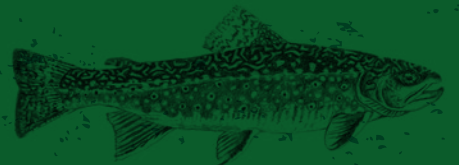
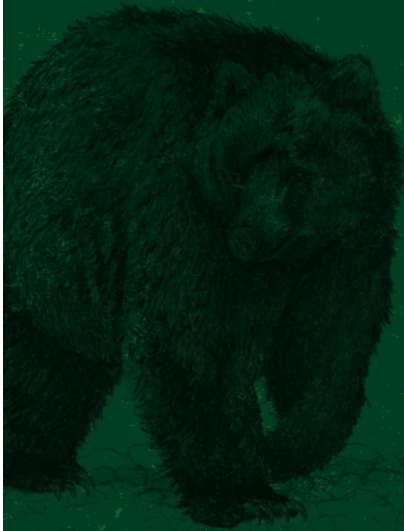




# The Strategic Plan 2020-2025



Commissioner Judith A. Camuso



# Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Strategic Planning Framework 2020-2025

## OVERVIEW

This document is a “strategic framework” that includes the essential elements of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife’s (MDIFW) strategic plan for the years 2020-2025.

This framework has and will continue to guide the development of annual departmental action plans that detail the steps necessary to accomplish the goals defined herein, as well as responsible parties, necessary resources and timelines. While MDIFW’s strategic framework will remain largely unchanged over the five-year planning period, the Department and its leadership are committed to ongoing monitoring and an annual review of multiyear objectives to ensure sustained relevance and responsiveness to emerging challenges and opportunities. The Department’s detailed action plans will be developed annually in alignment with the budget process.

This strategic planning framework was informed by one-on-one interviews and discussion groups with key stakeholders reflecting the state’s diversity; surveys of all MDIFW employees; and a review of previous customer satisfaction surveys, reports, and collected analysis. Led by MDIFW commissioners and directors, the development of multi-year objectives and the year-one action plan that supports their achievement, included the contributions of task forces composed of a diverse mix of employees from across the Department.

The MDIFW deeply appreciates the input received from the hundreds of individuals whose voices are reflected in this plan. Mainer’s respect for the state’s incomparable natural resources and firm commitment to the work of the MDIFW remain essential.

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## Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Strategic Planning Framework 2020-2025

### **Mission**

MDIFW protects and manages Maine's fish and wildlife and their habitats, promotes Maine's outdoor heritage, and safely connects people with nature through responsible recreation, sport, and science.

### **Vision**

The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) is the leader in protecting Maine's fish and wildlife; as well as Maine citizens and visitors who enjoy the outdoors. The Department engages individuals, organizations, landowners and outdoor enthusiasts to conserve and enhance the state's fish and wildlife populations and habitats, as well as promote and grow Maine's outdoor heritage.

MDIFW works to ensure and protect public access to Maine's lands and waters, and actively promotes enjoyable, safe, responsible recreation in Maine's outdoors — from hunting and fishing to paddling and bird-watching.

The Department and its employees are leaders in conservation and conservation law enforcement. Our workforce is diverse, dedicated and driven. We prize and value continued learning, innovation, and development, and believe in a supportive workplace culture and a commitment to excel.

The Department is a national leader in enhancing and protecting fish, wildlife and their habitats; and providing Maine's citizens and visitors with unparalleled access to an extraordinary array of natural resources and experiences.

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# Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Strategic Planning Framework 2020-2025

## GOALS

To achieve our vision and stay true to our mission, we have defined the following goals to guide our work through 2025:

### 1. Workforce

Successfully attract, support, and retain a highly skilled workforce and build an organizational structure and culture that values diversity, communication and teamwork.

### 2. Healthy Fish and Wildlife Habitats

Partner with the public to achieve shared goals for sustainability and maintaining and improving healthy fish and wildlife populations and habitats, despite environmental changes and shifts in land ownership.

### 3. Access

Engage landowners and the public to achieve stewardship goals and provide appropriate recreational access.

### 4. Communication

Measurably increase public knowledge of and support for the MDIFW's work.

### 5. Customer Experience

Promote public engagement with Maine's natural resources and support safe, responsible, and positive outdoor experiences.

*These goals are inextricably linked and listed in no particular order.*

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# Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Strategic Planning Framework 2020-2025

## OBJECTIVES

To allow us to monitor and measure progress and ensure accountability in our work, under each of the five strategic goals is a set of objectives. These objectives will be reevaluated annually and will guide the development of our annual action plans.

### 1. Workforce

Successfully attract, support, and retain a highly skilled workforce and build an organizational structure and culture that values diversity, communication and teamwork.

#### Strategic Objectives

- Increase diversity of our workforce to reflect the diversity of Maine's population
  - Develop attraction and recruitment strategies that result in multiple qualified candidates for each vacancy
  - Implement policies and employ strategies that support retention of high-performing employees
  - Assess and adjust, where possible, the Department's pay and benefits to ensure they are appropriately competitive
  - Annually assess our internal communications and implement strategies that support our shared commitment to departmental goals and to a respectful, inclusive and collaborative workplace
  - Provide training and education that support career advancement and foster the development of skilled managers and leaders
  - Implement succession planning strategies that anticipate vacancies and prepare employees for the potential of filling those roles
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## Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Strategic Planning Framework 2020-2025

### 2. Healthy Fish and Wildlife Habitats

Partner with the public to achieve shared goals for sustainability and maintaining and improving healthy fish and wildlife populations and habitats, despite environmental changes and shifts in land ownership.

#### Strategic Objectives

- Ensure the incorporation of the high-level priorities of state and federal plans (such as the State Wildlife Action Plan, Species Recovery Plans, and Big Game Management Plan) into annual staff work-plans
  - Identify strategic partnerships and build and maintain collaborative partner relationships to achieve shared goals
  - Develop and implement a plan to identify and conserve vulnerable high-value habitats
  - Identify important threats to fish and wildlife and their habitats (such as habitat loss, invasive species, climate change, etc.) and prioritize and implement appropriate conservation strategies to address them
  - Increase public input and engagement in developing and revising policies, rules, and regulations
  - Improve enforcement actions to reflect conservation priorities
  - Provide the resources, education, and training necessary to ensure employees are leaders in the science of wildlife conservation, including modern practices of enforcement
  - Develop, implement, and assess equipment, public use infrastructure, and facility plans that support the agency's mandate to protect fish and wildlife habitats while also providing recreational opportunities for the public
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## Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Strategic Planning Framework 2020-2025

### 3. Access

Engage landowners and the public to achieve stewardship goals and provide appropriate recreational access.

#### Strategic Objectives

- Develop, implement, and assess a landowner relations program to increase landowner satisfaction and provide technical assistance regarding fish and wildlife management
  - Create, implement and assess strategies to incentivize landowners to manage their land in accordance with MDIFW priorities
  - Identify the land/water access priorities for Maine and develop and implement appropriate strategies to retain or secure that access
  - Create, implement and assess strategies that will result in annual increases in the number of municipalities receiving technical assistance to guide and better inform development decisions
  - Develop, implement and assess a relationship management program to cultivate and maintain supportive relationships with partners, landowner groups, and land trusts
  - Develop and implement strategies to measurably increase responsible use by those who are accessing private and/or public lands for recreation
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## Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Strategic Planning Framework 2020-2025

### 4. Communication

Measurably increase public knowledge and support the MDIFW's work.

#### Strategic Objectives

- Develop and implement a marketing and communications strategy that is based on data and responsive to, and benchmarked by, public surveys
  - Develop, implement, and assess message strategies that result in measurably increasing the public's awareness of the Department's breadth of work and depth of expertise, the value of wildlife management and conservation, and their trust in and support for MDIFW
  - Develop, implement, and assess message strategies that support the Department's goal of ensuring safety in the outdoors
  - Develop, implement and assess strategies that provide all employees with the information and training they need to actively support the department's communication strategies
  - Develop, implement, and assess communication strategies to provide the public with essential information about nuisance animals and measurably reduce calls and time spent by staff
  - Develop and implement materials and message strategies that highlight for land-owners the socioeconomic and environmental benefits of outdoor recreation and for the public the importance of safe and courteous practices
  - Retain or grow the Department's national reputation and Maine's standing as the state with the third highest rate of outdoor activity
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## Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Strategic Planning Framework 2020-2025

### 5. Customer Experience

Promote public engagement with Maine's natural resources and support safe, responsible, and positive outdoor experiences.

#### Strategic Objectives

- Set and achieve individual goals for increases in participation in hunting, angling, trapping and citizen science
  - Increase the number/percentage of the public expressing high levels of satisfaction for the work of the department and the individuals with whom they interact
  - Develop, implement, and assess a curriculum and ongoing training program that promotes a high level of customer service
  - Develop and implement an ongoing process for identifying and remediating unreasonable barriers to participation in outdoor activities
  - Identify and support efforts by current and potential partners that align with the Department's goal to promote outdoor activity among youth, less experienced adults, and visitors to Maine
  - Continuously review and simplify laws regarding hunting, fishing, and trapping
  - Improve internal communication systems to be more effective, efficient, and diverse
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