

1. State your agency's mission statement and program goals, strategic plan, or strategic plan elements.

Fish, wildlife and outdoor recreation are important to the quality of life for all Kansans and important to the Kansas economy. The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) is the public steward of the state's natural resources and is also charged with promoting visitation to these and all attractions in Kansas. Its mission is to:

- Conserve and enhance Kansas' natural heritage, its wildlife and its habitats to ensure future generations the benefits of the state's diverse, living resources;
- Provide the public with opportunities for use and appreciation of the natural resources of Kansas, consistent with the conservation of those resources;
- Inform the public of the status of the natural resources of Kansas to promote understanding and gain assistance with this mission.
- Encourage the public to visit and travel in Kansas and stimulate tourism and travel-related spending in the state by promoting recreational, historic, cultural and natural attractions.

The agency works to achieve its mission through the following program elements:

- State Parks
- Hunting
- Fishing
- Boating
- Tourism
- Conserving Habitats and Species
- Enforcing the Law
- Information and Education

**3. How does your agency fulfill its mission statement and program goals or strategic plan?
a. Please provide documentation as to the progress of your programs.**

The KDWPT achieves its mission and a variety of program goals through two avenues, the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission and agency staff.

Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission

The Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission serves in an advisory and regulatory role in support of the agency's mission. The Commission's goal is to provide an effective interface between the public and the agency, helping the Department to meet its program goals. It helps the agency balance sometimes competing interests for limited resources with the growing demand for more and better outdoor opportunities.

The seven commissioners are appointed by the Governor to serve staggered four-year terms. No more than four members may represent a particular political party. Regulations approved by the

commission are adopted and administered by the Secretary of the Department. The Commission takes its actions during public meetings held six to ten times per year at various locations around the state and also broadcast by online video-streaming. The meetings are a forum for discussing regulatory matters, discussing Department policy and generally informing the public about Kansas wildlife, parks and tourism. Many of the agency's activities are empowered through statutory authority, and the Commission has a role in shaping and aiding Department legislative initiatives.

Agency Staff

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism has 430.5 FTE positions (FY 2012 Governor's estimate) to support the agency's mission and program goals. Augmenting the full-time staff is a network of temporary workers and volunteers such as inmates and community corrections people, AmeriCorps members and workers from a variety of service programs. This flexible staff assists with park and trail maintenance, camp hosting and permit collecting, and special projects. In addition, dedicated Friends Groups volunteer to support specific parks, and they are vital to the future of many of the state parks.

State Parks

Goals:

The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) serves as a vision for outdoor recreation in Kansas. It is designed to meet the requirements of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (LWCF) which requires states to have an approved State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan on file with the National Park Service. The following agency goals are consistent with SCORP:

- **Better identify the scope and diversity of the outdoor recreation market and intensify public and private promotional and advocacy efforts to ensure quality, life enriching outdoor recreation experiences.**
- **Improve recreation opportunities through coordinated planning of public and private entities, role analysis and expanded partnerships.**
- **Respond to demand for trail experiences.**
- **Improve Natural Resource Stewardship and protect open space while simultaneously enhancing sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities.**
- **Utilize all resources in an effort to obtain adequate funding for Outdoor Recreation. Without the resources, none of the goals can be fully realized.**

Kansas state parks offer a wide variety of geographical, demographic, historical, archeological, biological and recreational opportunities to the public. The KDWPPT manages 26 state parks and the encompassing over 35,000 land and 25,000 water acres. Most provide utility and primitive camping, and access to reservoirs, trails, and wildlife areas. More than 100 rental cabins are available at 19 state parks, five state fishing lakes and wildlife areas and one at the Kansas State Fair. A few parks are preserved as natural areas so visitors can enjoy unspoiled, wild Kansas experiences. State parks create an estimated annual economic impact of \$685 million. More than 2/3 of Kansas residents visit one or more state parks each year and spend about \$20 per day for visit-related purchases. The parks programs include:

- Campsites and long-term camping
- Cabin rentals
- Recreational trails for mental and physical health benefits
- Canoe and kayak rentals
- Day use, such as picnicking and swimming
- Outdoor educational on and off-site programs, displays and outreach to schools
- Managing habitats for wildlife and plant species through conservation practices such as controlled burns and agricultural leasing, creating watchable wildlife opportunities
- Managing assets such as park facilities, roads, boat ramps, beaches, electrical and water systems (each park is very similar to a small city with attendant services), grant reporting, personnel and crowd management, construction and rehabilitation project management
- Security and safety of park patrons and property within state park boundaries, and statewide law enforcement responsibilities outside park boundaries, (see the Law Enforcement section for more information)
- Partnerships with other entities, such as local recreation departments and schools, to enhance recreation opportunities for the public
- Special events at individual parks

Hunting

Goals:

- **Manage wildlife populations at levels consistent with a healthy environment.**
- **Conserve, enhance and protect habitats on public and private lands.**
- **Provide wildlife recreation opportunities for Kansans.**
- **Manage, enhance and protect KDWP's public lands, waters, and associated wildlife and plant communities.**
- **Provide hunting opportunities, accompanied by a diversity of quality outdoor recreation opportunities with special regard to natural resources protection.**
- **Conduct education and information programs to enhance the safety and proficiency of Kansas hunters.**

A variety of wildlife inhabits the grasslands, prairies, woodlands, wetlands, croplands and waters of Kansas. The agency's management approach includes purchasing land; supporting walk-in hunting areas on private land; developing, maintaining, and operating habitat-based wildlife areas to benefit all species; and conducting scientific research. The agency manages more than 300,000 acres of publicly-owned land and water acres for hunting and fishing recreation.

Hunting programs include:

- SANDS Program (Sportsmen Assisting Disabled Sportsmen)
- Walk-in Hunting Area Program (WIHA)
- Hunter Recruitment and Retention Effort (Pass it On)
- Hunter Referral Program
- Harvest Information Program

Fishing

Goals:

- **Provide angling and other fisheries-related recreation opportunities consistent with available resources and public desires.**

Kansas surface water resources include:

- 359,000 acres of permanent standing and flowing waters
- 24 large federal reservoirs covering from 1,200 to 16,000 surface acres
- 43 state fishing lakes owned and operated by the KDWP covering 50 to 300 acres
- 230 community lakes owned by local governments
- 150,000 privately-owned farm ponds
- 10,000 miles of streams and rivers including three navigable rivers open to the public (Arkansas, Missouri, and Kansas – permission is needed to access the rivers through private land). The rest of our streams are privately owned, but some reaches are leased by the KDWP through the Fish Impoundments and Stream Habitats (F.I.S.H) Program, while other reaches are in public ownership.

The department operates four hatcheries located at Farlington, Meade, Milford, and Pratt and a rearing pond at Woodson State Fishing Lake which together annually produce approximately 39.5 million fry, 3.5 million fingerling, and 385,000 intermediate fish for stocking in Kansas public waters. The department achieves its goal through programs including:

- Hatcheries
- Pond Management Program
- Fisheries Research
- Aquatic Education
- Community Fisheries Assistance
- Fishing Impoundments and Stream Habitats (F.I.S.H.)
- Urban Fishing
- Trout Fishing
- Master Angler
- Mobile Aquarium

Boating

Goals:

- **Identify and serve the needs of Kansas boaters in the areas of access, education, registration, and public safety to assure optimum recreation opportunity and enjoyment.**
- **Provide safe recreational use of Kansas waterways by minimizing use conflict while protecting the natural and cultural resource.**

Kansas offers some of the finest water recreation in the U.S. More than 150 lakes (with more than 1,640 shoreline miles and more than 147,000 surface acres of water), 10,000 stream miles, and 55,000 ponds support many types of boating. Most of the lakes are well-served by public access facilities and provide excellent opportunities for anglers, swimmers, skiers, sailboaters, powerboaters, canoeists and others. The agency's boating programs include:

- Boat registration
- Boating safety and other boating education activities

- Responsibility for patrolling the waters of Kansas, conducting boat accident investigations, boat safety inspections, Boating Under the Influence (BUI) checks

Tourism

The Tourism Division, formerly the Division of Travel and Tourism under the Department of Commerce, was moved to KDWPT on July 1, 2011 by Executive Reorganization Order 36.

Goals:

- **Serve as the lead state agency in promoting consumer travel to and within Kansas**
- **Develop and enhance Kansas' tourism product to establish the state as a destination**
- **Improve communication and outreach to the tourism industry**
- **Develop a research program to guide Travel and Tourism Division programs, public and private sector investments, and local tourism industry direction to opportunities that offer the highest rate of return on investment.**
- **Align resources to create efficiencies and to the support business plan**

Guiding Principles:

- **Do what the Kansas travel and tourism industry cannot do for itself**
- **Focus on targeted out-of-state and international audiences**
- **Support the industry**
- **Align resources with high impact programs and initiatives, then track and evaluate market penetration and program impacts**
- **Encourage and support ongoing dialogue, interaction and participation among all tourism industry stakeholders.**

The mission of the Tourism Division is to promote and encourage the traveling public to visit and travel within Kansas and to generate and facilitate tourism and travel-related spending throughout the state by promoting recreational, historic, cultural and natural attractions.

The division's efforts include promotion to travel media, travel trade (group tours, leisure tour market) and leisure independent travelers who originate from the United States and a selection of international countries. In cooperation with communities and other state agencies, the division promotes investment in tourism product development. Specific programs include the Attraction Development Grant Program, Flint Hills development initiatives, research and technical assistance.

Conserving Habitats and Species

Goals:

- **Increase the number of acres of habitat for conservation and public outdoor recreation through acquisition, leasing and easements.**
- **Protect, manage, enhance and restore natural habitats on KDWPT managed lands.**
- **Encourage and assist private landowners in protecting, restoring and managing natural habitats of all kinds.**

- **Attain a no-net-loss and non-degradation of wetlands in the short-term and increase wetland quantity and quality in the long-term.**
- **Communicate effectively with the public to promote appreciation of the natural resources of Kansas and gain assistance in achieving the KDWP mission**
- **Minimize losses through regulatory means**

Only about 3 percent of Kansas is public land, so conserving habitats and species plays a major role in the agency's business. Suitable wildlife habitat is necessary for hunting, fishing and wildlife watching and natural settings are important for outdoor recreation activities. In 2006, more than 816,000 citizens participated in wildlife-watching activities in Kansas, and made \$156 million in trip-related purchases in 2006, including \$90.3 million for equipment, \$20.3 million for food and lodging, and \$30.4 million for transportation. The department administers a variety of programs to conserve habitat, wildlife and plants, including:

- Delivering technical support and on-site assistance in fish and wildlife habitat and conservation activities on private land
- Conducting environmental reviews on about 1,200 publicly-funded development projects to minimize the loss of fish and wildlife habitat
- Identifying and taking appropriate conservation measures for threatened and endangered species. Kansas lists rare species as endangered, threatened, or species-in-need-of-conservation (SINC). The list is reviewed every 5 years. Recommended changes must be approved by the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission
- Nuisance Wildlife Damage Control, including Aquatic Nuisance Species
- Wildlife Diversity Programs such as Chickadee Checkoff and the Backyard Habitat Improvement Program
- Stream Assessment and Monitoring

Law Enforcement

Goal:

- **Enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Kansas through the protection and conservation of the natural and recreational resources of the state through public awareness and uniform enforcement of the statutes and regulations controlling the management of these resources.**

The Law Enforcement Division is responsible for enforcing the state's fish, wildlife, boating, and natural resource laws and regulations. State park region supervisors, managers, and rangers and public lands managers also have the same law enforcement powers and responsibilities, to provide protection to the citizens and resources on the properties they manage. Division staff also inspects and licenses game breeders, and controlled shooting areas. The division's responsibilities include:

- Statewide enforcement of state and federal fish and wildlife laws, boating laws, and public lands regulations on private and publicly owned lands
- Assisting federal, state and local law enforcement agencies when requested

- Participating in a variety of education and public information activities
- Issuing several permits, including three types of physical disability permits, controlled shooting areas, and game breeders
- Inspecting commercial wildlife facilities, bait shops, and controlled shooting areas
- Administering “Operation Game Thief,” a program which encourages citizens to report poachers by calling toll-free within Kansas at 1-877-426-3843 or by using an online reporting form. Users do not have to reveal their names or testify in court.

Information and Education

An informed, educated and involved constituency helps the KDWPT carry out its mission and provide substantive input into the agency’s decisions as well as those of the Commission. The agency informs the public about the natural resources of Kansas and the laws and regulations governing their use using a variety of tools such as:

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| • Bimonthly magazine | • Brochures |
| • Regulations Summaries | • Maps |
| • Catalogs and Atlases | • Internet website and social media |

The KDWPT educates outdoor enthusiasts through a wide range of outdoor skills and environmental education programs including:

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| • Hunter, Furharvester, and Bowhunter Education | • Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites (OWLS) |
| • Boating Education | • Museums and nature centers at Pratt, Wichita, Cheyenne Bottoms, Olathe and Milford Reservoir |
| • Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) | |
| • Wildlife Education Services (WES) | |