported a high degree of optimism about their ability to partner with the Department to help implement strategy ideas discussed during the sessions.

COMMON STRATEGY IDEAS THAT EMERGED FROM THE SESSIONS:

- Increase the number of youth involved in all outdoor activities through partnerships with schools, youth organizations, mentor organizations and the like.
- Expand collaboration among public and private partners to improve habitat and increase access to hunting, fishing and other recreational opportunities.
- Manage park development to optimize the visitor experience by avoiding overdevelopment.
- Enhance opportunities for other recreational interests to help support conservation and preservation.
- Increase citizen awareness about available outdoor opportunities and how to access them.
- Identify new revenue sources to support initiatives.

The results from the stakeholder engagement sessions were shared with the Department's objective team leads to assist with strategy development prior to implementation in January 2017. Progress on the plan and any updates as the measurable outcomes and strategies become prioritized can be found online at: gfp.sd.gov/agency/information.

100 INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATED REPRESENTING 68 DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING:

- Ag Unity
- Angostura Resort Management
- Black Hills Audubon
- Black Hills Flyfishers
- Black Hills National Forest
- Black Hills Playhouse
- Black Hills, Badlands & Lakes Association
- Brown County Sportman's Club
- Capital City Bike Club
- City of Yankton
- Custer State Park Resorts
- Discovery Center-Pierre
- Five Star Call Centers
- Friends of the Big Sioux River
- Governor's Commission on Fort Sisseton
- High Plains Wildlife Association
- Izaak Walton League
- Mule Deer Foundation
- National Field Archery Association
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- Northeast Glacial Lakes Watershed Project
- Northeast Tourism Association
- Northern Plains Joint Venture
- Paulsen Marketing
- Pheasants Forever, Inc.
- Pierre Chamber of Commerce
- Prairie Pothole Joint Venture
- Quail Forever
- Rapid City Trap Club
- Recreational Trails Advisory Council
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Sioux Falls Bird Club
- Siouland Heritage Museums
- South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts
- South Dakota ATV/UTV Association
- South Dakota Bowhunters Inc.
- South Dakota Canoe & Kayak Association
- South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities
- South Dakota Department of Agriculture
- South Dakota Department of Health
- South Dakota Department of Tourism
- South Dakota Farmers Union
- South Dakota Grassland Coalition
- South Dakota Hunter Education Instructor Association
- South Dakota Missouri River Tourism
- South Dakota Municipal League
- South Dakota Parks & Recreation Association
- South Dakota Parks & Wildlife Foundation
- South Dakota School & Public Lands
- South Dakota Sierra Club
- South Dakota State Historical Society
- South Dakota State University- Department of Natural Resources
- South Dakota Walleyes Unlimited
- South Dakota Walleyes Unlimited 29-90 Club
- South Dakota Wildlife Federation
- Southeast South Dakota Tourism Association
- Sutton Bay Golf, LLC
- The Nature Conservancy
- United States National Park Service
- US Army Corp of Engineers
- US Department of Interior – US Fish & Wildlife Service
- US Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration – SD Division
- US Geological Survey, SD Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA National Resources Conservation Service
- USDA US Forest Service
- Western South Dakota Fur Harvestors Association
- Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau

TEAM MEMBERS

A 45-member planning team was appointed in early 2016 to develop the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) first ever, department-wide strategic plan. Each person who contributed to the team did so in addition to their day to day responsibilities for the agency. They determined the four goals outlined in the previous pages and what they mean to the success of the vision, mission and values. They also defined the objectives, drafted the measurable outcomes and developed the initial list of strategies. And lastly, but most importantly, they have been and continue to be advocates of the plan on a daily basis.



GENO ADAMS
Program Administrator
Pierre



LYDIA AUSTIN
Program Specialist
Custer



JOHN BAME
District Park Supervisor
Madison



MIKE BARNES
Hatchery Manager
Spearfish



SEAN BLANCHETTE
Concessionaire Manager
Pierre



NEIL BROUGHTON
Conservation Technician
Canton



GARY BRUNDIGE
Division Staff Specialist
Custer



JOSH CARR
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KATIE CEROLL
Park Director
Pierre



WILLY COLLIGNON
Parks Regional Supervisor
Watertown



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Park Manager
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CHAD DOWNS
Engineer
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MARK FINSEL
Senior Wildlife Biologist
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JON FISCHER
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KARA WILLIAMS
Secretary
Gettysburg



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Wildlife Damage Specialist
Sioux Falls

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



CATHY PETERSON
Chairwoman
Salem



BARRY JENSEN
Vice Chair
White River



MARY ANNE BOYD
Yankton

Members of the GFP Commission also played a key role in the development and adoption of the strategic planning process. They were updated throughout the planning process and invited to attend the planning sessions to provide input on the direction of the vision, mission, values, goals and objectives.



PAUL DENNERT
Columbia



GARY JENSEN
Rapid City



RUSSELL OLSON
Wentworth



SCOTT PHILLIPS
New Underwood



JIM SPIES
Watertown

The work of the strategic planning process and project management could not have been done without Susan (Sue) L. Konstant, Owner/President of PACE Strategic Development, LLC. Konstant is certified in facilitating successfully proven strategic planning methodologies that position agencies and corporations of all sizes and mission diversity with goal-oriented, accountable, realistic and fiscally responsible frameworks for measurable and improved results. The department contracted with her to facilitate a customized strategic planning approach and development process. As an outside advisor, Konstant's primary role served as an objective partner to map a forward-thinking direction and prepare the department for plan implementation.

In addition, Konstant functioned as the key developer of all planning tools; trainer to department staff regarding the planning process and its elements; leader and planner of all retreats and additional subcommittee meetings; transcriber of all retreat data and recap reports; assistant for the staff roll out meetings and stakeholder engagement sessions; assistant for action plan tracking; and advocate to pursue the best possible results for the entire agency.

Konstant will continue to play a key role during the first year of implementation by conducting the three, six and 12 month review sessions.



SUE KONSTANT
Strategic Planning Consultant
Spearfish

“It is an honor to work with this department in an effort to propel its long-range plan that centers on the impactful legacy-building stewardship of South Dakota's parks, wildlife and fisheries. I would like to thank the planning team and department leadership for their diligent work, extraordinary professionalism and passion for commitment throughout this strategic planning process.”

THANK YOU

STRATEGIC PLANNING. NO ONE SAID THIS WORK WOULD BE EASY.

Dedication. Commitment. Flexibility. Growth. Organization. Challenge. High-level thinking.

Those are just a few words and thoughts that come to mind as we, the project management team for this process, begin to thank the strategic planning team members, department leadership, our contracted facilitator, stakeholders and the rest of our colleagues within GFP for the support, patience and ideas throughout the past year. Without the dedication, commitment, feedback, flexibility, discussions and thought-provoking ideas from these individuals, the strategic plan would not have gotten very far.

Change is hard. The strategic planning process is bringing a culture change to the forefront of our agency. It isn't that we have been doing things wrong in the past here at GFP. Instead, we now have a way where we can share department-wide successes together and know the work we are doing each day connects back to the vision, mission and values of who we are as an agency. If we can do that – then we have done good.

Please know that this is a fluid plan; where things can grow and change over the next five years. Big picture thinking takes time and we do not have to accomplish every strategy outlined in the first two years. Together, we can work hard in the same direction to sustain outdoor recreational opportunities, improve all aspects of communication and customer services, cultivate stewardship, foster partnerships and ultimately connect our friends, families and future generations to the great outdoors of South Dakota.

Thank you again for your support and patience during this planning process,

NANCY SURPRENANT | CHRIS HULL | EMILY KIEL

