

Report Highlights

Pennsylvania Game Commission Compliance With Its Strategic Plan

A 1998 amendment to the Game and Wildlife Code requires that the LB&FC conduct a performance audit every three years of the Pennsylvania Game Commission's (PGC's) compliance with its strategic plan for agency operations. This is the seventh report issued under this mandate. The report also includes information on PGC revenues, expenditures, and the Game Fund financial condition.

- **The PGC 2015-2020 Strategic Plan has been streamlined.** The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan has five broad goals and 34 associated objectives, compared to seven goals and 41 objectives in the 2009-2014 plan. For the most part, the goals and objectives in the 2015-2020 plan are sufficiently defined and stated in a manner (i.e., 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 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.
- **All five of the PGC's broad goals were rated as Partially Achieved.** In addition to the five broad goals, the Strategic Plan contains 34 Strategic Objectives. Of these 34 objectives, we rated 8 as Fully or Largely Achieved, 18 as Partially Achieved, and 8 as Not Achieved or Largely Not Achieved. Each rating has a brief explanation.
- **The deer population trend shows an increase in 5 Wildlife Management Units (WMUs).** The 6-year trend also shows that the deer population is stable in the other 18 WMUs.
- **Three of the Not Achieved or Largely Not Achieved objectives were on hold due to budgetary constraints.** These objectives include evaluating new tools to improve communications and engage with the non-hunting public, developing a marketing plan and construction of the Game Commission Wildlife Research and Education Center in State College.
- **The PGC's objective to focus State Game Lands (SGL) acquisition efforts on lands providing access to existing SGLs, inholdings, indentures, and sensitive habitats for special concern species and other unique landscapes was Partially Achieved.** In FY 2015-16, 439 acres were acquired, including one interior and one indenture with both providing improved access and three additional acquisitions improving access to existing SGLs. In FY 2016-17, 1,953 acres were acquired, including two interiors, seven indentures, and five acquisitions to improve access into existing SGLs. Two of these properties connected detached parcels to existing SGLs.
- **Forest health has improved.** The number of WMUs where forest health is rated as good has increased from none in 2012 and 2013 and one in 2014 to 4 in 2015. In addition, 16 WMUs had fair forest habitat health, and none had a poor forest health assessment.
- **The two objectives related to maintaining or expanding license sales were Not Achieved or Largely Not Achieved; license sales have declined over the last three years from 988,952 in LY 2014-15 to 958,122 in LY 2016-17.** The PGC anticipates recruitment and retention efforts directed at retaining and expanding licenses to improve with the hiring of a marketing director in 2018.