

Legislative Budget and Finance Committee

**PA Game Commission Compliance
With Its Strategic Plan**

**Report Presentation by Philip Durgin,
Former Executive Director to the Legislative Budget and Finance Commit-
tee, on June 6, 2018.**

Good morning. Act 166 of 1998 calls on the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a performance audit every three years of the Game Commission's compliance with its Strategic Plan. This is our seventh such report on this topic.

As with our last report, this report provides an assessment of the Commission's "compliance" with each of the five goals and 34 objectives contained in the Strategic Plan. We found that, for the most part, the goals and objectives in the 2015-2020 plan are sufficiently defined and stated in a manner (meaning they are reasonably specific, time-limited, and quantifiable) to allow for an independent assessment of their achievement. Our ratings of the PGC's achievement of its goals and objectives, however, are based primarily on information provided by the PGC and the PGC's internal self-assessment ratings, not direct observation or file reviews by LBFC staff.

As you will see in the report, we classified the extent to which an objective was achieved into one of three broad categories: Fully or Largely Achieved, Partially Achieved, or Not Achieved or Largely Not Achieved.

In all, we rated 8 of the 34 objectives as “Fully or Largely Achieved,” 18 as “Partially Achieved,” and 8 as “Not Achieved or Largely Not Achieved.” I won’t go through our ratings for all the objectives, but I will mention a few.

Two of the objectives we rated as “Fully or Largely Achieved” include overhauling the PGC website, which was done in 2016, and developing online hunter education programs. Objectives rated “Not Achieved or Largely Not Achieved” include expanding hunter recruitment and retention efforts and expanding recruitment of voluntary Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officers. The PGC cited “budgetary constraints” as the reason for failing to make significant progress on these two objectives.

With regard to the PGC’s efforts related to the deer population trend, we noted that the overall deer population trend is increasing in five Wildlife Management Units and is stable in the other 18 units, with none of the WMUs showing a decreasing trend. The deer harvest numbers are also relatively stable, with the PGC reporting consistent harvests between 300,000 to 350,000 white-tailed deer annually.

Finally, we found the PGC 2015-2020 Strategic Plan has been significantly streamlined, which was one of the recommendations in our prior report. For example, the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan has five broad goals and 34 associated objectives, compared to seven goals and 41 objectives in the 2009-2015 plan.

In closing, we would like to thank Executive Director Bryan Burhans and his staff for the excellent cooperation we received during this project. Thank you.