

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

FY2004- 2007 WORK PLAN

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Division of Fish and Wildlife protects, restores, and manages the fish and wildlife resources of the state. The division has a staff of 57 employees, including biologists, technicians, fish culturists, heavy equipment operators, and skilled workers. Division facilities include: the main office, three biological field offices, two development stations equipped with workshops and heavy machinery, and four freshwater hatcheries. The division is responsible for operating and managing twenty-four wildlife management areas totaling over 47,000 acres. The division also operates over 100 boat launching ramps and shore fishing areas located throughout the state. The division is responsible for setting seasons, size limits, methods of taking, and daily limits for the harvest of all wildlife as well as all recreational and commercial fisheries in the state. The division is divided into three separate sections: Marine Fisheries, Freshwater Fisheries, and Wildlife. Each section is responsible for specific program activities. These activities include fisheries and wildlife research, fish hatchery and fish stocking programs, habitat restoration, public access, land acquisition, education and information, public angling and hunting programs, and commercial fisheries management. In FY 1998 (FY1999 figures are not available but will be similar to FY1998) the total division program costs were \$5.45 million. These costs were distributed among 35 separate accounts corresponding to individual projects. Approximately 90% of these costs were covered by dedicated resources including USFWS Sportfish Restoration Program (special federal excise taxes on fishing, hunting, and boating equipment), NMFS, and Rhode Island hunting and fishing license receipts. These funding sources provide the foundation for a user-pay user-benefit relationship with the hunting, fishing, and boating public of Rhode Island. Limited funding, as authorized through a cooperative agreement under the Endangered Species Act, assists with recovery program for several species of flora and fauna, as well as monitoring programs for rare species, including reptiles and amphibians. The division works closely with this constituency, attending meetings and holding workshops to seek information on user-group needs and concerns.

II. MISSION OF THE DIVISION

Ensuring that the Freshwater, Marine, and Wildlife Resources of the State of Rhode Island will be Conserved and Managed for Equitable and Sustainable Use.

Key Division Objectives:

1. Maintain Healthy and Sustainable Populations of Fish and Wildlife
2. Protect and Restore Habitat & Promote Biodiversity.
3. Improve Recreational Fishing and Hunting.
4. Promote the Fisheries and Wildlife Resources as a Key Element in Rhode Islands Economy.
5. Asset Protection - Improve Division Facilities to Increase Program Effectiveness.

III. PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Objective 1 - Maintain Healthy and Sustainable Populations of Fish and Wildlife

Division of Fish and Wildlife DRAFT last revised 10/7/99 9:32:39 AM

Trends

- Fisheries surveys, which are currently being conducted statewide, indicate healthy distributions of species including important gamefish. This information has been used by local watershed groups (Pawcatuck River Watershed Partnership) as well as other state and federal agencies.
- Research and survey projects continue to provide data, which has been used to increase hunting opportunities for wild turkey, white-tailed deer, and Canada goose. New and/or longer seasons have been set. Certain wildlife populations have reached nuisance status through conflict with human expansion. These problems need to be addressed through existing wildlife management tools and methods.
- Environmental pollutants, ranging from heavy metals to pesticides and oil spills, in addition to emerging diseases continue in an unpredictable manner. Planning exercises for a Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak were added to the oil spill contingency planning efforts. The emergence of West Nile Virus (WNV) created a need for monitoring and testing of deaths in suspect wild birds. Mercury testing was increased to reflect bioaccumulation in piscivorous species, aquatic furbearers and birds. In addition, the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) necessitated a surveillance program for white-tailed deer and a moratorium on imports.
- The fisheries resource of Narragansett Bay and Rhode Island Sound is in transition. Demersal fish populations are in decline while pelagic species populations are increasing. Crab and lobster survey results have shown population increases while quahaugs have declined. This community restructuring is coincident to overfishing of demersal finfish, a long-term increase in water temperature, and predator-prey interactions.
- The commercial fishery has responded by shifting effort to underutilized species and exploring new market opportunities. Recreational anglers have also shifted emphasis to species under recovery such as striped bass and summer flounder. They have become more engaged in the management process, demanding rebuilding of the depressed stock and an equitable share in the harvest.
- Research, assessment, and management of the marine resources have grown exponentially in the past decade. Passage of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act and the Sustainable Fisheries Act have required state and federal agencies to channel substantial resources into rebuilding depleted stocks.
- Fisheries management has experienced a shift from resource orientation to client orientation.
- Wildlife habitat necessary to sustain healthy populations of species dependent on early successional habitats (young forests and thickets) has declined to the point where populations of these species are also declining.

Problems

- The demands of accelerated resource management have exceeded division resources. Modern management is largely a people issue demanding many interactions with stakeholders. Division scientists are not trained in this area, resulting in ineffective facilitation that does not meet current resource management needs.
- Maintenance and operation of existing fishways continues, however due to limited financial resources new fishway construction is on hold. Anadromous fish restoration in the Pawcatuck River cannot improve until the dam gates at the Potter Hill Dam have been repaired. This dam is in private ownership. Efforts to work with the owner of this dam have failed.
- In the past the division obtained alewife and blueback broodstock from coastal streams in Massachusetts. A recent decrease in the returns at these runs has limited our ability to perform broodstock enhancement work.
- Many populations and in some cases, entire species, are at risk in future years unless adequate advocacy, funding and staffing can be secured.
- Volunteer information from recreational anglers (logbooks, records, surveys etc) is an untapped source of information. Additional staff is needed to coordinate this work so that it may be used as part of the stock assessment process.

- Forest maturation, lack of active forest management projects statewide and loss of farmlands to development are major causes for the decline of early successional habitats.

Initiatives

Protect and Restore Critical Resources

- The division will work with the DEM Land Acquisition Committee to purchase additional land adjacent to management areas and along streams and ponds to protect and preserve habitat as well as improve public access.

Ecosystem/Watershed Management

- The division will continue to promote the need to develop projects on state and private lands to enhance wildlife habitats for early successional species.
- The division will continue with the current stream and pond fisheries survey program. Data will be organized by watersheds and will be available to watershed partnerships.
- The division is working with government agencies and local watershed groups on the Blackstone River, Ten Mile River, Kickemuit River, Cross Mills, Factory Pond, Indian Lake, Pawtuxet River, and Woonasquatucket River in an effort to restore anadromous fish runs.
- The division will work with the South County Watershed Partnership to attempt to resolve the Potter Hill Dam issues.
- Winter flounder research in the coastal ponds will be expanded to include tagging studies of the spawning stock.
- The division will begin a survey of the Block Island fisheries resource using a monthly, multi-gear sampling format.
- The division has recognized the importance of essential fish habitat and has delegated the responsibility for this issue to one staff scientist.
- The division will work with watershed partnerships on shellfish management issues in salt ponds and estuaries.
- The division will develop a comprehensive wildlife management plan that will focus on species of the greatest conservation need.

Promote Partnerships

- The division will promote partnerships with the USDA-NRCS to enhance wildlife habitats through the U.S. Farm Bill programs and the USFWS Landowner Incentives Program.
- The federal sportfish program will be expanded to include a research partnership with the URI Graduate School of Oceanography. They will study the decline of winter flounder in Narragansett Bay.
- The division will strengthen and restructure the citizens advisory panels which advise the RI Marine Fisheries Council
- With assistance from Senator Chafee's office, a partnership will be formed between the division and NMFS to study fisheries problems in Narragansett Bay. This will provide enhanced port & sea sampling and water quality studies.
- The division will expand its partnership with the EPA to monitor mercury in various trophic levels
- The division will partner with the USDA-APHIS, and Connecticut and Massachusetts Divisions of Fish & Wildlife to survey white-tailed deer for CWD.

Streamline Processes

- A grant request to streamline and modernize fishery data collection will be submitted to the Atlantic States Cooperative Statistics Program for consideration.

Improve Communication

- Expanding aquatic educational opportunities at various DEM facilities will continue.

Training

- Staff training in fisheries stock assessment methods, GIS, and general computer skills will continue.

Objective 2 - Protect and Restore Habitat. Promote Biodiversity.

Trends

- Wildlife habitat in the state of Rhode Island has decreased at a steady rate. Forest maturation processes have changed the compositional structure and age class of the forest, so that many birds including ruffed grouse, American woodcock and small mammals such as the New England cottontail no longer can find suitable habitats. The increased development in rural communities has provided situations where wildlife populations and human populations are attempting to coexist.
- The Galilee Salt Marsh restoration work has been completed with the expectation of 80 acres of new salt marsh being created for wintering black ducks. Partners on this project included URI, Ducks Unlimited, USFWS, EPA, and Army Corps.
- Approximately 100 acres of even-age forest habitat have been reverted to primary successional stage, dramatically increasing biodiversity on 2 wildlife management areas. Narragansett Electric provided in-kind services for this work.
- Recent DEM/Fish and Wildlife land acquisitions, as well as pending acquisitions continue to add to increase the size of existing wildlife management areas. This will increase division-managed lands to over 47,000 acres.
- Over the past 3 years, four waterfowl marshes have been renovated by installing new water control structures. This was under a cooperative program with the USFWS and Ducks Unlimited.
- The division, in conjunction with the North American Waterfowl Management Plan's Atlantic Coast Joint Venture, has designated 16 wetland/upland Focus Areas of concern and in need of protection, restoration and/or purchase.

Problems

- Private lands are being developed or are being posted at an increasing rate. Therefore, habitat and access for public fishing and hunting are decreasing.
- Funding to purchase additional lands for habitat protection has become limited.
- Limited resources have been a major setback when dealing with wildlife damage and/or disease issues.
- The Aquatic Education Program provides excellent opportunities for youth programs, workshops, and other forms of informational outreach on habitat restoration, however these activities are limited because of inadequate personnel and lack of appropriate class room facilities.
- The Division's wildlife section has the technical expertise to provide private landowners with needs and planning assistance to develop wildlife habitat management projects, under the Landowner Incentive Program, but lacks a full time staff position to dedicate to the project and develop it fully.

Initiatives

Protect and Restore Critical Resources

- The division will continue to participate in the purchase of open space habitat, insuring that biodiversity is a key component of acquisition criteria.
- The division will provide technical assistance to communities to insure that land use decisions are sensitive to fish and wildlife habitat requirements.
- Expand Narragansett Bay survey work to cooperate with EPA and the Coastal Resources Management Council to identify eelgrass and aquatic vegetation.

Ecosystem/Watershed Management

- The division will cooperate with watershed partnerships to evaluate instream flow regulations and the potential impact of drought conditions on the fisheries resources
- Watershed issues will be incorporated into the aquatic education program.

- The division will represent fish and wildlife resource issues in watershed based decision-making.
- The division will cooperate with USDA, EPA, TNC, Army Corps, Narragansett Indian Tribe, and other organizations on the NRCS “State Team” to promote wildlife programs under the Farm Bill.

Promote Partnerships

- The division will join with other states in USFWS Region 5 to fund a Wildlife Damage Cooperative Unit.
- The division will train wildlife rehabilitation volunteers in methods of taking care of wildlife impacted by oil spills.
- The division will work with watershed groups, local communities, and special interest groups to provide technical assistance to support creative and sound land use decisions to protect sensitive habitat and maintain biodiversity at the highest level possible.

Streamline Processes

- The division will continue to work with the Division of Agriculture to streamline regulations to allow for easy access to special use permits, including deer damage permits.

Objective 3 - Improve Recreational Fishing and Hunting

Trends

- Recreational fishing and hunting are essential components of natural resources management in Rhode Island. The posting of private land and development have decreased available habitat for angling and hunting. A 418 acre parcel was purchased and developed in Tiverton to create a new wildlife management area, Eight Rod Farm Management Area. The Division of Fish and Wildlife worked with the Division of Planning and Development and The Nature Conservancy to acquire this property. Protecting important fisheries and wildlife habitat in addition to the provision of public access will continue.
- Improvements to the trout hatcheries has brought hatchery production to an all time high. Each year new locations are selected for trout stocking. Trout stamp sales in FY 2002 indicate an increase in trout anglers.
- New areas are being developed to increase angler access. The Haines Memorial Park Boat Ramp and the Carbuncle Pond Fishing Pier were finished in 2002. Both facilities were handicap accessible. Funding for these two areas involved a continuing partnership with the Governor’s Commission on Disabilities. Repairs, maintenance, and operations of existing public access continue.
- Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics show recent increases in marine recreational fishing in Rhode Island. Much of this increase is due to the successful coast wide cooperative (state/federal) restoration of Striped Bass.
- Hunting for Ring-necked Pheasant is one of the most popular recreational hunting programs offered by the division. Each year over 2000 licensed hunters spend thousands of hours in pursuit of pheasants stocked at 25 different wildlife management units.

Problems

- Increasing the number of public access areas for angling and boating has also increased the maintenance and operation responsibilities (cost) of the division.
- Increasing public access to management areas has caused an increase in vandalism and public dumping.
- Multiple use of management areas causes conflicts and has increased costs of maintenance.
- Pheasant stocking programs are expensive to operated and the number of birds stocked has been limited because of funding, providing an inconsistent stocking levels below the level desired by constituents.
- Loss of hunting opportunity through land closures and /or restrictions to hunting within towns and cities of the state has added to problems of wildlife management within those respective entities. High populations of deer and/or Canada geese are non-hunttable due to these restrictions are resulting in increased nuisance complaints and have the potential for human casualties through road accidents and aircraft bird

strikes. Efforts to work with those towns and cities, having nuisance wildlife problems and that maintain no-hunting ordinances, are non-existent.

Initiatives

Promote Partnerships

- The division will improve largemouth bass populations (and angling) in selected ponds. Surveys will evaluate results of stocking. Local bass fishing clubs will cooperate with stocking and survey work.
- Planned public access improvements include, major repairs to boat ramps at Fort Adams, Gaspee, Longmeadow, Pawtuxet Village, Gull Cove, Prudence Island, and Mt. Hope. These Handicap accessible fishing facilities are planned for Coventry, Stillwater Reservoir, Carolina Trout Pond, and J. L. Curran Reservoir. The division will cooperate with local communities and the Governors Commission on Disabilities.
- The division will attempt to work with landowners such as the RI Audubon Society and the Providence Water Supply Board, to offer special permission hunting. The Northwest Cooperative and the South Shore Management Area are examples of this type of arrangement.
- Using the program's volunteer network of instructors, hunter education classes will be scheduled more frequently to increase the number of trained students
- Using the Aquatic Education Program's network of instructors, programs in angling will be scheduled to increase the number of trained students.
- The division needs to establish a cooperative hunting program with local cities and towns to open closed portions of lands and/or reduce restrictive hunting ordinances within communities having nuisance wildlife problems.

Set an Example

- The division's program to make boat ramps, fishing areas, and hunting areas handicap accessible continues. This program will call on partnerships with the Governors Commission on Disabilities and local communities. For example, the Division is working with the Governors Commission on Disabilities to develop a site at Carbuncle Pond and with SCAT to install a handicap accessible trail at Black Point.
- Hunting opportunities for disabled people will increase because of handicap accessible waterfowl hunting blinds and by the opening of a new area at Fort Greene in Narragansett. This work will include a cooperative effort with Ducks Unlimited and the Town of Narragansett.
- Hunting opportunities for deer, goose and turkey will increase because of opening of lands currently closed or restricted by town ordinances. Reduction in wildlife nuisance problems would be expected.
- Angling programs for disabled and special needs people will increase because of specialized programming at a disabled fishing training pier at the hatchery.

Objective 4 - Promote the Fisheries and Wildlife Resources as a Key Element in Rhode Islands Economy.

Trends

- Fish and wildlife resources and the business they support make up a significant sector of Rhode Island's economy. Surveys in 1996 estimated that 163,095 resident and non-resident anglers participated in recreational fishing in Rhode Island, spending over \$136,000,000. This total includes both fresh and saltwater angling. These anglers supported over 3000 full time jobs and generated over \$11,000,000 in state sales and income tax revenue. This same survey estimated that there were over 16,000 Rhode Island hunters who spent an estimated \$20,785,000. In 1996 over 4,000 commercial fishing licenses were issued and the value of the total commercial landings of fish and shellfish greater than \$230,000,000.

Problems

- Fisheries and wildlife resources must be considered and managed as a segment of Rhode Island's economy.
- Lack of support by state and local governments for fisheries and wildlife resources.

Initiatives

Promote Partnerships

- Develop a partnership with the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation to promote the economic importance of Rhode Island's natural resources.

Improve Communications

- Prepare and publish public access guides to assist the local and state tourist industry.
- Improve and expand the Information and Education Section of DEM to promote all programs available to the general public. Develop a monthly or quarterly magazine that would promote DEM's image and the State Of Rhode Island outdoor activities.

Objective 5 - Asset Protection - Improve Division Facilities to Increase Program Effectiveness

Trends

- Efforts to upgrade the division's facilities, thereby increasing program effectiveness, continue. Construction of the marine facility at Ft. Wetherill, Jamestown, was completed in 2002. Design of the new facility at the Great Swamp is underway.
- The existing marine research vessel (42' T. J. Wright) is too small and inadequate to properly sample Rhode Island Sound and Narragansett Bay. A contract to replace the existing marine research vessel with a larger vessel (60') capable of multiple sampling techniques has been awarded. Construction will begin in FY 2001.
- Existing base station and mobile radio network lacks ability to communicate within the division and with the Division of Enforcement's EPOs.

Problems

- The division does not have a central facility providing the public with access to information on fish and wildlife resources or outdoor recreational opportunities. There is also a lack of classroom, lab, and storage space for the aquatic education and hunter safety programs.
- The division has a substantial investment in heavy equipment, tractors, trucks, and boats. Storage and workshop capabilities are inadequate.
- The division of Enforcement has changed its radio networking to low band capabilities, while the division remains with high band capabilities resulting in the inability to communicate between divisions during potential disaster responses or other emergency situations.

Initiatives

Streamline Processes/Improve Communications

- The division will begin planning a new field headquarters in FY2003 to replace the Great Swamp facility. This new facility will be a center for the Freshwater Fisheries Section, the Wildlife Section, the Aquatic Education Program, and the Hunter Safety Program. This new facility will be equipped with adequate classrooms, meeting areas, and demonstration spaces to accommodate the dissemination of public information and education. The purpose of this facility is to streamline public access to DEM programs and information. These public meeting facilities will be ideal for public hearings, workshops, and community partnerships.
- Purchase low band base station and mobile radio communications.

<p>OBJECTIVE: 1 Maintain Healthy and Sustainable Populations of Fish and Wildlife</p>	<p>ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species abundance and distribution • Returning Adults • Wildlife Population Statistics • Abundance – Nesting Colony Birds • Landing Statistics • Spawning Stock Biomass 	
STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<p>A) Conduct Statewide Freshwater Fisheries Surveys</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue statewide fisheries surveys. Provide survey results to watershed partners. • Develop statewide survey completion report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing. • Fall 2004.
<p>B) Restore Anadromous Fish Populations to Coastal Streams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor spring returns at selected coastal streams. • Stock 500,000 Atlantic salmon fry and 15,000 smolts • Stock 10,000 river herring broodstock in selected coastal streams. • Provide technical assistance to Ten Mile Restoration Program. Begin fishway construction. • Modify Potter Hill fish ladder with new slide gate and cover. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing • Spring 2004 • Fall of 2003
<p>C) Conduct Statewide Wildlife Population Management Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue research and surveys on all hunted and non-game species • Continue wildlife research projects on ruffed grouse and wild turkeys. • Continue cooperative population surveys with USFWS on migratory species of waterfowl, American woodcock and mourning dove. • Monitor population status non-migratory native species including wild turkey and ruffed grouse. • Conduct CWD surveillance in cooperation with Connecticut and Massachusetts as part of a Southern New England region. • Collect and analyze information to set proper limits and seasons for hunting and trapping seasons. • Monitor the harvest of small game, waterfowl, deer, and turkey. • Conduct annual surveys on migratory waterfowl. Determine population trends and abundance. • Conduct surveys of major watersheds to determine trends in beaver population growth and distribution and for the development of a long-term beaver management plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing, annual • Ongoing, annual • Ongoing • Ongoing, annual • Ongoing, annual • Ongoing, annual

D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor all known nesting sites of piping plover. • Monitor American Beetle populations on Block Island. • Survey 65 colony nesting bird nesting sites. • Continue monitoring of osprey nesting sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing
E) Conduct Marine Fisheries Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trawl surveys, shellfish surveys, and lobster fishery monitoring will continue. • Sampling of juvenile populations in coastal ponds and Narragansett Bay will continue. • Continue monitoring program for pelagic gamefish in Narragansett Bay. • Continue monthly ichthyoplankton sampling in Narragansett Bay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample 12 trawl stations monthly • Sample 26 Trawl stations bi-annually • Sample 4 Coastal ponds monthly. • Sample 18 shore seine stations in Narr. Bay monthly(May-Oct.) • Annual shellfish samples from 60 sites in Narr. Bay • Annual surveys (40 trips) aboard commercial lobster boats to obtain data on lobster pop.
F) Monitor Commercial Landings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect weekly RI commercial landings data for 11 species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
G) Update Commercial Species Management Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend and implement inter-jurisdictional management plans for horseshoe crab and eel. • Amend and implement tautog and winter flounder regional management plans. • Cooperate with URI to investigate possible causes for decline of local winter flounder stocks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing

H) Provide Support to Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue providing technical support for Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council • Conduct regular meetings, public hearings, and workshops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing. • Ongoing
I) Provide Support to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in a cooperative coast wide monitoring program for commercial and recreational species. • Provide support to management plans for coastal migratory species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing
J) Develop Comprehensive Wildlife Management Plan with focus on Species of Greatest Conservation Need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Base Management • 1st Draft of Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Spring 2004

OBJECTIVE 2: Protect and Restore Habitat. Promote Biodiversity		Environmental Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife Populations Statistics • Waterfowl Population Statistics • Amount of Protected Land
STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
A) Continue Management Area Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continually update the 14 operational plans for wildlife management areas. • Seed 200 acres with wildlife food and cover crops • Harvest 25 acres of timber annually, various management areas • Plant 75 apple trees, annually • Maintain 100 acres of old field and meadow habitats annually • Install 10 new informational kiosks at wildlife management area trailheads and fishing access areas • Mark 10 miles of boundaries. • Cut 25 acres of brush on Prudence I. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Spring 2003 • 2003 to 2007 • Spring 2003 to 2007 • Spring 200 to 2007 • Summer 2003 • Spring 2003 • Spring 2003
B) Maintain Waterfowl Impoundment's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with annual maintenance to waterfowl impoundments. • Replace water control structures at Durfee Hill Marsh and Buck Hill Marsh • Inspect 500 wood duck nesting boxes statewide, annually. Repair and replace as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • By June 30, 2004 • Spring 2003 to 2007
C) Secure Land Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the Department with the acquisition of additional land to be incorporated into the wildlife management areas and improve public access for fishing and boating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
D) Continue Aquatic Education Program	Continue to offer teacher workshops, ecology programs, recreational angling program for youths, adults, and families, as well as programs for disabled and special needs persons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing

E) Review Development Proposals	Continue to conduct environmental reviews as required.	Ongoing
F) Continue Fish and Wildlife Population Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue making information available to the public. 	Ongoing
G) Expedite Wildlife Damage Assessment and Technical Assistance to the Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The division will continue to work with the Division of Agriculture to address deer damage complaints. Continue outreach efforts with expanded technical assistance pamphlets available on DEM website. Continue public and special interest forums to address problem wildlife on as needed basis 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

OBJECTIVE 3: Improve Recreational Fishing and Hunting		Environmental Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers of Stocked Fish
STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	PERFORMANCE MEASURE
A) Maintain and Operate Four Freshwater Hatcheries. Provide a Fish Stocking Program for Public Waters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with routine operations 135,000 trout to be distributed to 82 different locations. 2,000 sub adult bass and 2000 pounds of golden shiners will be stocked into selected ponds. 2,000 northern pike yearlings will be stocked into 5 selected locations. Repair and maintenance of the hatchery facilities will continue. Capitol improvements planned are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct new hatch house for Lafayette Hatchery. Install new water supply well Lafayette Hatchery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing. Fall 2003 Spring 2002 Spring 2003
B) Establish cooperative hunting program with local cities, towns, and golf courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop management programs that are acceptable to local towns and cites, and commercial properties for opening land segments within their boundaries allowing for control hunting of nuisance wildlife. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spring of 2003
C) Public Access Maintenance and Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with the annual maintenance schedules in FY 2002. Replace guardrail at approximatly 8 public access locations Continue with schedule for annual maintenance of the access areas. Maintain 15 miles of road and 3 miles of trails. Continue operating 4 hunter check stations and information centers Arcadia, Durfee hill, Great Swamp, Carolina. Operate new shooting range at Great Swamp Management Area Issue 600 waterfowl permits, 250 special deer hunting permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall of 2003 Ongoing Ongoing October – December 2003 January 1 to October 1 annually

D) Public Access Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Repairs to Gaspee Boat Ramp. Build dock at Ft. Adams Ramp, Construct handicap accessible dock for shore fishing at Pawtuxet River Coventry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spring 2003 Spring 2003 Fall 2003
E) Hunter Education	Schedule hunter education courses, bowhunter education courses, hunter ethics/landowner relations courses, and archery proficiency testing. Continue public outreach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing

OBJECTIVE 4: Promote Fisheries and Wildlife Resources as a Key Element of Rhode Island's Economy		Environmental Indicators More robust natural resources based industries.
STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
A) Identify the Recreational and Commercial Value of the Wildlife Resources of Rhode Island.	Integrate economic importance of natural resources into resource management decisions	Ongoing
B) Conduct Public Outreach	Prepare RI public guidebook to fishing and boating access areas. Survey hunters and land owners regarding cost of hunting within the state and cost of nuisance wildlife problems.	Spring of 2004

OBJECTIVE 5: Asset Protection - Improve Division Facilities to Increase Program Effectiveness		Environmental Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovated facilities Improved facilities and access.
STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
A) Maintain Division Buildings and Facilities	Continue with maintenance of division facilities- weekly cleaning, painting, carpentry, exterior work, etc.	Ongoing
B) Fort Wetherill Marine Resource Management Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major repairs to bulkhead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By Spring of 2004.
C) Great Swamp Field Headquarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete design Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By Fall 2003 Spring 2004
D) Marine Research Vessel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete vessel construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By Fall 2003