

Summary of DNR Core Work Analysis Results

Introduction

In July 2015, the Department of Natural Resources launched its Strategic Alignment Effort, rolling out an interim reporting structure and embarking on a Core Work Analysis effort. The purpose of the Core Work Analysis was to:

1. Document all the Core Functions throughout the agency;
2. Analyze the work effort associated with those Core Functions;
3. Prioritize Core Functions based on legal requirements and the department's mission;
4. Identify opportunities for efficiency; and
5. Develop recommendations on the level of investment needed to accomplish priority work.

In August 2015, supervisors throughout the agency participated in facilitated Mall Mapping exercises, which resulted in the development of "Mall Maps" for every program in the agency. For the first time, the department had a full accounting of all of its Core Functions, supporting processes, and key outputs and outcomes.

In September 2015, the Department Leadership Team (DLT) convened Integrated Design Teams (IDTs) for each division, which were comprised of supervisors, division staff, and staff outside the division to ask critical questions and challenge assumptions of the teams. The primary charge of the IDTs was to develop recommendations for efficiency and the level of investment needed to accomplish priority work.

In developing their recommendations, the IDTs relied heavily on the programmatic Mall Maps and feedback obtained from staff. Staff were invited to share their ideas in Town Halls, DLT-hosted alignment outreach sessions that were held around the state, a formal department-wide survey, in listening sessions hosted by the IDTs, and by sharing their ideas with their supervisors.

The recommendations that were developed by the IDTs were vetted through their respective division leadership teams, which presented their recommendations for DLT consideration in December 2015. What follows is a set of seven Core Work Analysis priorities advanced by DLT, with specific areas of focus that advance those priorities. The seven Core Work Analysis priorities are:

1. Leverage Staff Expertise to Accomplish Core Work.
2. Focus on DNR's Niche.
3. Strategic Investments in Information Technology.
4. Improve Service Delivery.
5. Enhance Integration.
6. Streamline Permitting.
7. Streamline Policy Development.

In February 2016 and beyond, the DLT will actively solicit feedback from external stakeholders on the preliminary recommendations contained in this document. Additionally, division and program management teams will be engaging staff on the recommendations to follow, along with additional areas of interest that will merit further evaluation into the spring of 2016. The feedback that is obtained from external stakeholders and staff will assist the DLT in refining its final recommendations and will be used to inform final alignment determinations, which will occur later in the spring of 2016.

PRIORITY #1: Leverage Staff Expertise to Accomplish Core Work

Create a Cohesive Approach to Non-game and Rare Species Management

Currently, non-game species management activities are conducted by staff throughout the department. The department is recommending eliminating duplicative or redundant non-game management activities and consolidating the remaining high-priority non-game species management activities within the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation. The department believes this shift in the management of non-game species will result in more effective delivery of those services, and will free up time in other programs such as the Wildlife Management to devote more time to their core work of managing game species.

Create Specialization in Property Management and Habitat Management

Currently, land holding programs are engaged in both property and habitat management functions. The department recommends separating and consolidating property and habitat management functions to better align staff skills to those activities that must be performed. Habitat management continues to be a high priority and specialization in property management will not only provide users with a consistent and high quality experience, but also help reallocate resources to higher priority habitat work.

Consolidate Complaint Response and Use as a Model for Functional Efficiencies in Other Program Areas

In 2011, the Waste and Materials Management (WMM) program implemented a procedure to streamline complaint response on issues including illegal dumping and burning. By all accounts, the centralized complaint system is a success, having met the goal of increased efficiency and enhanced customer service. The goals of the centralization/specialization were: reduce the amount of time spent responding to low and medium priority complaints, increase consistency and decrease response times by directing the initial contact and follow up to one designated staff person in WMM (instead of complaints going to at least 15 staff in the program), with high priority complaints forwarded to the field supervisors for assignment to program staff. This concept would be expanded to other areas within the department.

PRIORITY #2: Focus on DNR's Niche

Consolidate Recreational Vehicle and Trailer Registration Processing

Currently, DNR registers recreational vehicles (boats, ATVs, UTVs, and snowmobiles) while DMV registers the trailers to haul these vehicles. The department recommends consolidating recreation vehicle and trailer registrations within one agency to more efficiently provide these services, and improve convenience for recreation vehicle users in Wisconsin.

Consolidate Operator Certification & Licensing Functions

Currently, DNR is managing the certification and licensing of various types of professional operators within different programs. For example, the Bureau of Science Services manages certification of operators of wastewater facilities, drinking water facilities, septage businesses, septage haulers, incinerators, and landfills, while The Bureau of Drinking Water & Groundwater certifies and licenses well drillers and pump installers. Science Services administers the certification & licensing database (ELC) used by both programs. The Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPA) is charged with providing licenses and certifications for many similar specialized professions, including businesses that inspect and maintain privately owned treatment works (septic tanks). The department recommends exploring consolidating these operator and certification functions into one program.

Consolidate Septage Management

Currently, both the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPA) administer some septage management functions. DSPA currently licenses septage service operators, while DNR manages septage system planning and installation review. The department recommends consolidating these septage management functions within one agency to provide more efficient and coordinated septage management services.

Genetics Work Associated With the Tree Improvement Program

Currently, the Division of Forestry administers the Tree Improvement Program, which is designed to provide genetically improved seed for the reforestation program. The department proposes reducing its investment in genetics work and accomplishing some of this work through internal reallocations and with its contract with the UW-Madison Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology. The reduction in genetics work would be reallocated to higher priority work within the Forestry Division.

Transfer Management of Properties that are not in Alignment with DNR's Mission

The department is exploring opportunities to transfer the management of some properties to other organizations whose missions better align with the delivery of those services. The department has built strong relationships with partner groups and other units of government and has found past success partnering with those organizations to manage properties to better meet the needs of impacted constituents. The department recommends seeking other opportunities to formalize property management arrangements that are better aligned with other organizations, which would result in efficiencies at DNR that could be reinvested in higher priority work.

Evaluate Printed Communications and Involvement in Promotional Events

The department is conducting an evaluation of the effectiveness of its printed communications and involvement in promotional events. The evaluation will consist of a review of current printed publications and staffing effort dedicated to coordinating and attending external promotional events. The department will seek opportunities to more effectively and efficiently deliver these services so the department can focus on high priority communication needs, while continuing to engage with the public in a meaningful manner.

PRIORITY #3: Strategic Investments in Information Technology

Innovative Technology

DNR provides a wide range of services to a diverse customer base, and the department is interested in pursuing a number of information technology enhancements to improve the service it provides to its customers. The recommended IT enhancements advanced by the department are focused on increasing electronic submittal capacity, improving access to information, and decreasing staff workload through efficiencies. Recommendations include: automating manual business processes, mapping and database enhancements, digitizing records, developing online and fillable forms, eliminating duplicative data entry for staff, and expanding e-payment and e-signature capabilities.

Business Portal

The department recommends investing in internal work to refine and better connect the DNR Business Portal that is currently in development to the statewide Wisconsin One Stop Business Portal. This provides the DNR with a greater presence on the Wisconsin One Stop Business Portal to improve DNR's connection to existing and startup businesses. Businesses, consultants and economic development professionals will be able to better use existing web resources and users will have a better upfront understanding of required permits for proposed projects.

Online System for Grants Administration

On an annual basis, the Community Financial Assistance Bureau issues about 3,500 new grant agreements and processes about 3,000 payments for projects awarded in prior years covering 39 different grant programs. The department recommends developing an on-line system for grants administration that would increase the efficiency these grant programs processes.

PRIORITY #4: Improve Service Delivery

Explore Alternatives for Efficient and Effective State Parks Program Service Delivery

In the 15-17 biennial budget, the governor and legislature enacted a change in how the State Parks Program was funded – shifting the program away from General Purpose Revenue to a program revenue model based on user-generated fees. The 15-17 budget directs the department to report back to the Joint Committee on Finance, The Governor, and appropriate standing committees on potential options

for additional sources of parks revenue. Specifically, the department was asked to estimate revenue that might be generated through a voluntary vehicle registration fee and expanding camping facilities. In order to provide the best service possible to our customers, the department is not only considering options for new sources of State Parks revenue, but how to maximize the use of its limited resources. Options being considered by the department include creating more flexibility in the application of resources to high use properties and services that are most valued by customers, as well as contracting for some maintenance activities.

Prioritization of Land Management Services

Effective management of department lands is critical to realizing the agency's mission. Effective and efficient land management requires allocation of resources to highest priority work. To facilitate this, the department plans to develop a land management prioritization system which considers property use, conservation need and available resources. This effort will establish clear ecological and recreational objectives for public lands and incorporate stakeholder input to improve coordination and better integrate land management activities with DNR's conservation partners. Additionally, the department will be analyzing its relative investments in private versus public lands.

Recreation Property Law Enforcement Service Delivery

The department is interested in exploring the most effective and efficient way to provide law enforcement (LE) services in Wisconsin. The department will evaluate the current staffing commitments to various LE functions, prioritize those LE functions, and make recommendations to appropriately staff those functions to meet the needs of the department and its customers. The analysis will include an evaluation of services on recreational properties including campgrounds, recreation areas, trails, and flowages.

Coordinated Hunter, Trapper, and Angler Recruitment

Currently, coordination of hunter and angler recruitment efforts are managed by several programs within DNR. Coordinating these efforts within one program should result in better and more consistent service, while increasing support for the department's partners who are implementing the programs.

Improved Delivery of Facilities and Lands Functions

The department is committed to improving delivery of Master Planning, Real Estate, Engineering & Construction Management, Facilities and Property Management services to better meet the needs of internal customers and external stakeholders. The department recommends consolidating the administration of master planning services within a single program, and aligning it along with the remaining LF services programs with other existing internal services within the Internal Services Division. These programs collectively align better within Internal Services as they serve multiple divisions within the agency.

Changes to Managed Forest Tax Law and Private Forest Lands Assistance

The department recommends reallocating some of the staff time investment from administration of the tax law program to focusing on non-tax landowner forestry management services. There are approximately 11 million acres of private forest lands statewide, of which approximately 3 million are

enrolled in a forest tax law program. This recommendation would position the department to work with non-MFL landowners to increase sustainable forestry in Wisconsin, creating more jobs in the forest industry and healthier and more productive forests.

Good Neighbor Authority

The department recommends increasing its investment in the administration of the USFS Good Neighbor Authority. This increased investment would include work with the Forest Service to administer the agreement, as well as work with the districts on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest to setup and administer timber sales, and facilitate other land management and restoration activities on the forest.

Decommission Fire Lookout Towers

The department has made the decision to decommission its 72 remaining fire lookout towers based on an assessment of tower condition and resulting safety issues, as well as an assessment of fire detection alternatives. Resources saved once the towers have been fully decommissioned will be shifted to other priority work, including an increase in flight hours spend conducting aerial detection.

Point of Customer Contact Service Delivery Improvements

The department has frequent interaction with its customers, and two primary ways the general public interfaces with the department are either in person at one of DNR's Service Centers or by phone or online chats with DNR's Call Center. The department is committed to optimizing the distribution of its limited Customer Service staff in order to maximize its ability serve our customers in the manner that best meets their needs, while advancing the department's mission.

Watershed Program Emphasis on Front-End Outreach and Compliance Outcomes

In order to adapt current resource constraints, while continuing to serve customers and meet the department's mission, the department is recommending shifting resources within the Waterway and Wetlands Program, placing an emphasis on up-front outreach and pro-active assistance. The department would focus its efforts on providing more comprehensive tools for contractors and consultants, holding applicants accountable for developing good projects, monitoring compliance, exercising appropriate enforcement, and using adaptive management to adjust, when needed.

Modification of Grant Timelines

The department is currently conducting a review and analysis of all grant programs administered by the Community Financial Assistance Bureau. The goals of this analysis is to identify opportunities for grant timeline modifications that would more evenly distribute grant workload for staff, enhanced customer service, and improved service delivery. This proposal would not impact the total dollars awarded by the department – only the timing of those awards.

PRIORITY #5: Enhance Integration

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Coordination

The department recommends consolidating the location for Sector Coordinator positions within DNR's Bureau of Environmental Analysis and Sustainability (EAS), which focuses on cross-agency coordination on complex matters. Under this proposal, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Coordinator would move to EAS and head up an agency-wide team focused on FERC issues. The consolidation of these coordinative functions should lead to new efficiencies, because the coordinators will have new opportunities to discuss challenges and share tools to create positive outcomes.

Inspection Coordination

The department is interested in exploring opportunities to coordinate facilities inspections to save staff time and improve convenience for DNR customers. Under this recommendation, the department would inventory the scope of inspection issues, the number of facilities with multiple permits requiring DNR inspections, the current timing of DNR inspections, which inspections are unannounced, potential funding constraints, and which inspections may be simple enough to allow staff from another program to conduct them.

Endangered Resources Reviews

Currently, the endangered resources review program resides within the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation (NHC). The department recommends moving the endangered resources review functions into the DNR's Bureau of Environmental Analysis and Sustainability (EAS) and expanding the certification program. This effort would align review staff working on environmental review and permitting for energy projects and transportation projects into the same program, resulting in review efficiencies. Under this proposal, the department would also dedicate additional staffing resources to the endangered resources review program so staff could conduct review services for the rest of the agency, assuring a consistent review process for all permits.

Prescribed Burning Coordination

Currently, the management of prescribed fires on Wisconsin's landscapes are coordinated within various programs in the department. The department recommends creating a centralized prescribed fire specialist to facilitate the coordination and consistent execution of prescribed burns on all state-owned properties. This position will create a department-wide benefit by coordinating prescribed fire policy and will act as a liaison to the private prescribed burning community. Creating this position will help ensure habitat management practices will be accomplished in a more efficient and consistent manner.

Combine Contaminated Soil and Contaminated Sediment Cleanups into one Organizational Unit

Currently, the department manages contaminated soil cleanups in the Remediation & Redevelopment (RR) Program, while contaminated sediment cleanups are managed in the Office of the Great Lakes (OGL). The department recommends transferring the contaminated sediment technical staff and management of the contaminated sediment bonding appropriation from OGL to RR and appropriately

staffing those functions to meet priority cleanup objectives. This approach will ensure that joint coordination, communication and decision making occurs between OGL and RR on Legacy Act funding and Natural Resource Damage Claims that impact RR projects. This proposal creates efficiencies in coordination internally, with RPs and with EPA, and better resembles the DNR commitment to a One Cleanup Program. Financial management of contaminated sediment sites would be coordinated in RR alongside of other similar remedial grant options which is an expertise niche for the RR program.

Law Enforcement Coordination

Building on the successes of the Integrated Law Enforcement Guidance Team, the department recommends assessing additional opportunities to more effectively coordinate administrative functions of the four programs with Law Enforcement officers (e.g. Bureau of Facilities and Lands; Bureau of Forest Protection; Bureau of Law Enforcement; and Bureau of Parks). The assessment of administrative functions will include an analysis of the hiring and training of LE officers, including: hiring announcements, screening, interviews, background checks; scheduling psych/physical fitness exams for candidates, Field Training Officer (FTO) program coordination and entry of officer training records into ACADIS.

PRIORITY #6: Streamline Permitting

Permit Development Improvements

DNR is charged with permitting myriad activities throughout the state of Wisconsin. DNR customers have expressed a desire to streamline permitting processes throughout the department so that permitable activities can be conducted with minimal delay to meet business needs while continuing to protect the environment. The department is advancing a number of recommendations to streamline the permitting process, which include: exploring additional opportunities for more general permits, alternative approaches to the development of permits, and incorporating federal requirements into state permits by reference.

Permitting Efficiencies

In addition to the recommended permit development improvements, the department believes it can realize a number of efficiencies through improved coordination and internal processing of permits. Improved coordination and internal processing of permits will leverage existing relationships with local units of government and consolidate certain permitting functions within the department to improve consistency, timeliness, and customer satisfaction with the department's permits. Recommended improvements include: improving municipal government project coordination, expanding partnerships through the development of Memorandums of Understanding, streamlining archaeology reviews, and the expansion of contractor and consultant assurance programs.

PRIORITY #7: Streamline Policy Development

Rulemaking Process Improvements

DNR promulgates administrative rules throughout the department to implement state statute and federal requirements. From January 2014 through December 2015, the Natural Resources Board approved 33 scope statements with estimates of staff time needed to develop rules of 16,166 hours. Estimates to complete the various rule packages ranged from 40 to 4,600 hours. The rulemaking process can be arduous, and the department will be evaluating a number of recommendations to streamline the rulemaking process in an effort to minimize staff effort required to develop rules and to address some of the choke points in the process. The rulemaking improvements advanced by the department will ensure DNR continues to conduct a thorough analysis, while maintaining adequate public input and meeting all statutory requirements.

Flexibilities within Safe Drinking Water Loan Program and the Clean Water Fund

The Environmental Improvement Fund is comprised of two separate and distinct programs: Safe Drinking Water Loan Program and the Clean Water Fund. The Safe Drinking Water Loan Program (SDWLP) provides financial assistance to public water systems to build, upgrade, or replace water supply infrastructure to protect public health and address federal and state safe drinking water requirements while The Clean Water Fund Program (CWFP) provides financial assistance to municipalities for wastewater treatment facilities and urban storm water runoff projects. The department believes there are opportunities to provide more flexibility for programs to have access to some of these resources and maximize the extent to which the department can improve and protect water quality.