

# Wildlife Resources Division Education Plan FY05-09



Submitted by the Education Committee  
Anthony Rabern and Ken Riddleberger, Co-Chairs

Wes Abler  
Capt. James Bell  
Kitty Esco  
David Gregory  
Capt. Rick Godfrey  
Kim Kilgore  
Walter Lane  
Chris Martin



# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
Procedure .....	5
Program Recommendations .....	8
Goal One: Appreciation & Understanding .....	10
Goal Two: Stewardship .....	13
Goal Three: Recreation .....	15
Action Item Priorities .....	17
Ideas for Future Consideration .....	24
Appendix A: Summary of Results from the WRD Education Plan for 1996-2001 .....	25
Appendix B: Correlation of the Direction for the Decade Report and the WRD Education Plan for FY05-09 .....	34

# Introduction

The Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) is charged with “promoting the conservation and wise use of Georgia’s natural resources.” Through its history, WRD has educated the state’s youth and adults about wildlife, habitat, management, stewardship, and natural resources in a variety of ways. Today, education remains one of the best and most important means available to WRD to accomplish its mission. As urban sprawl, human population growth, and other activities increasingly threaten both quantity and quality of Georgia’s wildlife and wildlife habitats, the need for better and more effective wildlife education becomes even greater. Yet, as state revenues decline and program cuts occur, WRD needs to refine and target its educational mission to programs that provide the greatest benefit in a fiscally conservative manner. To improve, focus and streamline the Division’s education efforts, a strategic plan is needed, which identifies target audiences and key delivery mechanisms.

In 1994, WRD Director, David Waller, appointed an Education Strategy Team to examine the Division’s education programs and recommend strategies to enhance and target the Division’s education efforts. The resultant five-year strategy plan was the first attempt to coalesce and to coordinate the various education programs of the Sections within WRD into one unified plan. One of the primary accomplishments of the Team was the development of an education mission statement:

***“The educational mission of the Wildlife Resources Division is to cultivate an appreciation and understanding of Georgia’s wildlife resources so as to foster wise stewardship of these resources and to promote safe and ethical natural resource-based recreation.”***

This mission statement is easily divided into three education goals for the Division:

- 1. To cultivate an appreciation and understanding of Georgia’s wildlife resources.***
- 2. To foster wise stewardship of these resources.***
- 3. To promote safe and ethical natural resource-based recreation.***

The five-year strategy plan for 1996-2001 contained 77 specific action items (tactics), which targeted educators, students, the general public, and elected officials. Of the 77 action items in this initial plan, 71 % were accomplished. Outstanding accomplishments included the expansion of the regional education center system, the development of alternative delivery mechanisms for hunter and boater education courses, the establishment of an Information Clearinghouse, the increased emphasis on student contacts by law enforcement, and additional workshop opportunities for educators. Of the 29 % not accomplished, the major disappointments included the lack of a standardized record keeping system, which made tracking progress very difficult if not impossible, the failure to develop a volunteer network system, and the lack of emphasis on key conservation messages and educating elected officials. The accomplishments of this initial effort for 1996-2001 are summarized in Appendix A.

# Procedure

In December 2001, the Director appointed a committee to revise the education strategic plan for the next five-year period. The charge given to the Committee included the following:

1. Review the 1996-2001 WRD Education Plan to determine whether the educational goals, objectives and strategies are still applicable. Modify and update these areas where needed to reflect changes that have occurred in the Division's education efforts.
2. Conduct a needs assessment of Division staff, teachers, and other environmental education stakeholders to determine what tools or resources are needed to communicate the Division's educational goals more effectively to their target audiences.
3. Conduct an internal assessment to determine the personnel and financial commitment of the Division for educational programs coordinated by the agency.
4. Develop Programmatic Goals, Objectives, and Strategies based on the needs assessment to address issues such as personnel, funding, record keeping, program support/coordination, staff training, and correlation to QCC guidelines.
5. Design implementation strategy, tactics and timeline to meet the educational and programmatic goals for the next five years focused on the delivery of quality programs.
6. Develop recommendations on how the Committee can be used long term to improve the quality of the agency's education efforts.

In 2002, WRD initiated the development of a Division-wide strategic plan called "Direction for the Decade" (DFTD). The process included an in-depth assessment of the Division's education programs by staff, stakeholders, and the public. The resulting plan included many recommendations involving education. The Education Committee used this assessment to address the directions above. The assessment also provided valuable information to help dovetail the new education plan with the DFTD recommendations.

Findings from the DFTD surveys indicated that education should be an important priority for the Division during the next decade. Thirty-three percent of WRD associates rated education as extremely important over the next ten years. Stakeholders placed even greater emphasis in this area, with 42 % rating education programs as extremely important. While only 29 % of the public rated education as extremely important during the next decade, education rated second behind law enforcement. Not only did these three groups strongly endorse WRD's educational initiatives, but they also identified five education priority areas for the next decade. These priority areas were:

1. Enhance Hunter Education and Boating Safety.
2. Provide skills training (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and other activities related to outdoor recreation).
3. Conduct targeted education, which address specific issues and topics, to the public.
4. Strengthen the regional education centers.
5. Develop/Promote key conservation messages.

As part of the DFTD process, a Division-wide working group session was held. During these sessions, additional recommendations related to education were generated. The Education Committee attempted to address these staff recommendations in this plan. A summary of how each recommendation was incorporated into the Education Plan is contained in Appendix B.

After completing the evaluation of the first education plan, the education team focused its efforts on developing a new plan. From the beginning of this process, the Committee agreed that the original education mission statement and goals were appropriate for the next five years. For the new plan, greater emphasis was placed on the delivery of key conservation messages, as recommended by the DFTD. To that end, an **Annual Conservation Theme (ACT)** was developed for each of the five years of this plan. The ACT was incorporated into the Objectives, Strategies and Tasks for each of the three goals of the education plan. The ACT will serve as a guiding message that will permeate the education and information activities of the Division, thus providing a common thread to be used by the Regional Education Centers (RECs), the Public Affairs staff, and all associates. The ACTs proposed by the education team are:

### **Year 1: Natural Resources**

*Georgia's rich diversity of natural resources is important and must be conserved, managed, and protected.*

Our audiences will be able to:

- Describe or define natural resources and wildlife resources.
- Identify some of Georgia's important wildlife resources (fish, game, non-game, protected plants, T&Es).
- Describe or give examples of how WRD works to conserve, manage, and protect wildlife resources.
- Describe or give examples of how natural resources are used for recreation.

### **Year 2: Habitat**

*Conserving, managing, and protecting quality habitat is essential for the survival and health of Georgia's wildlife resources.*

Our audiences will be able to:

- Define and identify a variety of habitats in Georgia.
- Understand the function and importance of habitat.

- Recognize that both people and wildlife need habitat and must coexist.
- Recognize that habitats constantly change.
- Have a greater understanding of complex habitat issues such as land use, growth, construction, and land acquisition.
- Locate habitats that provide recreation (forests, waters, mountains).

### **Year 3: Water**

*Clean and sufficient water resources are essential to both wildlife and humans.*

Our audiences will be able to:

- Define and describe water resources.
- Understand the causes and effects of water pollution (point, non-point, water treatment, E&S, buffer laws, contaminants in fish).
- Have a greater understanding of water issues (quantity/quality, interbasin transfer, trout habitat, water chemistry, water wars, water conservation).
- Describe the forms and functions of wetlands.
- Relate water issues to wildlife resources and plants.
- Recreate on the water safely and ethically (boater safety, fishing)

### **Year 4: Wildlife Management**

*Wildlife is managed for the benefit of wildlife and people.*

Our audiences will be able to:

- Define wildlife management.
- Describe the need for wildlife management.
- Recognize that different species require different management strategies
- Identify management tools (techniques and methods, particularly hunting and fishing).
- Identify who is responsible for managing wildlife.
- Manage wildlife in their area or backyard.
- Recognize who pays for wildlife management.
- Recognize how laws and regulations are important to wildlife management.
- Describe how wildlife management results in improved hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife observation opportunities.

### **Year 5: People and Wildlife**

*People are an integral part of natural systems and our quality of life is linked to the health of these systems.*

Our audiences will be able to:

- Describe how people and wildlife interact.
- Recognize the effect of human impacts on wildlife (habitat loss, overharvest, regulations, roads, agriculture, disturbance).
- Find constructive ways to cope with nuisance wildlife problems.

- Understand the impact of introduced species on our native wildlife.
- Understand that wildlife diseases can be spread by human action (whirling disease, CWD, rabies).
- Enjoy wildlife through the use of backyard/schoolyard wildlife habitats.
- Recognize that the presence of wildlife improves our quality of life.
- Enjoy wildlife recreation opportunities available throughout the state (hunting, trapping, fishing, recreation).
- Recreate safely and ethically in the outdoors.

## Program Recommendations

In addition to the strategies provided in this plan, the Committee also identified two specific programs that are essential to the success of the Division Education Plan.

### **Evaluation and Oversight**

Based on the shortcomings of the previous education plan, the Committee realized that regular evaluation and oversight of its implementation is necessary for success. In the absence of a formalized Division-wide education program, we recommend the continuation of the Education Committee as a working group to perform these functions. The Director should ensure that the Education Committee includes representatives from each Section and Public Affairs, a REC Coordinator, and the Project WILD Coordinator, upon approval of the Education Plan.

The Committee should strive to evaluate progress, ensure implementation of the Plan, coordinate the educational efforts across Sections, develop the annual ACT campaign, and prepare Division and Section report cards. The WRD Education Committee will also develop a record keeping system, with clearly defined terms, for use by all Sections and Regional Education Centers by June 2004. Regional supervisors will implement the Education Plan record keeping system, beginning July 1, 2004. Through this reporting process and structure, implementation of the Plan can be closely monitored and course adjustments can be made, as needed.

### **Regional Education Centers**

From staff comments during the DFTD process and based on the accomplishments of the previous plan, the importance of the Regional Education Centers (REC) to the Division's education efforts is obvious. The Committee strongly recommends that measures be taken to establish permanent funding for existing REC staff and operations. To date, these centers have succeeded because of the hard work and dedication of staff and limited funding from the regions. The regions should continue this support, but administrators and REC Coordinators should diligently search for outside funding sources at the local, state, and national levels. The WRD Education Committee will also explore potential grant funding mechanisms, including EPD's Solid Waste Trust Fund. In addition to supporting the current RECs, the Committee

recommends that WRD staff explore ways to acquire and develop new RECs, especially in critical shortage areas in southwest and west Georgia.

### **Summary**

In summary, education is consistently ranked by staff as one of the most important and effective programs of the Division. In the DFTD associate survey, one comment summarized the importance of the agency's education efforts by stating, "*Education is key to everything that we do.*" Based on the structure provided in the Division's educational mission and goals, the Education Committee has proposed measures that will enhance, improve, and target the Division's education efforts as we prepare to move into the next decade. Several recommendations are critical to the success of this plan. The use of ACTs will focus the Division's efforts and assist all facets of our educational outreach. In addition, a standing Education Committee will be responsible for implementing the Plan, monitoring progress, and evaluating its success. RECs are essential to our education efforts, and steps must be taken to enhance and expand this delivery system. The overall success of this Plan is contingent upon the endorsement of the Director and Section Chiefs. The Director and Section Chiefs should rank education within the context of all program priorities and establish adequate funding sources for education commensurate with its importance.

# Goal 1 – *To cultivate an appreciation and understanding of Georgia’s wildlife resources*

Objective 1 – Provide educators with tools for teaching about wildlife resources.

- Strategy 1 – Annually conduct teacher training workshops.
  1. Project WILD Coordinator will schedule and conduct Project WILD educator workshops and highlight the Annual Conservation Theme (ACT) in advanced workshops.
  2. Project WILD Coordinator and Regional Education Center (REC) Coordinators will schedule and conduct teacher workshops. These workshops may be designed in consultation with the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) and Curriculum Directors for staff development credit and target critical needs for local school systems.
  
- Strategy 2 – Annually provide materials and curricula for Georgia teachers.
  1. The WRD Education Committee will annually coordinate the development of an integrated education unit and other resource materials for teachers, which highlight the ACT, and disseminate to staff by July of each year of the Education Plan.
  2. Project WILD Coordinator will develop articles related to the ACT for the annual Project WILD newsletter.
  3. The Director’s Office will annually update the WRD information clearinghouse of available education and information materials.
  4. The Education Committee will oversee the development of an Urban Stream Aquatic Ecosystem poster in FY05 and one new wildlife poster in each of the following years of the Plan. The wildlife posters should highlight important Georgia ecosystems and should be patterned after the aquatic poster series.
  5. Nongame Program will promote the Give Wildlife a Chance poster contest. The Education Committee will evaluate this contest and make recommendations for enhancing this project by FY06.
  
- Strategy 3 – Encourage the integration of wildlife education into existing state and college curricula and programs.
  1. Project WILD Coordinator will annually make contacts with colleges of education, disseminate course materials and resources related to the ACT, and encourage the use of Project WILD in pre-service teacher courses.
  2. REC Coordinators will annually cooperate with local colleges to foster internship programs at their facilities.
  3. The WRD Director should appoint a liason between WRD and the Department of Education to incorporate wildlife education into state mandated curricula by July 2004.

- Strategy 4 – Improve the education portion of the WRD website.
  1. WRD Computer Support will provide access to a WRD education homepage through the WRD homepage by September 2008.
  2. The Education Committee will maintain information about the RECs on the WRD homepage.
  3. The Senior Wildlife Biologist at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center will provide web addresses for appropriate conservation education sites to post on the WRD education homepage by December 2008.

Objective 2 – Provide WRD staff with tools for presenting programs related to wildlife resources.

- Strategy 1 – Support WRD staff with wildlife education materials, including those related to the ACT.
  1. Public Affairs office will inform the staff about the ACT by July of each year.
  2. The WRD Education Committee will develop presentations related to the ACT and encourage their use by staff by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year of the Plan.
  3. REC Coordinators will routinely inform local WRD staff about the availability of education materials and provide guidance with local outreach programs.

Objective 3 – Reach youth with wildlife education messages.

- Strategy 1 – Conduct outreach programs.
  1. REC staff will provide outreach programs, as time and resources permit, including those that highlight the ACT.
  2. WRD staff should conduct outreach programs, especially those that highlight the ACT, as individual schedules permit.
  
- Strategy 2 – Conduct wildlife programs at DNR facilities and functions.
  1. WRD staff will assist RECs with education programs, as time permits.
  2. WRD staff will coordinate education programs at special events (e.g. Parent-Child hunts, KFES, JAKES Day, “Outdoor Adventure Day”, International Migratory Bird Day).
  3. REC staff will continually develop and implement on-site wildlife education programs, which highlight local features of the facility as well as the ACT.
  4. WRD staff and volunteers will conduct wildlife programs, as time permits.
  5. The WRD Director will meet with the DNR-Parks Director to encourage Parks staff to incorporate the ACTs into their regular programming.
  6. The WRD Director will request DNR-Parks to appoint a liaison to work with the WRD Education Committee.

Objective 4 – Provide wildlife information to the general public.

- Strategy 1 – Provide updated information on WRD website.
  1. The WRD Education Committee will provide the WRD section web coordinators with updated information and specific content devoted to the RECs and ACTs by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year of the Plan.
  
- Strategy 2 – Make presentations to the public on various topics, as time permits.
  1. WRD staff will give presentations on the ACT and other important topics to various civic and conservation groups.
  2. WRD staff will build partnerships with various organizations (e.g. State Parks, EPD, RESA, GYSTC, UGA 4-H Centers, US Forest Service) to make presentations and distribute information.
  
- Strategy 3 – Develop and disseminate information to the media in support of on-going wildlife issues and initiatives.
  1. Throughout the year, Public Affairs staff will disseminate information through various media outlets and conservation groups to inform the public about the ACT and other important wildlife issues.
  2. Public Affairs staff will produce and distribute news releases about the ACT by July 1st of each year of the Plan.

## Goal 2 – *To foster wise stewardship of these resources*

Objective 1 – Educate and inform Georgia citizens about resource management and stewardship principles.

- Strategy 1 – Annually provide educators with tools and materials to teach about resource management and stewardship principles.
  1. Project WILD Coordinator will promote and distribute education materials related to resource management and stewardship.
  2. Project WILD Coordinator will highlight resource management techniques in Advanced Project WILD workshops.
  3. REC Coordinators will promote management and stewardship activities at their facilities, including those activities related to the ACT.
  
- Strategy 2 – Provide the public with information about resource management activities.
  1. WRD staff will present resource management programs to groups and highlight the ACT, when appropriate.
  2. Public Affairs office will continue to work with mass media outlets (newspaper, magazine, radio, and television) to promote local resource management activities, the ACT, and partnership programs such as Forest Stewardship, Bobwhite Quail Initiative, Kids Fishing Events, and Forestry for Wildlife.
  3. Section web coordinators will highlight WRD resource management activities on the WRD website, when appropriate.
  4. Conservation rangers will emphasize the role of law enforcement in wildlife management during their daily contacts and routine presentations. Examples include the importance of licenses, seasons, bag limits, and fair chase. The Hunter Education video, *The Sportsman* provides good examples.
  
- Strategy 3 – Develop, enhance, and maintain resource management demonstration areas for public viewing.
  1. Regional supervisors and program managers will incorporate demonstration areas (e.g. timber management, hatchery operations, wildlife plantings) at WRD facilities and properties, when appropriate.
  2. WRD staff should foster partnerships with other agencies (USFS, USFWS, NPS, NRCS, UGA Extension Service) to demonstrate resource management techniques.
  3. The WRD Education Committee should annually provide materials to facility managers for public display, which highlight the ACT.

Objective 2 – Encourage public participation in resource management and stewardship activities.

- Strategy 1 – Provide opportunities for educators and students to participate in field activities.
  1. Project WILD Coordinator and REC Coordinators will foster partnerships with the Georgia Wildlife Federation to promote schoolyard habitat projects.
  2. WRD staff and REC Coordinators should involve schools in local resource management activities, when appropriate (e.g. fish stocking, surveys, habitat restoration).
  3. REC Coordinators will routinely encourage schools to participate in Adopt-A-Stream and River Clean Up activities.
  
- Strategy 2 – Involve the public in on-going WRD activities.
  1. WRD staff should encourage public involvement in field activities, when appropriate.
  2. Regional supervisors and program managers should promote public involvement in WRD special events and programs, such as the International Migratory Bird Day.
  3. Nongame Program Manager will encourage local communities to participate in the Community Wildlife Project.

Objective 3 – Inform Georgia’s elected and appointed officials about the benefits and values of wildlife resources.

- Strategy 1 – Provide information to elected and appointed officials on key wildlife issues.
  1. Public Affairs office will send a special fall edition of the *Highlights* newsletter to state legislators and DNR Board members.
  2. The Director’s Office will coordinate with the Conservation Congress to annually host a special event for legislators to inform them about pertinent resource management issues.
  3. WRD staff will invite local officials and community leaders to special events hosted at WRD facilities and properties.

## Goal 3 – *To promote safe and ethical natural resource-based recreation*

Objective 1 – Provide safety, ethics, and skills training to students and adults.

- Strategy 1 – Complete the implementation and adjust, as necessary, the current initiatives of the Hunter Education program.
  1. The Hunter Education Coordinator will seek to provide alternative course opportunities and a useable database by July 2006.
  2. Hunter Education Coordinator will replace materials, including the instructor's manual, the student manual, and other materials, as needed.
  3. The Hunter Education Coordinator will encourage the Georgia Hunter Education Association to implement a continuing education program for volunteer instructors by June 2007.
  4. Game Management and Fisheries Management regional supervisors should suggest and encourage any staff interested in teaching Hunter Safety classes to become involved to the extent their work schedules permit.
  5. Hunter Education Coordinator will coordinate the Hunter Education calendar on the DNR website and work with Public Affairs office to advertise upcoming classes through major media outlets during peak times.
  6. Hunter Education Coordinator will develop an effective course registration mechanism and evaluate alternatives for providing class registration at no cost, including trying to negotiate a flat fee for services provided by the Central Reservation System by September 2005.
  
- Strategy 2 – Conduct Boating Safety classes.
  1. Boating Safety Coordinator will coordinate the Boating Safety calendar on the DNR website and work with Public Affairs office to advertise upcoming classes through major media outlets during peak times.
  
- Strategy 3 – Provide programs that teach outdoor safety, ethics, and skills to youth and adults.
  1. Game Management staff will annually offer skills training at selected specialty hunts.
  2. REC Coordinators will annually incorporate outdoor skills training, such as fishing, shooting sports, wildlife observation and identification, orienteering, and recreation, in their programs and special events.
  3. REC Coordinators should offer wildlife camps for youth, as facilities and schedules allow, and include outdoor skills training in the programming.
  4. The Fisheries Section will annually sponsor or co-sponsor 500 Kids Fishing Events.
  5. The Chief of Fisheries will evaluate the potential for experimental kids fishing events (KFEs) to target non-traditional areas, such as county and city park lakes by June 2005.
  6. Nongame Wildlife – Natural Heritage Section staff will annually assist with special events, such as birding festivals, that teach wildlife observation skills.

7. Section chiefs should encourage and promote the development and enhancement of trails and wildlife viewing areas at WRD facilities and properties, where appropriate.
8. WRD staff should cooperate with conservation organizations and other private groups to promote outdoor recreation training for the public, as opportunities arise.
9. Game Management staff will develop a trial program for teaching archery in schools, as part of the physical education curriculum.

Objective 2 – Promote opportunities for public participation in outdoor recreation.

- Strategy 1 – Develop and distribute information to media outlets.
  1. Public Affairs staff will continue to develop media packets, which inform the public about hunting, trapping, fishing, watchable wildlife, and other outdoor recreation opportunities.
  2. Public Affairs office will update the general brochure and update information related to WRD facilities by June 2005.
  3. Section web coordinators will regularly update the website calendar of WRD events and provide detailed information about outdoor recreation opportunities on WRD-operated properties.

# Action Item Priorities

The tasks and responsibilities for each program area are listed in priority order. In some cases, a tie occurred between priorities. Ties are noted and the action items are itemized as a, b, c, etc. Cross-references to specific Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Items of the Education Plan are in parentheses. For example, G1.1.1.1 refers to Goal 1, Objective 1, Strategy 1, and Tactic 1.

## Director's Office

1. The Director should appoint a standing Education Committee, which includes representatives from each Section and Public Affairs, a REC Coordinator, and the Project WILD Coordinator, upon approval of the Education Plan. (Program Recommendations, Evaluation and Oversight Section)
2. The Director's Office will coordinate with the Conservation Congress to annually host a special event for legislators to inform them about pertinent resource management issues. (G2.3.1.2)
3. The WRD Director should appoint a liaison between WRD and the Department of Education to incorporate wildlife education into state mandated curricula by July 2004. (G1.1.3.3)
4. Tie.
  - a. The WRD Director will request from DNR-Parks to appoint a liaison to work with the WRD Education Committee. (G1.3.2.6)
  - b. The Director's Office will annually update the WRD information clearinghouse of available education and information materials. (G1.1.2.3)
5. The WRD Director will meet with the DNR-Parks Director to encourage Parks staff to incorporate the ACTs into their regular programming. (G1.3.2.5)

## WRD Education Committee

1. The WRD Education Committee will annually coordinate the development of an integrated education unit and other resource materials for teachers, which highlight the ACT, and disseminate to staff by July of each year of the Education Plan. (G1.1.2.1)
2. Tie.
  - a. The WRD Education Committee will develop presentations related to the ACT and encourage their use by staff by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year of the Plan. (G1.2.1.2)

- b. The WRD Education Committee will provide the WRD section web coordinators with updated information and specific content devoted to the ACT by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year of the Plan. (G1.4.1.1)
- 3. Tie.
  - a. The WRD Education Committee should annually provide materials to facility managers for public display, which highlight the ACT. (G2.1.3.3)
  - b. The WRD Education Committee will evaluate the Give Wildlife a Chance poster contest and make recommendations for enhancing this project by FY06. (G1.1.2.6)
- 4. The WRD Education Committee will oversee the development of an Urban Stream Aquatic Ecosystem poster in FY05 and one new wildlife poster in each of the following years of the Plan. The wildlife posters should highlight important Georgia ecosystems and should be patterned after the aquatic poster series. (G1.1.2.4)
- 5. The Education Committee will maintain information about the RECs on the WRD homepage. (G1.1.4.2)

## Public Affairs Office

- 1. Throughout the year, Public Affairs staff will disseminate information through various media outlets, and conservation groups to inform the public about the ACT and other important wildlife issues. (G1.4.3.1)
- 2. The Public Affairs office will continue to work with mass media outlets (newspaper, magazine, radio, and television) to promote local resource management activities, the ACT, and partnership programs such as Forest Stewardship, Bobwhite Quail Initiative, Kids Fishing Events, and Forestry for Wildlife. (G2.1.2.2)
- 3. Public Affairs staff will continue to develop media packets, which inform the public about hunting, trapping, fishing, watchable wildlife, and other outdoor recreation opportunities. (G3.2.1.1)
- 4. Public Affairs staff will produce and distribute news releases about the ACT by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year of the Plan. (G1.4.3.2)
- 5. The Public Affairs office will inform the staff about the ACT by July of each year. (G1.2.1.1)
- 6. The Public Affairs office will send a special fall edition of the *Highlights* newsletter to state legislators and DNR Board members. (G2.3.1.1)

7. Public Affairs staff will update the general brochure and update information on all WRD facilities by June 2005. (G3.2.1.2)

## Game Management Section

1. Game Management staff will develop a trial program for teaching archery in schools, as part of the physical education curriculum. (G3.1.3.9)
2. Game Management staff will annually offer skills training at selected specialty hunts. (G3.1.3.1)
3. Section chiefs should encourage and promote the development and enhancement of trails and wildlife viewing areas at WRD facilities and properties, where appropriate. (G3.1.3.7)
4. Tie.
  - a. **Game Management** and Fisheries Management regional supervisors should suggest and encourage any staff interested in teaching Hunter Safety classes to become involved to the extent their work schedules permit. (G3.1.1.4)
  - b. The Senior Wildlife Biologist at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center will provide web addresses for appropriate conservation education sites to post on the WRD education homepage by December 2008. (G1.1.4.3)

## *Project WILD Coordinator*

1. Project WILD Coordinator will schedule and conduct Project WILD educator workshops and highlight the Annual Conservation Theme (ACT) in advanced workshops. (G1.1.1.1)
2. **Project WILD Coordinator** and Regional Education Center (REC) Coordinators will schedule and conduct teacher workshops. These workshops may be designed in consultation with the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) and Curriculum Directors for staff development credit and target critical needs for local school systems. (G1.1.1.2)
3. Tie.
  - a. Project WILD Coordinator will develop articles related to the ACT for the annual Project WILD newsletter. (G1.1.2.2)
  - b. Project WILD Coordinator will annually make contacts with colleges of education, disseminate course materials and resources related to the ACT, and encourage the use of Project WILD in pre-service teacher courses. (G1.1.3.1)
  - c. Project WILD Coordinator will promote and distribute education materials related to resource management and stewardship. (G2.1.1.1)

4. Project WILD Coordinator will highlight resource management techniques in Advanced Project WILD workshops. (G2.1.1.2)
5. Project WILD Coordinator and REC Coordinators will foster partnerships with the Georgia Wildlife Federation to promote schoolyard habitat projects. (G2.2.1.1)

## Fisheries Management Section

1. The Fisheries Section will annually sponsor or co-sponsor 500 Kids Fishing Events. (G3.1.3.4)
2. The Chief of Fisheries will evaluate the potential for experimental kids fishing events (KFEs) to target non-traditional areas, such as county and city park lakes by June 2005. (G3.1.3.5)
3. Section chiefs should encourage and promote the development and enhancement of trails and wildlife viewing areas at WRD facilities and properties, where appropriate. (G3.1.3.7)
4. Game Management and **Fisheries Management** regional supervisors should suggest and encourage any staff interested in teaching Hunter Safety classes to become involved to the extent their work schedules permit. (G3.1.1.4)

## Law Enforcement Section

1. The Boating Safety Coordinator will coordinate the Boating Safety calendar on the DNR website and work with Public Affairs office to advertise upcoming classes through major media outlets during peak times. (G3.1.2.1)
2. Conservation rangers will emphasize the role of law enforcement in wildlife management during their daily contacts and routine presentations. Examples include the importance of licenses, seasons, bag limits, and fair chase. The Hunter Education video, *The Sportsman*, provides good examples. (G2.1.2.4)

### ***Hunter Education Coordinator***

1. Tie.
  - a. Hunter Education Coordinator will replace materials, including the instructor's manual, the student manual, and other materials, as needed. (G3.1.1.2)
  - b. Hunter Education Coordinator will coordinate the Hunter Education calendar on the DNR website and work with Public Affairs office to advertise upcoming classes through major media outlets during peak times. (G3.1.1.5)
2. Hunter Education Coordinator will develop an effective course registration mechanism and evaluate alternatives for providing class registration at no

cost, including trying to negotiate a flat fee for services provided by the Central Reservation System by September 2005. (G3.1.1.6)

3. The Hunter Education Coordinator will seek to provide alternative course opportunities and a useable database by July 2006. (G3.1.1.1)
4. The Hunter Education Coordinator will encourage the Georgia Hunter Education Association to implement a continuing education program for volunteer instructors by June 2007. (G3.1.1.3)

## Nongame Wildlife and Natural Heritage Section

1. Nongame Wildlife – Natural Heritage Section staff will annually assist with special events, such as birding festivals, that teach wildlife observation skills. (G3.1.3.6)
2. Nongame Program will promote the Give Wildlife a Chance poster contest. (G1.1.2.7)
3. Section chiefs should encourage and promote the development and enhancement of trails and wildlife viewing areas at WRD facilities and properties, where appropriate. (G3.1.3.7)
4. Nongame Program Manager will encourage local communities to participate in the Community Wildlife Project. (G2.2.2.3)

## Computer Support

1. Tie.
  - a. WRD Computer Support will provide access to a WRD education homepage through the WRD homepage by September 2008. (G1.1.4.1)
  - b. Section web coordinators will regularly update the website calendar of WRD events and provide detailed information about outdoor recreation opportunities on WRD-operated properties. (G3.2.1.3)
2. Section web coordinators will highlight WRD resource management activities on the WRD website. (G2.1.2.3)

## Regional Education Centers (RECs)

1. REC staff will develop and implement on-site wildlife education programs, which highlight local features of the facility as well as the ACT. (G1.3.2.3)
2. Project WILD Coordinator and **REC Coordinators** will schedule and conduct teacher workshops. These workshops may be designed in consultation with the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) and Curriculum Directors for

- staff development credit and target critical needs for local school systems. (G1.1.1.2)
3. REC Coordinators will annually cooperate with local colleges to foster internship programs at their facilities. (G1.1.3.2)
  4. Tie.
    - a. REC staff will provide outreach programs, as time and resources permit, including those that highlight the ACT. (G1.3.1.1)
    - b. REC Coordinators will annually incorporate outdoor skills training, such as fishing, shooting sports, wildlife observation and identification, orienteering, and recreation, in their programs and special events. (G3.1.3.2)
  5. REC Coordinators will routinely inform local WRD staff about the availability of education materials and provide guidance with local outreach programs. (G1.2.1.3)
  6. REC Coordinators will promote management and stewardship activities at their facilities, including those activities related to the ACT. (G2.1.2.4)
  7. REC Coordinators will routinely encourage schools to participate in Adopt-A-Stream and River Clean Up activities. (G2.2.1.3)
  8. REC Coordinators should offer wildlife camps for youth, as facilities and schedules allow, and include outdoor skills training in the programming. (G3.1.3.3)
  9. Project WILD Coordinator and **REC Coordinators** will foster partnerships with the Georgia Wildlife Federation to promote schoolyard habitat projects. (G2.2.1.1)
  10. WRD staff and **REC Coordinators** should involve schools in local resource management activities, when appropriate (e.g. fish stocking, surveys, habitat restoration). (G2.2.1.2)

## WRD Staff

1. WRD staff will coordinate education programs at special events (e.g. Parent-Child hunts, KFEs, JAKES Day, “Outdoor Adventure Day”, International Migratory Bird Day). (G1.3.2.2)
2. WRD staff will assist RECs with education programs, as time permits. (G1.3.2.1)
3. WRD staff should conduct outreach programs, especially those that highlight the ACT, as individual schedules permit. (G1.3.1.2)

4. WRD staff and volunteers will conduct wildlife programs, as time permits. (G1.3.2.4)
5. WRD staff will invite local officials and community leaders to special events hosted at WRD facilities and properties. (G2.3.1.3)
6. WRD staff should cooperate with conservation organizations and other private groups to promote outdoor recreation training for the public, as opportunities arise. (G3.1.3.8)
7. WRD staff will build partnerships with various organizations (e.g. State Parks, EPD, RESA, GYSTC, UGA 4-H Centers, US Forest Service) to make presentations and distribute information. (G1.4.2.2)
8. Tie.
  - a. WRD staff will give presentations on the ACT and other important topics to various civic and conservation groups. (G1.4.2.1)
  - b. WRD staff should foster partnerships with other agencies (USFS, USFWS, NPS, NRCS, UGA Extension Service) to demonstrate resource management techniques. (G2.1.3.2)
9. WRD staff will present resource management programs to groups and highlight the ACT, when appropriate. (G2.1.2.1)
10. Regional supervisors and program managers should promote public involvement in WRD special events and programs, such as the International Migratory Bird Day. (G2.2.2.2)
11. WRD staff and REC Coordinators should involve schools in local resource management activities, when appropriate (e.g. fish stocking, surveys, habitat restoration). (G2.2.1.2)
12. WRD facility managers will incorporate demonstration areas (e.g. timber management, hatchery operations, wildlife plantings) at WRD facilities and properties, when appropriate. (G2.1.3.1)
13. WRD staff should encourage public involvement in field activities, when appropriate. (G2.2.2.1)

# Ideas for Future Consideration

Although many ideas were generated during the development of the Education Plan, some ideas were not feasible under current staffing levels and budget constraints. To retain the best of these suggestions, several ideas are listed in this section for future consideration.

1. Develop new Regional Education Centers in critical areas of the state, such as southwest and west Georgia.
2. Evaluate Project WILD use by Georgia educators and its influence on Georgia students.
3. Hire a full-time WRD webmaster to maintain and enhance the WRD website.
4. Create a mechanism to allow website visitors to register on-line to receive regular electronic news releases.
5. Develop a hands-on firearms training requirement for the Hunter Education program.
6. Develop a student safety course that focuses on accident prevention.

# Appendix A

## Summary of Results from the WRD Education Plan for 1996-2001

**1996-2001 Wildlife Resources Division Education Plan  
Report Card**

	<b>DID NOT MEET</b>	<b>MEET</b>	<b>EXCEEDS</b>
<b>Goal 1</b>	<b>Appreciation and Understanding</b>		
<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Objective 3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8 (33%)</b>	<b>15 (63%)</b>	<b>1 (4%)</b>
<b>Goal 2</b>	<b>Resource Stewardship</b>		
<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Objective 3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6 (38%)</b>	<b>8 (50%)</b>	<b>2 (12%)</b>
<b>Goal 3</b>	<b>Recreation</b>		
<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Objective 3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Objective 4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>9 (24%)</b>	<b>26 (70%)</b>	<b>2 (6%)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23 (30%)</b>	<b>49 (64%)</b>	<b>5 (6%)</b>

**Outstanding Accomplishments:**

- **Regional Education Center System**
- **Alternative delivery systems for Hunter Education and Boating Safety courses**
- **Central information clearinghouse**
- **Increased emphasis on student contacts by the Law Enforcement Section**
- **Additional educator workshops**

**Needs Improvement:**

- **Standardized record keeping system**
- **Volunteer network system**
- **Emphasis on key conservation messages**
- **Educating elected officials**

## Wildlife Resources Division Education Plan Results Summary 1996-2001

**Educational Goal One: To cultivate an appreciation and understanding of Georgia's wildlife resources.**

**Objective One:** Increase the number of educator contacts by 25% over FY 97 by 2001.

- **Strategy One:** Document data on the total number of educator contacts beginning in FY 97.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- On average, educator contacts through regional education centers increased only 8% over 1997 totals. However, reported numbers are probably not representative of actual numbers as reporting systems are inconsistent.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- Fisheries Management is the only section reporting contacts in an accessible manner for evaluation.
  
- **Strategy Two:** Coordinate and/or conduct teacher-training workshops statewide.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- A volunteer delivery system taught Project WILD curriculum with 328 participants.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Since FY 98, eight Schoolyard Habitat Workshops were held and reached 236 participants. However, participation has dropped off since the first year and no workshops were held the final year.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Coordinators led 15 Advanced Project WILD workshops and reached 394 participants.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Workshops reached 1,422 participants over the past five years. However, accounting practices were inconsistent between centers; therefore, figures are probably not representative of actual totals.
  
- **Strategy Three:** Train WRD associates in the most effective methods for conducting education programs.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Conservation rangers were taught the fundamentals of wildlife and fisheries as well as how to teach hunter and boater education at mandate school.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- WRD education coordinators provide guidance to section staff on teaching fundamentals of wildlife conservation education. However, low participation resulted in a questionable overall result.
  
- **Strategy Four:** Reach 25% of the graduating pre-service teachers through workshops in college settings.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- This tactic was not practical to assess.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Educators at several colleges were trained as Project WILD facilitators.

**Objective Two:** Increase the number of pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade aged youth contacts by 30% over FY 97.

- **Strategy One:** Document data on total number of pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade aged youth contacts beginning in FY 97.
  - Tactic: EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS—Education center student contacts increased, on average, 308% over 1997 totals. Additional youth events increased, on average, 224% over 1997 totals. Overall, efforts directed towards youth are increasing but results from the effort are not clear.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS—Even though total estimated contacts increased over the five year period, only 1 section properly distinguished and documented youth contacts as directed by the tactic.
  
- **Strategy Two:** Offer in-classroom I&E programs throughout the state.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—Conservation Rangers performed 12,299 programs for 648,252 students, which deserves significant recognition. However, reported totals may be inconsistent with actual totals since information specific to this tactic was not recorded.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—Outreach programs have been integrally associated with standard Regional Education Center programming.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS—Due to reporting differences, this tactic was not measurable.
  
- **Strategy Three:** WRD will host/sponsor wildlife conservation education programs for youth.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- On average, 20,000 hunter education students were trained.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Although expectations were met, this tactic is best measured in another section. Attempting to evaluate this tactic under this objective creates a “double dipping” effect.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXECTATIONS—The Georgia Outdoor Family Festival was cancelled after FY 98 and future years due to difficulties in coordinating the event with metro recreation centers and lack of follow-up participation.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—Wildlife conservation programs were presented by all Regional Education Centers, however quantity and quality of programs were unable to be evaluated.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—All WRD Sections completed this tactic, however no standardized reporting system was established to accurately evaluate this tactic. Numbers of programs were incorporated into youth and adult contacts in a previous tactic. By reporting numbers under this tactic, a “double dipping” effect would occur.

**Objective Three:** Increase the total number of adult contacts by 5% over FY 97.

- **Strategy One:** Document data on the total number of adult contacts beginning in FY 97.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS—Not completed on a Divisional level.

- Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS—Although efforts were made to develop contacts with the adult public, documentation, as directed by the strategy, was limited and suspect.
- **Strategy Two:** Provide wildlife conservation information and education for adults.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—The revised hunter education courses are more student friendly when compared with previous programs offering current hunter education topics and limited practical experience.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—Becoming an Outdoors Woman was a popular event that reached attendance goals each year it was offered.

**Educational Goal Two: To foster wise stewardship of these resources.**

**Objective One:** Increase educational opportunities and involvement in stewardship activities by the general public by creating one new stewardship program and enhancing three existing ones.

- **Strategy One:** Aquatic Education Coordinator will work with Environmental Protection Division to determine ways WRD associates can increase public involvement in Adopt-A-Stream stewardship activities.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- Since section reports cannot confirm totals, this tactic can't be properly evaluated.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- Environmental Protection Division primarily handles the Adopt-A-Stream program.
- **Strategy Two:** Improve and promote the Turn In Poachers (TIP) program to the general public.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Working with the TIP board is an ongoing relationship.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- SOC handles TIP calls.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- The Public Affairs office periodically disseminated TIP news releases.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Stickers were produced and distributed.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Even though a mandatory policy is not in place most vehicles have the TIP stickers in place and accomplished the awareness objective.
- **Strategy Three:** Establish a division volunteer network to provide opportunities for public involvement in Wildlife Resources Division Activities.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS--Was not completed.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS--Was not completed.

**Objective Two:** Through Wildlife Resources Division education and outreach, increase partnership programs and other programs that encourage landowner/corporate involvement in wildlife conservation efforts.

- **Strategy One:** Educate Georgia's landowners and land users about wildlife issues and how to become involved in wildlife conservation efforts.
  - Tactic: EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS-- This program is continually growing impacting millions of acres of wildlife habitat throughout the state.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Protection and management for red-cockaded woodpeckers is underway.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Nesting programs were established.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Cooperatively, Kids Fishing Events have grown to an integral component of aquatic education programs for the Fisheries Management Section and a vital source of angling information and opportunities for children.
  - Tactic: EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS-- Total publications regarding landowner conservation efforts exceeded expectations over the past five years.

**Objective Three:** Inform Georgia's elected officials about the benefits and values of wildlife resources when making land-use decisions.

- **Strategy One:** Develop a program to educate and inform elected officials about the economic benefits and intrinsic values of wildlife in making land use decisions.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- Was not completed.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- Was not completed.

<b>Educational Goal Three: To promote safe and ethical natural resource-based recreation.</b>
---

**Objective One:** Increase by 5% training and education aimed at safety, ethics and skills in outdoor recreation.

- **Strategy One:** Public Affairs will annually obtain baseline data regarding the total number of individuals reached through training and education efforts.
  - No Tactics
- **Strategy Two:** Modify and improve Georgia's Hunter Education Program to bring it into compliance with Hunter Education Association recommended minimum class curricula to meet future standards.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Compliance was met.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- This change was implemented on July 1, 1997.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- The entire course curriculum, teaching materials, and delivery methods for the Hunter Education Program has been implemented.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- A full time Hunter Education Coordinator position was established in November 1997 to help facilitate communication with

- volunteer hunter education instructors and to continue improvements in the Hunter Education Program.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- The GA Hunter Education course is now 10 hours.
- **Strategy Three:** WRD will annually offer and promote programs that teach outdoor ethics, safety and skills to youth and adults.
  - Tactic: EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS-- The number of Kids Fishing Events was twice the education plans expected total for all years but one.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- All year except FY 97, the goal of 25 announcements was met with outstanding number of releases in FY 01.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- The Georgia Outdoor Family Festival was cancelled after FY 98 and future years due to difficulties in coordinating the event with metro recreation centers and lack of follow-up participation.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—Becoming an Outdoors Woman was a popular event that reached attendance goals each year it was offered.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- On average, 20,000 hunter education students were trained.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—Boating safety classes were offered successfully.
- **Strategy Four:** Present hunter and boating safety I&E programs to schools and youth groups.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS—Was not completed.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS—Information was not available.

**Objective Two:** Maintain participation in hunting at 1995 levels as determined by annual hunting license sales.

- **Strategy One:** Encourage Georgia citizens to become involved with sport hunting.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Each year the number of adult/child hunts continued to increase.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- A combination of low turnout and minimal publication of events resulted in poor success of tactic.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- A minimum of 18 shooting ranges was operational throughout the past five years and was popular with users.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- The Public Affairs office annually promotes Youth Waterfowl Hunting Day through a news release and a public service announcement.
- **Strategy Two:** Develop and offer workshops/trainings that will teach people how to hunt.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- The Georgia Outdoor Family Festival was cancelled after FY 98 and future years due to difficulties in coordinating the event with metro recreation centers and lack of follow-up participation.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Becoming an Outdoors Woman was a popular event that reached attendance goals each year it was offered.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Proper archery techniques are taught to youth at select Regional Education Centers.

- **Strategy Three:** Promote availability of hunting opportunities targeting new hunters and former hunters.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—The Public Affairs office completed regular news release to support this tactic.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- An information clearinghouse was developed and is updated regularly.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Offered information annually but quantity and quality of information is not monitored.

**Objective Three:** Increase participation in fishing by 5% as measured by annual license sales in FY 95.

- **Strategy One:** Offer opportunities for Georgia citizens to learn how to fish.
  - Tactic: EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS-- The number of Kids Fishing Events was twice the education plans expected total for all years but one.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Currently, there are 27 sites owned by the Department of Natural Resources (state parks and the Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center) with a fishing tackle loaner program.
- **Strategy Two:** Promote availability of fishing opportunities to new and former anglers.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS—The Public Affairs office completed regular news release to support this tactic.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- An information clearinghouse was developed and is updated regularly.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Offered information annually but quantity and quality of information is not monitored.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Fisheries Management has annually updated public fishing prospects and small lakes guides and these publications have been included in the Information Clearinghouse.

**Objective Four:** Increase participation in watchable wildlife activities by 5% with baseline data being drawn from 1991 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Survey of Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife-Associated Recreation in Georgia edition.

- **Strategy One:** Promote opportunities for Georgia citizens to participate in watchable wildlife activities.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- The minimum number of press releases was not obtained except during FY 01.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Project turned over to and was completed by the Georgia Wildlife Federation.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- An information clearinghouse was developed and is updated regularly.
  - Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- No priority was given to this tactic.
  - Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Signage was placed at all watchable wildlife sites.
- **Strategy Two:** Offer educational programs and other incentives that encourage participation in watchable wildlife activities such as birdwatching, backyard wildlife, hiking and camping.

- Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- Activities related to watchable wildlife are taught periodically in Regional Education Centers, however programs focused on this objective have not been developed at this time.
- Tactic: MET EXPECTATIONS-- Becoming an Outdoors Woman was a popular event that reached attendance goals each year it was offered.
- Tactic: DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS-- Information was not provided.

# Appendix B

## Correlation of the Direction for the Decade Report and the WRD Education Plan for FY05-09

## **Correlation of the Direction for the Decade Report and the WRD Education Plan for FY04-09**

The Direction for the Decade (DFTD) report contained 72 suggestions related to education. The Education Plan incorporated 43 (56.8%) of these suggestions. Of the remaining 29 suggestions, nearly half were considered by the Education Committee to be outside the scope of the Plan. The remainder of the suggestions were deemed by the Education Committee either not feasible, an ineffective approach, or was already implemented within the Division. Several suggestions related to Hunter Education from the DFTD report were initially incorporated into the Plan, but the Law Enforcement Section determined that these recommendations would not be implemented at this time. The suggestions from the DFTD working group sessions are listed below, with comments by the Committee regarding its relevance to the Plan. Cross-references to the specific Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Action Items of the Education Plan are in parentheses. For example, G1.1.1.1 refers to Goal 1, Objective 1, Strategy 1, and Tactic 1.

### **Regional Education Centers** (4 out of 5 suggestions were incorporated into the Plan.)

- Establish a closer link with and/or play a more active role in developing programs and curriculum for the regional education centers to ensure that the centers are meeting the agency's outreach needs and covering pertinent habitat issues. (ACTs and several action items under Goals 1 and 2 will provide focus for educational programming. In particular G1.3.2.3 best addresses this suggestion.)
- Establish more regional education centers. (The Education Committee agrees with this recommendation and highlights this suggestion in the Program Recommendations of the report.)
- Make regional education centers more accessible to more kids. (Although we all agree that exposing more kids to REC programs is desirable, it is impractical. All RECs are operating near capacity; therefore, it is difficult to make room for more.)
- Add staff to existing regional education centers. (The Education Committee agrees with this recommendation and REC Coordinators have identified the lack of staffing and permanent funding as the two most critical limitations. The Education Committee tried to address this need for more staffing through G1.3.2.1, which encourages staff participation in REC programs.)
- Partner with Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) to sell environmental education centers to local schools. (The Education Committee supports the idea of partnerships with RESA and attempts to stress that in G1.1.1.2 and G1.4.2.2.)

### **Boater/Hunter Education** (7 of 15 suggestions were incorporated into the Plan.)

Many of the DFTD recommendations about the boater safety and hunter education programs were incorporated into Goal 3, Objective 1, Strategies 1 and 2. Specifically, action items were developed addressing minimum age requirements, updating course materials, staff development for instructors, and course registration.

- Rework the Hunter Education program, including the registration process for both the participant and the instructors. (G3.1.1.6)

- Develop better guidelines and/or a training program for hunter education instructors to improve their methods of delivering hunter education. (G3.1.1.3)
- Update hunter education and boating safety education materials, including videos. (G3.1.1.2)
- Consider a minimum age limit for youth participating in hunter education. (This suggestion creates potential conflict between parents, students, and instructors, which are best addressed on a case-by-case basis by the instructor.)
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the on-line hunter education program. (This issue was not addressed in the Education Plan. It is assumed that this will be an on-going activity of the Hunter Education Program.)
- Develop a hands-on firearms training requirement for hunter education. (This is a good suggestion supported by the Education Committee and the Law Enforcement Section, but current staffing levels are not adequate to support this demand. This suggestion was retained in the Ideas for Future Consideration section.)
- Make boating education mandatory. (This suggestion requires legislative action that is beyond the scope of this plan.)
- Develop an interactive game to teach hunter safety. (This idea was discussed by the Education Committee, but was considered outside the scope of this Plan.)
- Develop a student safety course that focuses on accident prevention. (This need is currently being met in many areas of the state through the efforts of local instructors. The idea of a formal safety course has merit, but current staffing levels are not adequate to support this increased demand. This suggestion was retained in the Ideas for Future Consideration section.)
- Develop the hunting education and boating safety programs in the mold of Project Wild. (The Education Committee felt this was not an effective approach to address the topics.)
- Incorporate hands-on components to education courses, such as camp for children. (G3.1.3.3)
- Dedicate staff to teach hunter education and boating safety. (G3.1.1.4)
- Consider more Game Management Section involvement in hunter education. (G3.1.1.4)
- Develop a set schedule for hunter education classes. (The Education Committee discussed this idea with the Hunter Education Coordinator, who indicated that classes were typically offered on a regular and set schedule.)
- Consider privatizing hunter education. (The Law Enforcement Section is mandated by legislation to teach Hunter Education.)

**Youth Education – Classroom** (11 of 12 suggestions were incorporated into the Plan.)

- Encourage the Director to establish a relationship with the Department of Education Superintendent and the Board of Education to facilitate the inclusion of natural resource issues into the state curriculum. (G1.1.3.3)
- Provide and/or increase classroom ready materials for teachers. Focus on one grade level and send the information to every teacher in the state. Provide a person to teach the unit in the classroom. (Providing materials for teachers is a high priority that is highlighted throughout the Plan but is emphasized in G1.1. Strategies 1 through 4.)
- Develop education programs that can “piggyback” on curriculum that students already are learning. (The Education Committee agrees that wildlife education should be integrated into state-mandated curricula. This is best accomplished by developing materials that comply with the Department of Education’s Quality Core Curriculum (QCC), which is done with most REC programs and other formal education activities of the Division.)
- Develop an outdoor education elective for schools that would include segments on hunting, boating, natural resources management and other issues. (Although influencing the state mandated curricula is difficult, WRD hopes to establish a better working relationship with the Department of Education, as described in G1.1.3.3).
- Work with the Legislature and the Department of Education to mandate a natural resource curriculum to be taught in schools. Standardize key expected outcomes for a core curriculum. (This recommendation is addressed in the comments in the preceding recommendation.)
- Enhance information available on Division’s Internet site for teachers and provide links to other research sites. (The Education Committee made this a high priority in the Education Plan. Enhancing the website to meet education goals was described in G1.1.4.)
- Provide teachers with an inventory of nearby field experiences. (The Education Committee recommended that field opportunities be listed on the website (G2.1.2.3) and that the public be encouraged to participate in field activities G2.2.)
- Develop brochures and other materials geared for teachers about the role of the Department of Natural Resources. (This recommendation will be part of the focus in fourth year of the Education Plan, under the ACT emphasis.)
- Develop curriculum for schools that can portray hunting and fishing in positive light. (This recommendation will be part of the focus in fourth year of the Education Plan, under the ACT emphasis.)
- Develop a “teachers in the outdoors” program. (Although this program was not specifically identified in the Plan, numerous opportunities are provided for teachers to learn and participate in the outdoor programs of WRD, especially in G1.1.1 and G2.2.1.)
- Develop natural resources curriculum that are reading and math oriented and hire staff or use retired educators to develop support materials. (Workshops will be developed, which

target the critical needs of teachers (G1.1.1.2). Hiring retired educators is encouraged for special projects, as funds permit.)

- Hire staff to develop a natural resources curriculum. (The Education Committee recognizes this as an on-going need and supports this suggestion. We believe, however, this suggestion is outside the scope of this Plan.)

**Youth Education (Other)** (1 of 3 suggestions were incorporated into the Plan.)

- Develop a mentoring program for hunting and fishing for kids and adults. (The Education Committee discussed this suggestion at length. Based on data from existing mentor programs, we concluded there was no evidence that mentor programs provide long-term benefits. South Carolina stated that their mentor program was not effective and very costly. Over \$250,000 was spent for a mentor program that reached only 93 children.)
- Work closer with conservation groups to provide mentoring for outdoor recreation opportunities. (Based on the comments above, it is difficult to advocate this ineffective program to WRD partners.)
- Offer a hands-on outdoor camp for kids or restart the summer youth camp. (G3.1.3.3)

**Internet** (3 of 5 suggestions were incorporated into the Plan.)

- Upgrade the web site and use the technology available to reflect the agency's commitment to excellence and progressive operations. (The Education Committee recommended the addition of an education page on the website, G1.1.4.1.)
- Use the web site to as a functional link between the agency and our constituents by allowing for timely interaction through surveys and other communications tools. (Using the website as a tool for surveys is outside the scope of this project. The Plan includes a recommendation to disseminate information directly to interested parties under the Future Considerations section.)
- Provide regional offices with the capabilities to make faster changes. (This suggestion is outside the scope of the Education Plan.)
- Develop a Division Intranet page for each region to share information on regional issues. (Although upgrading the WRD website was a high priority in the Education Plan, providing a mechanism for the regions to share information is outside the scope of this Plan.)
- Hire a Division web master. (Listed under Future Considerations section.)

**Public Relations** (6 of 11 suggestions were incorporated into the Plan.)

- Increase public awareness of Division services. (G3.2.1.2 partially deals with this suggestion. We believe the Education Plan is designed to improve public awareness about key conservation messages and important wildlife issues. Promoting awareness of the broad range of WRD services; therefore, is outside the scope of this Plan.)

- Direct more public relations efforts on general hunting information and statistics. (G3.2.1.1)
- Develop more “canned” programs for use by associates on a variety of subjects that cross Division and Section lines. (The Education Committee felt this was extremely important, especially as it relates to promoting the ACTs. This suggestion is contained in G1.2.1.2.)
- Develop high visibility public service announcements on:
  - the Division
  - hunter ethics
  - taking kids hunting and fishing
  - the role of hunters
  - conservation issues

(Developing PSAs is a regular duty of the Public Affairs Office. This responsibility was addressed in various action items under Goal 1.)

- Encourage *Georgia Outdoors* to cover more “hook and bullet” shows. Due to budget cuts imposed in FY04, funding of *Georgia Outdoors* was cut.
- Develop intense advertising campaigns for key issues, including conservation messages. (A major component of the Education Plan is the ACT campaign, which is described in the introduction of the report. This campaign will be a concerted effort to reach the public with a focused wildlife message.)
- Develop media contacts on a national level to showcase Georgia opportunities. (This is outside the scope of the Education Mission of WRD, but the suggestion is an on-going effort of the Public Affairs Office.)
- Consider bilingual materials (public service announcements, publications, signs, advertising campaigns etc.) to reach minorities. (The Education Committee discussed this issue at length. This issue has far-reaching implications that affect every level of state government. We agreed that WRD should not take action toward this suggestion until the Governor provides further guidance. We concluded, however, that the need for developing bilingual materials should be handled on a case-by-case basis by field staff.)
- Standardize the Division’s hunting message. (The Education Committee is not clear on what this means. The goal of the Education Plan is to promote WRD’s education messages. Hunting and fishing are certainly important features of that message.)
- Use celebrities to promote hunting, boating safety and wildlife issues. (The Education Committee feels that the Public Affairs office should utilize this suggestion as circumstances allow. As an overall approach, this suggestion is not cost effective.)
- Expand public relations staff and do better job of getting information out to the public or dedicate staff to work specifically on information and education in each region. (This suggestion is outside the scope of the Education Plan.)

**Legislators** (2 of 3 suggestions were incorporated into the Plan.)

- Educate legislators and county and state court judges on Division issues. (G2.3.1.1-3)
- Develop a roundtable session for legislators to learn about Division issues. (Same as the above suggestion.)
- Hire a lobbyist to assist with funding problems at both the national and state level in order to provide additional resources for education. (This suggestion is outside the scope of the Education Plan.)

**General** ( 9 of 18 suggestions were incorporated into the Plan.)

- Develop a greater presence in urban areas. (The Education Committee felt that the Fisheries and Nongame Sections have the greatest opportunity to impact urban areas. Toward this end, a municipal kids fishing program was recommended (G3.1.3.5) as well as the development of an Urban Streams poster (G1.1.2.6).)
- Provide more education to local law enforcement agencies on wildlife. (Based on input from the Law Enforcement Section, this suggestion is best handled at a county level on an issue-by-issue basis.)
- Create a Division magazine and make it accessible on the Internet. (Production of a magazine is not cost-effective nor is it feasible.)
- Develop more printed materials for education purposes on targeted issues (such as stream protection). (This suggestion will be incorporated into the ACT campaign and is contained in the strategies under G1.1.)
- Create more nature trails and/or interpretive signs on wildlife management areas or in urban areas. (G3.1.3.7)
- Work on a national level to pitch a Disney-type movie with positive hunting/fishing ethics. (This is outside the scope of the Education Plan.)
- Purchase more information and education materials and equipment for use by staff and provide in-service training on programs that can be given with it. (Utilizing WRD staff to deliver educational messages to students and the public is an essential part of the Education Plan. To aid staff, the WRD Education Committee and local RECs will provide support to staff throughout the five year plan. Four action items specifically target this suggestion – G1.1.2.1, G1.2.1.3, G1.2.1.3, and G2.1.3.3.)
- Develop a mobile aquatic education unit. (Based on results from other states with a similar unit, this item is very expensive and requires dedicated staff to administer the unit. After much discussion, the Education Committee felt that the cost was too much for us to propose as a recommendation.)
- Design state facilities to benefit education by including classrooms, equipment, and outdoor education opportunities. (The Education Committee felt like this suggestion was being addressed at new facilities. Dodge County PFA is one example.)

- Conduct more public meetings to determine what the public wants. (The Education Committee feels that the public needs surveys are being conducted on a periodic basis at a Division level and in various WRD programs.)
- Develop an “Adopt-a-Stream”-type program for boat ramps with schools and businesses and designate them with signage. (Outside the scope of the Education Plan.)
- Develop skill-based seminars aimed at specific groups (minorities, college kids, etc.) and partner with corporate partners for funding. (The Division already offers skills-based programs, such as Hunter Education and Boater Safety (G3.1). Also, G3.1.3 recommends other opportunities for skills training.)
- Improve communications among Sections to coordinate education efforts. (The establishment of a standing Education Committee will help improve communications among sections and coordinate this Division-wide initiative. (Program Recommendations, Evaluation and Oversight Section)
- Partner with colleges to develop co-op program to introduce natural resource issues, especially with schools that do not offer coursework in these areas. (G1.1.3)
- Develop a comprehensive resource management booklet to incorporate information from all Sections. (A general brochure already exists, which include the suggested information. The Education Plan (G3.2.1.2) recommends that this brochure be updated.)
- Promote information on wildlife management areas to state park patrons. (The Education Plan does not specifically address providing information about WMAs to parks visitors; however, the Plan addresses ways to educate parks visitors about wildlife issues in G1.3.2.5 and .6)
- Consider bilingual skills when hiring new associates. (This suggestion is outside the scope of the Education Plan.)
- Hire staff with marketing skills. (This suggestion is outside the scope of the Education Plan.)

