

# Who We Are and Where We're Going

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks touches the lives of almost everyone who lives in or visits this state. Our work affects ranchers, hunters, anglers, farmers, outfitters, guides, state parks visitors, hotel and cafe owners, tourists, fly shop employees, students, and many others.

Because of our vast effect, we are obligated to do the best job we can. And to continually improve.

The department took a big step in that direction recently with completion of a new FWP vision that sets the direction for what this department wants to achieve in the next decade. It contains eight core values, nine commitments, and roughly two dozen actions for fulfilling our promises to the public and our employees.

Our core values, as detailed in the new vision document, are to serve the public, embrace the public trust, honor tradition and heritage, work with landowners, provide leadership, use science, provide stewardship, and value our workforce. These core values guide all of us in this department as we do business every day.

Our nine commitments are too lengthy to list here. But they include such promises as doing a better job of understanding and responding to public expectations, providing diverse opportunities and services, and remaining fiscally responsible and sustainable.

FWP's new vision was created by employees from all levels of the department statewide using input from ten public and eight employee "listening sessions" held last summer across Montana.

It's been nearly 20 years since FWP last developed a vision for the future. Most of us in the department—myself included—weren't around then. We didn't have the opportunity to join those discussions about what FWP is and where it is going. What's more, because much about Montana has changed over the past two decades, we need a new vision that addresses new challenges. For instance:

- Hunters and anglers increasingly request more and better information, access, and opportunity.
- Interest in nongame wildlife management and wildlife watching continues to grow.
- Fast-paced technologies such as social media and mobile, personalized communication platforms are creating new opportunities and challenges for the department.

▸ Visits to state parks have doubled in recent years, while revenue for management and maintenance has remained flat.

▸ Currently, more than half of FWP staff have worked for the department less than 10 years. Many may not be aware of this agency's core values and guiding principles.

▸ Traditional funding sources alone are no longer sufficient to meet our growing responsibilities and public demands.

Montana has long excelled in fish, wildlife, and state parks conservation and management. But we can't simply rest on past achievements. If FWP is to remain relevant in today's rapidly changing social, economic, and natural environments, we must chart a smart and effective course. We must build on the department's best traditions while embracing new public values, interests, and ways of doing business. FWP's new vision will do that by, among many things:

▸ increasing the public's understanding of the services FWP provides while identifying where we are not meeting public expectations and how we can improve;

▸ creating a more cohesive and effective conservation community throughout Montana;

▸ growing a stronger, broader, and more stable funding base for the work we do; and

▸ strengthening the department by improving internal communication and creating a unified sense of common purpose.

For any organization to remain relevant and effective, it must regularly examine why it exists, where it is headed, and whether it has been fully achieving its mission. That's what we've done with the new FWP vision. I'm

confident that this new vision will help both our new and longtime employees continue to serve the public while conserving and enhancing the wildlife, fisheries, state parks, and outdoor recreation and heritage that define Montana's identity and character.

—M. Jeff Hagener, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Director

*The FWP Vision and Guide document will be available at [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) later this summer.*



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