

**DIVISION  
OF PUBLIC  
SAFETY AND  
RESOURCE  
PROTECTION**



**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2024–2027**

*Protecting  
People &  
Natural  
Resources*

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources – Division Of Public Safety And Resource Protection (DPSRP) provides law enforcement, public safety, environmental protection, resource protection and recreational education services to all people who live, work and recreate in Wisconsin. Our staff works with tireless passion to provide a high level of service to the people and resources of our great state through education, enforcement and community involvement. Our staff makes us capable, our partnerships make us strong, and our commitment to the natural world makes us relevant to all.

For decades, the DPSRP has used strategic plans linked to the DNR’s mission to guide our thinking, our goals and our work. By reflecting on the past, evaluating the present and exploring the future, we endeavor to guide the DPSRP in a progressive, responsible and mindful way. Trends and cultures change over time so through strategic planning DPSRP remains adaptable, forward-thinking and relevant. While change is inevitable and important, our timeless focus is on protecting, promoting, enhancing and passing on Wisconsin’s natural resources to future generations.

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**The foundation of the Division Of Public Safety And Resource Protection strategic plan is four overarching priorities:**

**1. We Serve Our Residents – By enhancing public safety, public health and enjoyment of outdoor recreational experiences.**

**2. We Protect And Enhance Our Natural Resources – By preserving our air, land, water, wildlife, fish, forests and the ecosystems that sustain all life.**

**3. We Care About Future Generations – By promoting safety education and encouraging everyone to be stewards of our natural resources on behalf of future generations.**

**4. Our Staff Are Our Strength – By providing our staff with fulfilling careers while leading and adapting to achieve our mission.**

# PRIORITY 1

**We Serve Our Residents** – By enhancing public safety, public health and enjoyment of outdoor recreational experiences.

***We will ensure our staff are trained to prioritize public and officer safety, have the equipment and authority necessary to safely carry out their duties, and focus on reducing off-highway vehicle crashes.***

**Objective 1.1: Provide training to ensure staff can safely and effectively respond to and investigate incidents, focusing on scenarios that occur frequently on recreational vehicles and recreational properties.**

- 1. Tactic:** Identify primary safety concerns on recreational properties and provide training to staff with a primary goal of reducing recreational property incidents.
- 2. Tactic:** Identify specialized trainings needed and prioritize trainings that would most enhance public and officer safety.
- 3. Tactic:** Identify any subject matter experts/instructors internally or at partner agencies. Work with instructors identified to determine the most effective platform for each training (webinar, classroom, scenarios).
- 4. Tactic:** When appropriate, involve internal partners, or external partners to partake in division trainings.
- 5. Tactic:** Provide training for division management on assisting staff through critical incidents, mental health, physical health and well-being situations.
- 6. Tactic:** Evaluate crash investigation practices and provide wardens with refresher crash investigation training.

**Objective 1.2: Proactively address division capital development improvement needs, especially regarding recreational fleet vehicles for enforcement, rescue operations, equipment and storage needs.**

- 1. Tactic:** Develop a recurring timeline that specifies all significant equipment replacement needs that will require a state budget request. Proactively address funding needs through budget initiatives and pursuing alternative funding sources.
- 2. Tactic:** Develop a 20-year Building Roof Inspection and Repair Plan for division maintained and leased buildings, along with a 10-year capital development plan for storage building renovation and replacement.
- 3. Tactic:** Develop a 20-year Division Boat Replacement Capital Improvement Plan, along with a simplified and centralized buying process.

# PRIORITY 1

We Serve Our Residents – By enhancing public safety, public health and enjoyment of outdoor recreational experiences.

## **Objective 1.3: Pursue new ways to promote recreational vehicle safety with a primary goal of crash reduction.**

- 1. Tactic:** Work with partners to enhance recreational vehicle safety awareness through messaging campaigns designed to reduce unsafe operation. Promote and create specialized recreational vehicle safety campaigns such as “Think Smart Before You Start,” “Sled Safe,” and “Operation Dry Water.” Emphasize use of social media.
- 2. Tactic:** Increase outreach with new user demographics, dealerships, outdoor outfitters, specialty shops, canoe/kayak/rafting outfitters, dive shop rentals and dealers, etc.
- 3. Tactic:** Provide public education on primary crash factors by vehicle type including, statistics, non-fatal information, reporting methods, non-traditional users and safety messages.
- 4. Tactic:** Reduce recreational incidents by focused enforcement in areas with high fatalities.
- 5. Tactic:** Continue to partner with user groups to support development of legislative changes to improve consistency, conformity and enforceability of recreational vehicle laws and incorporating OWI penalties and prior convictions on the same platform regardless of vehicle type.
- 6. Tactic:** Evaluate adequate coverage of current specialized positions, and funding for additional specialized positions.

## **Objective 1.4: Improve conservation warden authority.**

- 1. Tactic:** Collect and prepare data, testimonials and other evidence to substantiate the need for improved authority to provide as needed. Include pitfalls of expanded authority, liability issues and more.

# PRIORITY 2

## We Protect and Enhance Our Natural Resources –

By preserving our air, land, water, wildlife, fish, forests and the ecosystems that sustain all life.

***We will further protect our resources through a commitment to provide permitted individuals and businesses incentives for improved compliance by streamlining our enforcement processes for pollution violations; and by beginning to shift from a paper records system to an electronic records management system for permittees.***

**Objective 2.1: Create efficiencies, reduce economic impacts and promote a level playing field for all citizens and businesses.**

- 1. Tactic:** Collect and prepare data, testimonials and other evidence to substantiate the need for statute changes, new citation authority and a consistent falsification of records violation for all environmental programs.
  - Identify Calls for Service (CFS) that are associated with violations that do not currently have citation authority.
  - Collect testimonials from interactions with internal and external partners related to violations identified.
  - Analyze and assemble the information to substantiate the need for new citation authority.

**Objective 2.2: Improve regulation and enforcement related to the commercialization of our natural resources.**

- 1. Tactic:** Improve reporting collection strategies, compliance and enforcement for commercialized activities.
  - Shift from a paper record reporting and licensing system to electronic for captive wildlife and Wild Ginseng.
  - Train and transition internal and external users on the reporting systems and data it provides.
  - Make data readily accessible and useable for enforcement staff to view, verify, analyze and investigate.
  - Schedule periodic audits and investigate suspicious transactions for possible illegal activity.

# PRIORITY 3

**We Care About Future Generations** – By promoting safety education and encouraging everyone to be stewards of our natural resources on behalf of future generations.

***We will lead sustainable, diverse and inclusive safety education and R3 programs, which meets a wide range of customer needs. The collaboration with multiple stakeholders and ongoing analysis of outdoor recreation trends and statewide demographics is vital to the programs and future generations.***

**Objective 3.1: Increase outreach and engagement with stakeholders by increasing the division’s virtual and/or remote presence.**

- 1. Tactic:** Work with Division Public Information Officer (PIO) to develop a communications plan to solicit guest appearances on podcasts to conduct outreach to an expanded audience about relevant messages or topics from across the Division (such as warden career, R3, safety, parks, regulation updates and more).
- 2. Tactic:** Increase safety education instructor engagement by implementing virtual trainings, recertifications and/or regional update meetings.
- 3. Tactic:** Implement scheduled “live chat” sessions on a variety of topics (such as warden recruitment, cooking wild game, regulations, safety campaigns, R3 pathways, instructor recruitment).
- 4. Tactic:** Create “how to” content—online library PDF docs, videos/webinars on DNR YouTube channel in conjunction with the DNR Office of Communications.

**Objective 3.2: Increase outreach and engagement with new and existing stakeholders by increasing the division’s physical presence.**

- 1. Tactic:** Increase offerings of connected in-person programs such as Learn to Hunt, Learn to Fish, Mobile First Catch Center and shooting sports/range events by two opportunities per DNR region in priority areas such as Madison and Milwaukee – with a focus on adults, females, families and diversity that otherwise would not have the connection or pathway.
- 2. Tactic:** Increase volunteer safety education instructor engagement by providing in-person trainings, regional town halls and appreciation events.
- 3. Tactic:** Hire, train and develop staff and partners to support our increased efforts.



# PRIORITY 4

**Our Staff Are Our Strength** – By providing our staff with fulfilling careers while leading and adapting to achieve our mission.

***We will promote and support a focus on mental health, physical health, well-being and work-life balance; ensure all division staff have access to career development training; find new ways to show our staff they are valued members of our workforce, and work to address high turnover and vacancy areas.***

**Objective 4.1: Ensure all division staff have access to relevant professional and career development training.**

- 1. Tactic:** Research and develop a Division Succession Plan for the next 5–10 years to better understand our future staffing needs and stability. The Division’s Succession plan will foster leadership skills, professional and career development and expand and diversify knowledge.
- 2. Tactic:** Develop formal division-wide financial and budget training for both new full-time and limited-term employees, and existing current staff and new supervisors.
- 3. Tactic:** Continue to improve and further develop our Community Service Officer (CSO) program to recruit for full-time positions within the division and department.

**Objective 4.2: Ensure division staff feel valued through means outside of formal recognition by fostering a culture of appreciation; working to shape division culture and improve employees’ overall satisfaction while reducing the chances of attrition.**

- 1. Tactic:** Evaluate the division-specific results from the department-wide Employee Engagement Survey (summer 2023). Determine how results compared to the 2019 survey related to staff engagement, morale and the overall work environment at the Division level.
- 2. Tactic:** Require regions & bureaus coordinate an annual team-building event that invites Law Enforcement Management Team, supervisory and field staff to develop relationships, increase collaboration, build trust and improve productivity.
- 3. Tactic:** Continue to improve division awards process by developing and implementing a marketing strategy for Division awards, simplifying the nomination process and ensuring all division awards are announced and presented in a meaningful way.

# PRIORITY 4

**Our Staff Are Our Strength** – By providing our staff with fulfilling careers while leading and adapting to achieve our mission.

**Objective 4.3: Seek innovative ways to address issues related to high turn-over stations, long-term vacancies, retention and compensation.**

- 1. Tactic:** Research and compile department, division and law enforcement retention rates to ensure we have a complete understanding of our standing, outlying issues and develop strategic approaches to address and improve employee retention.
- 2. Tactic:** Review, evaluate and address retention related issues with property specific field warden stations.
- 3. Tactic:** Develop a more transparent and realistic conservation warden recruiting strategy as an effort to improve retention of officers within first two years of employment.
- 4. Tactic:** Evaluate the amount and structure of our non-sworn staff in the division to ensure a sustainable workload.

