

SCHEDULE F

Workforce Plan



Life's better outside.®

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Workforce Plan

Fiscal Years 2025-2029

Hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation have long been part of the fabric of Texas. Thousands of years ago, native hunters and gatherers settled in Texas to take advantage of its abundant natural resources. Today, people still flock to Texas to enjoy rich hunting and fishing traditions in the state's bountiful forests, prairies, and waters. However, the natural landscape is changing. The state faces many challenges in its efforts to protect, conserve and manage its precious natural resources. It is vitally essential that lands and waters in Texas are set aside and managed for the conservation of our wild things and wild places; Texans depend on it. The need for outdoor recreation has been evident with increased visitation at TPWD sites. Throughout its history, the dedicated employees of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) have worked diligently to ensure that present and future generations can enjoy Texas' great cultural and natural heritage.

To be effective in the execution of the agency's mission, TPWD's workforce must be supported throughout the employee life cycle. This includes:

- effective recruitment and talent retention,
- development, implementation, and integration of effective Human Resources (HR) policies and systems that promote an agency-shared culture of growth,
- promotion of an environment of continuous learning and development, and
- fostering an environment of employee engagement.

This Workforce Plan aims to assess current and future workforce needs at all levels of the organization. TPWD seeks to provide a workforce with the tools and skill sets to be successful and create balance in their professional and personal lives.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE

The governing body of TPWD includes a nine-member governor-appointed commission and two former members holding the title of Chairman-emeritus. The Commission is responsible for adopting policies and rules related to agency programs and activities.

Day-to-day oversight responsibilities rest with the Executive Director, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Chief of Staff. Division Directors provide leadership and oversight to their respective areas of responsibility. The agency is organized into 13 divisions:

- Coastal Fisheries
- Communications
- Executive Office
- Financial Resources
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Infrastructure
- Inland Fisheries
- Law Enforcement
- Legal
- State Parks
- Support Resources
- Wildlife

In the General Appropriations Act, the Legislature categorizes agencies broadly by their function. This allows for information to be provided about the funding of each Article, or function, of government spending, as well as a comparison between agencies under

the same function. TPWD is categorized under Article VI, or Natural Resources agencies. The comparisons of TPWD to Article VI agencies in the charts herein are intended to provide more specific points of comparison than TPWD to statewide averages.

CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE

The TPWD Headquarters is located in Austin, with regional and field offices located throughout the state. Approximately 73% of agency staff work at field locations. The agency has legislative authority for a Full-time Equivalent (FTE) cap limitation of 3,160.9 in FY2024 and FY2025. The workforce headcount during FY2023 averaged 2,939.4, regular full- and part-time employees. TPWD’s staffing increases significantly during the summer months with the addition of seasonal temporary staff and interns. The agency manages 89 state parks/historic sites, 50 wildlife management areas, eight fish hatcheries, and a law enforcement training academy that collectively comprise over 1.4 million acres managed in the public trust for recreation and conservation.

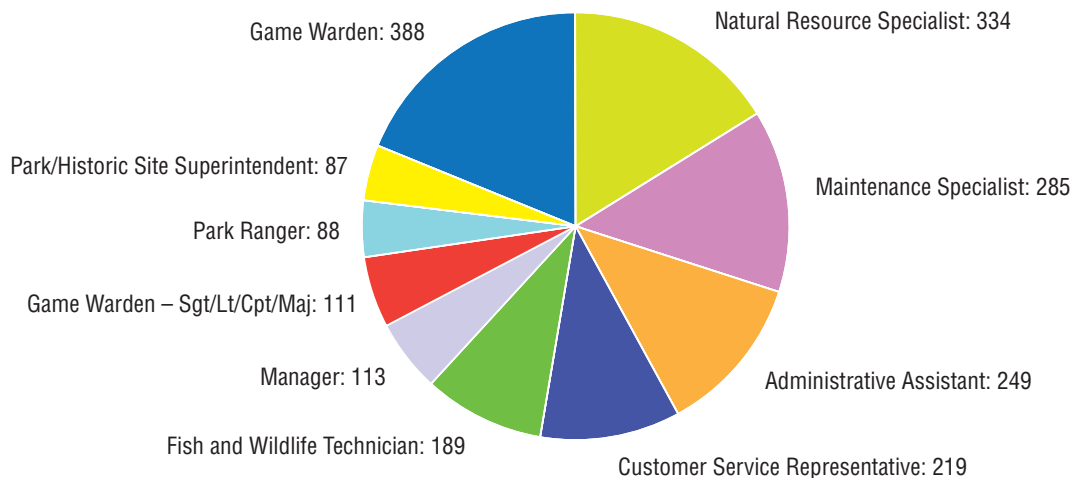
As of the end of January 2024, TPWD’s workforce consisted of:

- 3,028 classified regular full-time (CRF) and part-time employees
- 67 classified temporary full-time (CTF) and classified temporary part-time (CTP) employees
- 3 contingent workers aiding on short-term projects and other temporary work assignments
- 305 veterans
- 10,079 active volunteers (FY23 totals)
- 125 interns (FY23 Totals)

TPWD’s workforce has focused skills and abilities supporting the agency’s strategies and functions. Five of the top ten job classifications make up 48% of the agency’s total workforce, with 1,475 employees occupying these positions. Professionals make up the most significant percentage of the TPWD workforce in the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) categories together with the following:

- Professionals, 32%
- Protective Service Workers, 23%
- Administrative Support, 19%
- Service Maintenance, 13%
- Technicians, 10%
- Paraprofessionals, 2%
- Officials and Administrators, 0.68%
- Skilled Craft Workers, 0.65%

Top Ten Classifications Used by TPWD



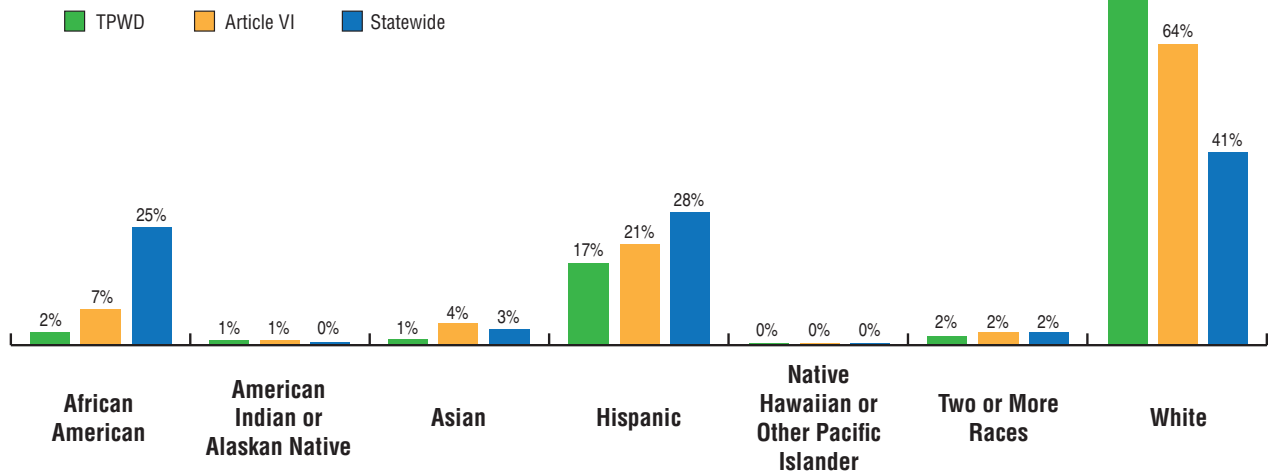
Most divisions supplement their workforce with TPWD-paid and externally paid interns. Externally paid internships are funded by partnerships outside of TPWD such as the Al Henry program, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, and the Coastal Conservation Association. The seasonal and temporary workforce is essential to the agency, due to increased activities and visitors to TPWD’s facilities. In addition, interns support ongoing programs, events, maintenance, and the agency’s overall operations.

RACE/ETHNICITY

TPWD’s workforce is:

- 77% White
- 17% Hispanic
- 2% African American, and
- 1% or less each: Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (NHPI), and Two or More Races

Race/Ethnicity Comparison

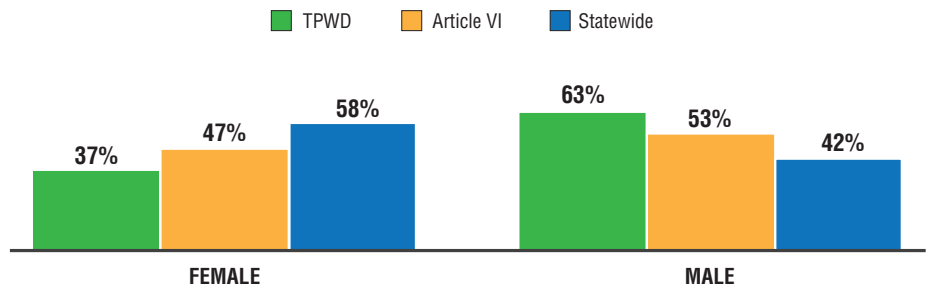


	African American	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	White
TPWD	2%	1%	1%	17%	0%	2%	77%
ARTICLE VI	7%	1%	4%	21%	0%	2%	64%
STATEWIDE	25%	0%	3%	28%	0%	2%	41%

GENDER

TPWD’s workforce is 63% male and 37% female. In the first quarter of FY2024, TPWD has seen an increase in female hiring at many levels across the agency. However, an examination of turnover data for the first two quarters of FY2024 has shown females leaving the agency at a higher rate than they are represented in the agency.

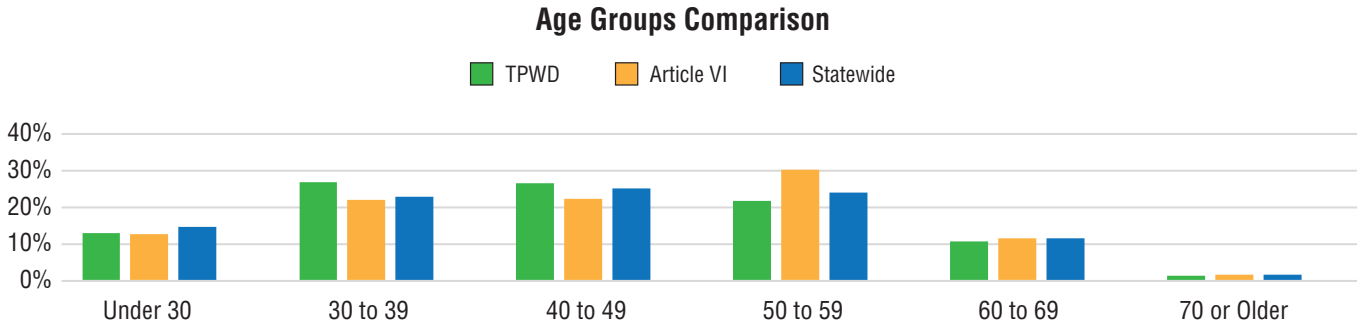
Gender Comparison



The agency has seen an increase of females appointed to numerous executive and management positions. Females occupy significant leadership roles in the agency, serving as directors of Communications, Human Resources, Infrastructure, Information Technology, and Internal Audit, in addition to the agency’s Chief of Staff.

AGE

The graph below shows that 75% of the agency is between the ages of 30 and 60; 12% are approaching or are already at retirement age. With more individuals choosing to work well past the typical retirement age, TPWD and other workplaces are experiencing a multi-generational workforce. TPWD employees range in age from 17 to 86 years old.

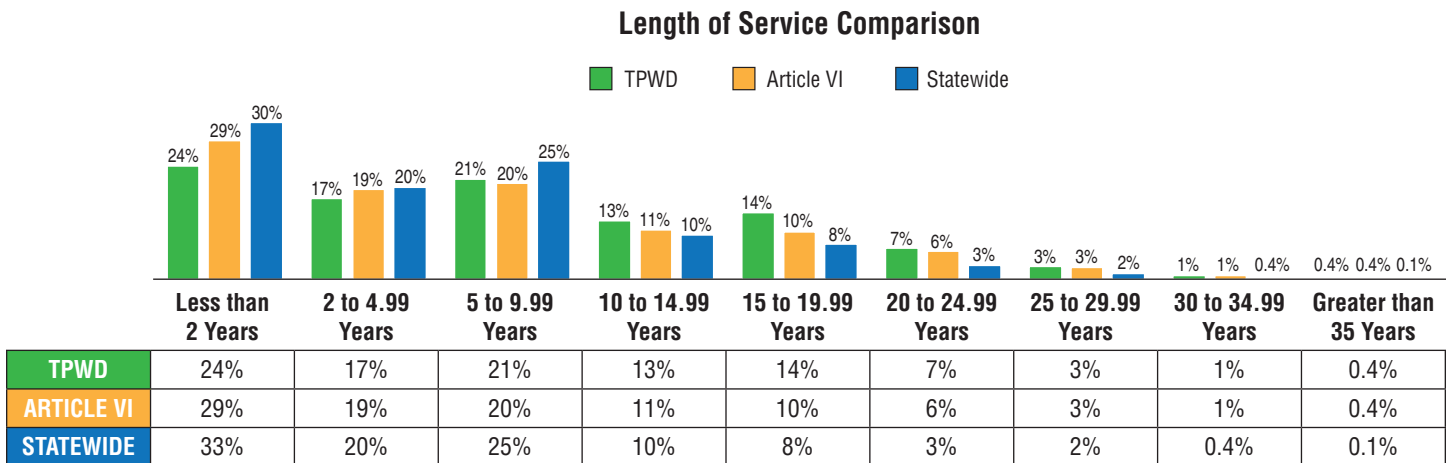


VETERANS

Texas Government Code Section 657.004 specifies that veterans should comprise 20% of an agency’s workforce. TPWD has made concerted efforts to meet this standard by dedicating a Military Employment Liaison position within the Human Resources Division to focus on veteran hiring. The agency’s current percentage of veterans in the workforce stands at 9.77%. TPWD actively participates in Veteran Recruiting events and the U.S. Department of Defense SkillBridge Program to create a pipeline of veteran candidates for TPWD vacancies.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

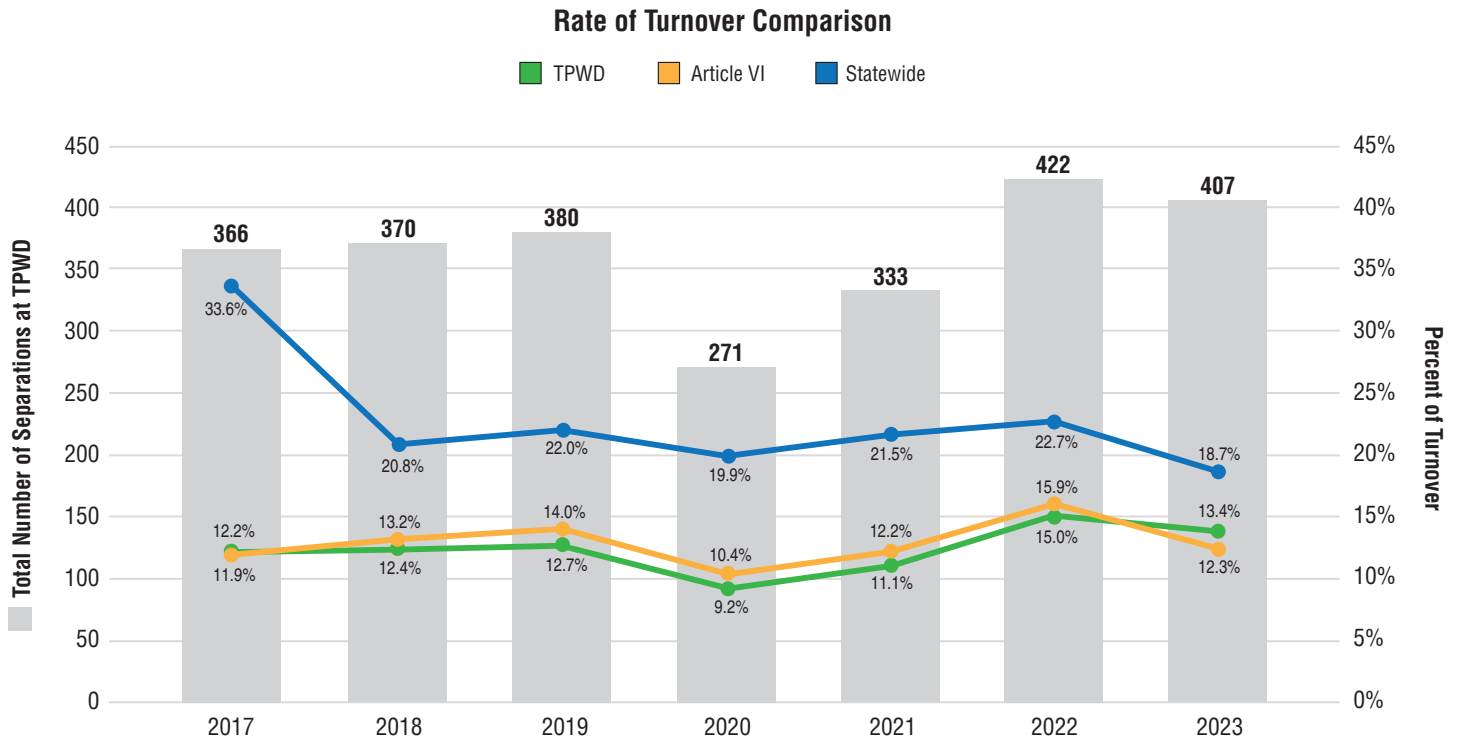
As of January 2024, approximately 41% of TPWD employees have five or fewer years of service at TPWD, 27% have between ten and 20 years, and approximately 11% have 20 years or more. While 62% of TPWD’s workforce has less than 10 years of service, the agency has a larger proportion of employees with 10-20 years of service than other state agencies.



TURNOVER

TPWD is known for recruiting and retaining quality employees dedicated to the mission of the agency. This dedication is reflected in the relatively low and consistent turnover rate the agency has experienced when compared to statewide and Article VI agencies. In FY2023, TPWD experienced a turnover rate of 13.4%, compared to an 18.7% turnover rate for state agencies.

Despite consistently low turnover, the agency’s key challenge is the loss of institutional knowledge and expertise resulting from retirements and resignations.



Post-pandemic, TPWD is starting to see turnover rates reduced from what was experienced during the colloquial “great resignation.”

During FY2023 and thus far into FY2024, the common reasons reported for voluntary separations from TPWD were:

- Better pay/benefits
- Retirement
- Issues with my supervisor/issues with employees supervised
- No or little career advancement opportunities
- Relocation of self or spouse

RETIREMENT ELIGIBILITY

The agency estimates that 28% of agency staff will be eligible for retirement at the end of FY2029. By FY2029, seven of TPWD’s 13 divisions will have 35% or more staff eligible for retirement. Currently, the agency employs 54 return-to-work retirees and has 430 employees who are eligible to retire at the end of FY2024. As employees retire, establishing knowledge transfer or knowledge-sharing best practices will be key to the continuity of operations.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

TPWD pay lags behind Article VI agency salaries on average. State salaries have always lagged behind private-sector salaries for comparable work; however, the gap continues to widen. While state employees received a legislatively appropriated salary increase in July 2023 and targeted salary increases that were distributed in early fiscal year 2024, pay continues to contribute to employee turnover since it has not kept pace with inflation and the labor market. Another legislatively appropriated increase is set to take place in September 2024. TPWD continues to examine pay and related classification issues in the following areas:

- Comparison of classifications within TPWD to the labor market,
- Comparison of classifications within TPWD to other state agencies,
- Comparison of average salaries by division,
- Comparison of agency average salaries to other state agencies, and
- Pay as it relates to turnover.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

TPWD’s workforce is significantly augmented by its volunteer program. Volunteers play a crucial role in the agency’s mission and provide a wide variety of services across almost every division. State Parks volunteers serve as ambassadors to the public and support staff in day-to-day operations at the parks and providing interpretive programs. Texas Master Naturalists provide education, outreach, and service to manage natural resources and natural areas within all communities. Hunter, angler, and boater education instructors teach outdoor enthusiasts how to hunt, fish, and boat safely, responsibly, lawfully, and ethically.

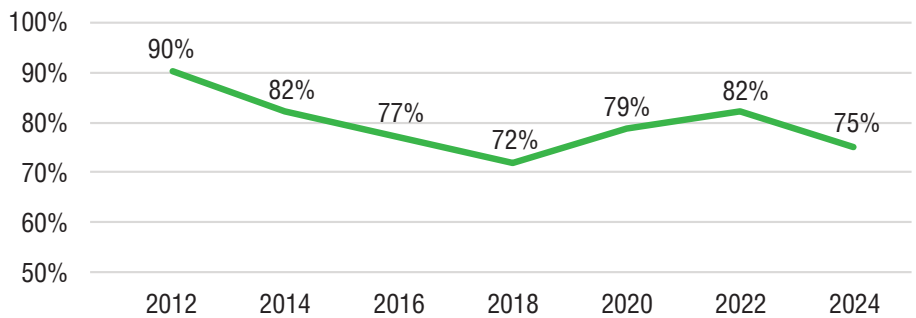
In FY2023, TPWD had over 10,079 active volunteers working within the agency. These volunteers provided over 1,146,794 hours of service for the agency. These services are equivalent to 551 FTEs, valued at over \$36.5 million based upon the dollar value of volunteer time at \$31.80 hour (Independent Sector). Volunteer numbers decreased during COVID, but are beginning to trend back to pre-pandemic levels. TPWD continues to seek opportunities to expand its volunteer program and increase the diversity of its volunteers.

SURVEY OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

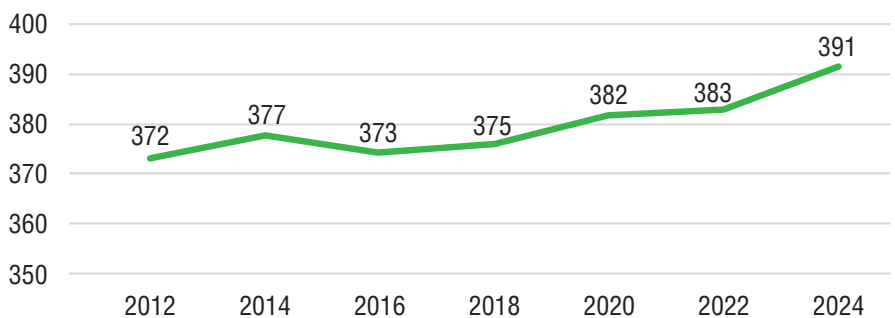
The Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) is an assessment administered biennially to employees throughout state government by the Institute of Organizational Excellence at the University of Texas at Austin. Employees are asked to anonymously share feedback on their agency’s multiple topics through the SEE, including internal communication, pay, supervision, and strategic vision. Generally, the agency has high response rates and high scores on the survey constructs.

Employees are asked to respond to over 70 statements using a Likert scale that ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The results of the responses are calculated into corresponding scores that span 100 to 500 points. Generally, scores between 350 and 500 points are considered very strong to excellent results and are interpreted to be a strength for the agency.

TPWD Survey Response Rate



TPWD Overall Score



Over the past several SEE iterations, TPWD's scores have had some minor fluctuations. While the agency's strongest and weakest constructs have remained fairly consistent in the past, the 2024 results showed some shift in the agency's strengths. For the most recent survey, the highest scoring constructs for the agency (in order from highest score to third highest) are Workgroup, Supervision, and Strategic Vision. TPWD's lowest-scoring constructs (in order from lowest score to third lowest) are Pay, Benefits, and Internal Communication. To provide context, the only score below 350 points that the agency consistently receives is on the construct of Pay, and in 2024, half of all construct scores for TPWD were above 400 points.

TPWD will continue to utilize the SEE results to address employee concerns, strategically plan for the future of our workforce, and develop appropriate actions that boost engagement and retention throughout the agency. It is vital that the agency utilize organizational tools, like the SEE, to protect one of our most valued resources – our human resources.

II. FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE (DEMAND ANALYSIS)

As times change, the workplace and workforce also change. Post-pandemic, we are starting to see which effects will be long lasting. More recently, employees and potential applicants are looking for a workplace that aligns with their specific individual and family needs and values. Reconciling the needs of the workforce and what a workplace can provide are critical to agency operations.

The world is experiencing a post-pandemic evolution that is changing our perspectives and beliefs about how we work. In particular:

- The balance of power has shifted from employers to employees.
- The employee value proposition has shifted from “work for me” to “work with me.”
- Employees favor a hybrid model versus going back to the office full time.
- Employees are rethinking their purpose—they are searching for meaning, not activity. In particular, millennials are interested in working with purpose-driven companies rather than those focused on shareholder value ⁱ.

Collaboration no longer requires working in proximity to one another. Technologies that were quickly put in place at the start of the pandemic have become efficient collaboration tools for headquarters and field staff, replacing in-person meetings that may be perceived as time wasters and productivity barriers. Now, we have those discussions and complete the work synchronously through quick, virtual meetings that are less taxing on time and fiscal resources.

The Texas unemployment rate has not seen a rise since April 2021. The unemployment rate is low at 3.9%, and has consistently been between 3.8% and 4.1% since April 2022 ⁱⁱ. The U.S. economy is projected to add almost 4.7 million jobs from 2022 to 2032, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports. Total national employment is projected to increase to 169.1 million and grow 0.3% annually, which is slower than the 1.2% annual growth recorded over the 2012-22 decade ⁱⁱⁱ.

Projected employment growth is driven by labor force growth, which in turn is constrained by population growth. Total population is projected to grow slightly slower than previous decades, at 0.7% annually over the projected period, although population growth is concentrated among individuals aged 75 and over because of the aging of the baby-boom generation ^{iv}. Because older age groups have lower labor force participation rates than prime age workers, overall labor force participation rates are projected to decline. The participation rate for prime working age women, ages 25-54, is projected to increase slightly from 76.4% in 2022 to 76.7% in 2032. For prime working age men, however, the participation rate is projected to decline 0.2% annually in the 2022-32 decade, from 88.6% to 86.7% ^v.

The computer and mathematical occupational group is also projected to experience much faster than average employment growth. The expanding digital presence of businesses and consumers will produce a massive amount of data for these workers to collect, organize, analyze, and protect. Employment in occupations such as data science, statistics, and information security is projected to grow more than 11 times the average rate ^{vi}.

TPWD has established the following overlay initiatives to guide the strategic planning that sets forth the work of our agency. These overlay initiatives have established working groups within the agency and the work groups are tasked with the following:

- Accelerate the modernization of the department.
 - Unlock potential efficiency gains and cost reductions that can be deployed to support the core mission of the department.
 - Create better customer and stakeholder experiences both internally and externally.
 - Create efficiencies where savings can be put towards advancing the mission of preserving and recreating in the landscape and in the water.
 - Continue to stay relevant with Texans and be a leader amongst all other agencies.
- Elevate the enterprise of science.
 - Anticipate changes and address emerging issues.
 - Maintain the highest level of scientific validity and credibility.
 - Be proactive on emerging issues and reactive on issues of importance to stakeholders.
- Strengthen the TPWD brand and capitalize on its equity.
 - Focus on relevancy strategies that explain the “why” of our work.
 - Seek opportunities to increase our brand reach.
 - Modernize the customer relationship management system.

Additionally, the agency has benefited from various legislative actions and partnership opportunities that promise to expand the reach of the department’s mission. These initiatives will lead to significant land acquisitions and the development of many new public use spaces across Texas. All of these exciting endeavors for the agency will require an expansion of the workforce and needed skills/competencies to carry out these duties.

CRITICAL JOB COMPETENCIES

As previously mentioned, TPWD employs a variety of positions to carry out its mission. Human Resources Division follows the guidelines provided by the State of Texas Classifications Plan of the State Auditor’s Office and works closely with the agency supervisors/managers to identify the basic and advanced technical skills and competencies of each job classification. TPWD will continue to identify critical positions and competencies that significantly impact the agency and the execution of its mission. There is a continuing need for TPWD employees with:

Technical & Job Specific Skills

- Strong information technology skills (including legacy tools and systems)
- Water and wastewater licensed operators
- Maintenance and repair (equipment and facilities)
- Toxicology expertise
- Experience in specialty programs like ADA compliance, sustainability, safety, and risk & emergency management
- Fabrication
- Artificial Intelligence

Soft Skills

- Problem-solving
- Communication
- Public speaking
- Analytical thinking
- Conflict resolution
- Influence and presence
- Leadership

Several high-level cross-divisional competencies were identified and deemed critical for agency-wide success.

These competencies include:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • change management | • influencing/negotiating | • Spanish language skills |
| • coaching/mentoring | • information management | • technology management |
| • conflict management | • project management | • digital content development |
| • fiscal management | • public speaking | • real estate expertise |

PAY

For many years, pay has been the lowest-scoring construct in the TPWD SEE. Through exit interviews, employees continue to communicate that pay is not keeping pace with the rising cost of living or other similar jobs outside of state employment. TPWD employees drive significant distances to perform their job duties in many cases. This is due to a lack of affordable housing close to designated worksites and/or remote worksite locations, requiring significant travel. State Auditor's Office (SAO) exit surveys also reveal that pay and benefits continue to be the number one reason for leaving employment with TPWD. With high inflation, concerns that pay will not keep pace with rising costs are real. TPWD has some positions paying less than entry-level retail positions.

III. GAP ANALYSIS

AGING WORKFORCE AND ATTRITION

With approximately 60% of TPWD employees at or above age 40 and 33% of employees at or above age 50, experience is undoubtedly an asset for day-to-day operations and helps to provide continuity. However, the fact that approximately 28% of agency employees are at or nearing retirement eligibility over the next five years raises significant concern. Special attention to recruitment, succession planning, and training will be necessary to fill potential gaps in the workforce. This potential loss of valued experience and institutional knowledge from pending retirements must be managed through targeted recruitment, mentoring, technical training, leadership programs, and succession planning efforts.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, 40% of employees are under 40 years old. These employees bring a wealth of differing perspectives and newer ways of doing business into the organization. They tend to seek continuous challenges and better salaries with more rapid upward mobility than older employees. As a result, they may change employers frequently due to the scarcity of opportunities to increase their income. They also value non-traditional work arrangements such as telework, pay by project, and flex-time schedules that may not fit the paradigm of many traditional positions in the agency. These types of arrangements require different management techniques, training, and increased flexibility with benefits, morale, and retention programs. With multiple generations overlapping in the workforce, research reveals that different generations typically want significantly different things out of their careers. Younger workers tend to prioritize purpose and personal development, whereas tenured employees seek security and stability.

NON-COMPETITIVE SALARY STRUCTURE

TPWD performs salary comparisons of classifications against other state agencies and within internal divisions to compare and reduce compression issues between divisions. Empirically, the SEE results have confirmed that salary remains the number one issue related to job satisfaction. The agency turnover rate is seeing signs of stabilization post-pandemic. Other noted staffing challenges with recent external changes and competition for talent include:

- Other state agencies and the private sector have affected the entire agency significantly in retention and quality of applicant pools. TPWD is not able to offer competitive pay for its employees.
- Entry-level positions, particularly at state parks, are challenging to fill. The department is seeing current staff take on more responsibilities with small pay increases when available. Entry-level salaries in other job markets are paying increasingly more.
- TPWD has experienced recruiting and retention difficulties for many mid-level and senior positions in the areas of natural resources, maintenance, administrative support, and executive leadership due to below-market salary and minimum experience requirements.

OPERATIONAL EXPANSION AND FTE LIMITATIONS

Over the past several years, TPWD has faced newly emerging challenges in the conservation landscape and experienced fortuitous opportunities with new, mission-specific funding sources. The natural resources of Texas continue to face various threats in various forms such as disease, urban expansion, and invasive species. However, the agency mission has already or

potentially stands to benefit from several funding sources, including the dedication of the Sporting Goods Sales Tax and the establishment of the Centennial Parks Conservation Fund. Collectively, these emerging challenges and opportunities require TPWD to adjust, create, and expand various agency programs.

To meet this evolving demand without sacrificing current initiatives, TPWD will have to increase the rate and quantity of land acquisitions, design and build new facilities, and establish and expand programs aimed at disease eradication and species of greatest conservation need. The agency will need additional FTEs to appropriately staff these efforts. Of course, positions such as park rangers/superintendents, natural resource specialists, project/construction managers, engineers, architects, and law enforcement will need to be a primary focus. However, an effort to meaningfully bridge this projected workforce gap would also need to focus on positions necessary to support operational expansion (human resources, finance and purchasing, information technology, legal, communications, and other support resources).

While TPWD can successfully maintain current business operations within its current FTE limitations, process efficiencies and workload capacities have been maximized. To respectfully steward these public investments and responsibly expand programmatic operations, TPWD will require an increase in its appropriation of FTEs.

IV. HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

TPWD utilizes a “values-based” human resources strategy in an effort to attract and retain highly quality staff and to ensure an effective human resources management (HRM) across the agency. TPWD’s core values of stewardship, service, excellence, integrity, and teamwork serve as the foundation for designing the agency’s policies and practices, which are developed in coordination with other support divisions. These fundamental values are embedded into the organization’s culture. This HR strategy is based on research that demonstrates people want to work for an organization they trust and respect, where they feel valued and welcomed, where they are enriched and connected to the community, and, most importantly, where they can make a positive difference.

The Human Resources Division supports all divisions in the execution of the agency’s mission and works to achieve excellent customer service based on four human resource-specific strategic goals:

Goal 1: Recruitment and Talent Management – Attract, employ, develop, and retain a qualified, varied employee workforce that includes veterans and volunteers to meet current and future business needs.

Goal 2: Personnel Administration – Develop, implement, and integrate effective HR policies, business processes, and data systems by leveraging industry best practices.

Goal 3: Shared Culture – Leverage the agency’s shared culture and core values to distinguish TPWD as a welcoming and engaging employer of choice.

Goal 4: Learning and Development – Ensure mission success by providing TPWD employees with access to learning and development programs geared toward promoting competencies related to teamwork, supervision, and leadership.

TPWD is committed to addressing the gaps identified in its workforce. These efforts include increasing outreach and recruitment to reflect the workforce of the state, addressing pay inequities, and continuing employee leadership development. The agency has built a reputation for providing employees with training and development opportunities and must continue to do so to maintain a high-quality workforce. As TPWD’s current workforce retires and years of valuable institutional knowledge and experience are lost, the agency must implement a succession plan and develop a more broadly experienced workforce to avoid losing the competencies needed to accomplish the TPWD mission.

COMPREHENSIVE RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS

Recruitment programs are a top priority for TPWD, as these are key to hiring the best qualified individuals and are crucial as the agency endeavors to be an employer of choice.

Given that 14% of employees are currently eligible to retire and a total of 28% of employees will be eligible within the next five years, a strong recruitment effort is essential to helping the agency secure the talent needs to continue operations. Specific opportunities for future agency recruitment include the following components:

- Soliciting, training, and supporting agency employees to represent TPWD at events virtually, across the state, and in their local communities through the Recruitment Representatives Program.
- Targeted recruitment efforts for students and veterans in areas of the state where TPWD positions exist by engaging communities through efforts such as providing seminars on becoming a successful applicant.
- Developing and executing recruitment strategies to reach educational institutions with conservation-relevant degree programs for broad segments of the population.
- Increasing investment in high school students by conducting visits and contacts with guidance counselors and coaches to promote TPWD employment and professional growth opportunities to interested students.
- Utilizing community college partnerships to recruit IT professionals earning industry-relevant certifications in conjunction with HB 584 (88th Legislative Session).
- With the agency's goal to increase veteran employment to 20% of the workforce, the Military Employment Liaison position in the HR Division dedicates its services to veterans. TPWD participates in the U.S. Department of Defense SkillBridge Program. SkillBridge is an opportunity for service members to gain valuable civilian work experience in government positions during their last 180 days of military service and at no cost to the agency. This has been a successful recruitment avenue for the agency and we will continue to expand the usage of the program within TPWD.
- Increasing outreach to veterans by expanding existing partnerships among TPWD divisions.
- Create collaborative learning outcomes for all interns, highlighting the agency's mission and key themes to prepare students for a future in conservation.

COMPETITIVE SALARY STRUCTURE

TPWD will continue to address the issues of competitive compensation and pay inequities in comparison within TPWD, to other state agencies, the private sector, and the overall labor market. The agency's long-term goal is to develop a comprehensive compensation package that is competitive enough to attract, motivate, and retain quality employees.

While the agency will not be able to directly compete with many private entities, TPWD will emphasize a total compensation package that includes non-salary compensation such as retirement plans, health benefits, 401K/457 plans, wellness/fitness programs, tuition reimbursement, telecommuting, flexible working arrangements, and employee assistance programs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Leadership and management education provides key professional development and supports formal succession plans by ensuring capable leaders at all levels of the organization have the acumen to ensure that the agency can complete its mission and take care of its most valuable resource, its people. TPWD recognizes the need to consider all generations in the workforce when developing and delivering training and leadership programs so that all learning styles and preferences are considered. TPWD will continue to develop effective leaders throughout the organization by:

- Participating in executive leadership programs including the Governor's Executive Development Program, the National Conservation Leadership Institute, and TPWD's eight-month-long Senior Leadership Development Program (SLDP).

- Continuing to develop first-line managers and team leaders through the Successful First Line Management program (SFLM), which covers self-reflection, nature of management, nature of teams, communication, conflict management, and coaching.
- Ongoing development of a Middle Management Development Program for leaders who are seeking development and growth between SFLM and SLDP.
- Deployment of a new manager training program that provides managers entering a supervisory role at TPWD with the tools needed to manage, lead, and develop the operations of their team.
- Building upon the agency's various mentoring programs that are tailored to serve several levels of the organization, including:
 - Mentoring for Growth – This program targets employees in their first three to six years of tenure at the agency and provides the opportunity to be mentored by seasoned employees for knowledge management/transfer, career development, and staff retention.
 - New Manager Mentoring – This iteration of mentoring is intended for supervisors who are new into a managerial role to be mentored by tenured, experienced managers.
 - Informal Mentoring – The Human Resources Training and Organization Development offer a suite of resources and tools for employees who may not qualify for one of the formal mentoring programs the agency offers.
 - Peer-to-peer Mentoring – Currently under development, this program aims to provide formal mentoring partnerships for employees at the same level of the organization.
- Providing learning opportunities for individual contributors across the agency through programs like the *There's a Leader in Every Seat Collection*, which is offered to all employees and includes highly participatory training focused on the self-reflection and core knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors critical to attaining leadership success as an employee in a non-supervisory role.
- Engaging employees through various statewide training programs covering customer service, conflict management, communication, dealing with difficult people, high-performing teams, coaching, managing up, personality differences, work styles, multigenerational workforce, facilitation skills, teambuilding, time management, and other topics as requested.

EMPLOYEE RETENTION STRATEGIES

The agency will continue to use a variety of strategies to influence retention, including:

- Encouraging the use of performance-based merit pay increases, one-time merits, and paid administrative leave to recognize employees' significant contributions to the agency's mission.
- Furthering the agency's commitment to a comprehensive employee recognition program that honors the best, brightest individuals and team accomplishments.
- Developing and executing recruitment strategies to reach educational institutions with relevant degree programs.
- Promoting participative management strategies that allow individual contributors to take an active role in decision-making, which increases employee engagement.
- Creating opportunities for individual development and training.
- Providing tuition assistance to supplement student-employee educational endeavors.
- Leveraging flexible work arrangements.
- Engaging the use of various collaboration tools that further enable employees to make meaningful contributions within and outside their workgroups.
- Utilizing the employee wellness program to enhance employee engagement and productivity.
- Continuing TPWD's participation in the biennial Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) and executive commitment to appropriately address areas of concern.
- Maintaining an affirming culture for nursing mothers as a designated Mother-Friendly Worksite.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER BEST PRACTICES

The following are active strategies for divisions to consider in order to retain institutional knowledge that is lost in the wake of resignations and retirements:

- Documenting internal procedures
- Cross-training
- Mentoring programs
- Training programs
- Developing leaders
- Succession planning

SUMMARY

This workforce plan is based on the agency's strategic plan and considers the organization's mission, vision, core values, and goals.

The analysis was conducted by examining the agency's demographics, length of service, attrition, workforce contributions from volunteers and interns, employee engagement, and organizational climate. These factors and criteria provide a holistic perspective and support the agency's strategic direction. Data was extracted from the agency's system of record (the Centralized Accounting Payroll/Personnel System), the State Auditor's Office online database systems, and various research from industry-leading resources that were information applicable.

The labor market profile is in constant change, and it is critical for the agency's operational success to have a thorough, comprehensive workforce plan. As new technologies continue to consistently emerge, organizations are faced with increasing obligations to advance the effective modernization of communication mediums, collaboration tools, and product delivery. To meet this need, the agency has determined what is believed to be the most critical workforce needs and challenges over the next five years. The various human resource strategies and organizational goals outlined in this workforce plan contain strategic focus on recruitment and talent management, personnel administration, shared culture, and learning and development.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department continues to build upon a strong reputation as an industry leader in natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation. The future of the agency's mission and subsequent contributions to the state of Texas are only as strong as the workforce dedicated to that purpose.

REFERENCES

- i Osibanjo, Dr. Richard. “The Post-Pandemic Workplace: 5 Shifts Every Leader Must Make.” *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 13 Mar. 2022, forbes.com/sites/richardosibanjo/2022/02/27/the-post-pandemic-workplace-5-shifts-every-leader-must-make/?sh=7248bb2e4fc1.
- ii *Texas unemployment rate (I:TURO1)*. YCharts. (n.d.). https://ycharts.com/indicators/texas_unemployment_rate. Accessed Mar. 2024.
- iii “Employment Projections: 2022-2032 Summary - 2022 A01 Results.” *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 6 Sept. 2023, www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.nr0.htm.
- iv *Texas unemployment rate (I:TURO1)*. YCharts. (n.d.). https://ycharts.com/indicators/texas_unemployment_rate. Accessed Mar. 2024.
- v “Employment Projections: 2022-2032 Summary - 2022 A01 Results.” *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 6 Sept. 2023, www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.nr0.htm.
- vi “Employment Projections: 2022-2032 Summary - 2022 A01 Results.” *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 6 Sept. 2023, www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.nr0.htm.