SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Accountability Report Transmittal Form

Agency Name:_   _   SC Department of Natural Resources_____

Date of Submission: September 15, 2005_____   _____

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2004/2005 ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT
SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Mission & Values

During FY 2004-2005, DNR operated its programs based upon the DNR Board's Strategic Plan entitled *The Natural Resources Agenda: A Strategy for Managing South Carolina's Natural Wealth.* In the DNR Board's Strategic Plan, the agency's mission is stated as follows: "The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) is the advocate for and steward of the state's natural resources." DNR accomplishes its mission based upon an agenda that encompasses these values:

1. Places the resource first through permanent protection and management of habitat and cultural (archaeological) resources of special significance;
2. Protects human life, property, natural resources and the safety of the persons using those resources;
3. Manages natural resources under its jurisdiction sustainably, insuring their long-term integrity and diversity;
4. Uses the best available, sound, scientific and technical information in making natural resources decisions;
5. Conducts applied research to improve scientific knowledge upon which natural resource management decisions are based;
6. Protects, manages and enhances current and future public's use and enjoyment of South Carolina's fish, wildlife, aquatic, soil, water, geological, and cultural resources;
7. Educates and effectively communicates with the public about South Carolina's natural resources and environment, and provides accountability by routinely involving the public in DNR's decision-making process;
8. Speaks for the state's natural resources by commenting on proposed alteration to the environment; and
9. Maintains an agency culture that continuously seeks to improve operations and effectiveness in a professional manner for its employees and customers.

Major Achievements

The quality and abundance of South Carolina's natural resources create a wealth that is unsurpassed by other states and regions of the country. These resources bring an enviable quality of life to our citizens and attract and sustain business activity, which translates into economic wealth for all South Carolinians. The most recent survey conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) revealed state residents and non-residents spent $1.3 billion annually on wildlife-associated recreation in South Carolina. With a total agency budget of approximately $63.7 million, $1.3 billion in expenditures represents a return on investment of over $20 for every dollar expended by the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR). These figures signify the substantial business and financial results that provide a benchmark for identifying benefits from DNR programs.

SCDNR implemented the Strategic Plan's primary goals and strategies to accomplish significant results and major achievements over the past year. Some of these major achievements include the following:

♦Consolidated the existing land and water protection programs to create the new Habitat Protection Section to more effectively identify and coordinate the purchase of outstanding resource properties;

♦Fee simple acquisition of Bonneau Ferry Phase III to complete the 10,700-acre project on the Cooper River in Berkeley County for use as a Wildlife Management Area;

♦Completion of the plan to consolidate DNR field offices statewide into four Regional Hub Offices, closing 18 offices in 16 counties across the state;

♦Consolidated the Administrative Services Division and the Conservation Education and Communication Division into one new division, the Office of Support Services;

♦Consolidated all cell phones into an agency wide minute-share plan, resulting in increased efficiency and effectiveness, creating greater staff accessibility and cutting cost by approximately $30, 000 per year;

♦Extensively revised law enforcement officer reporting systems, eliminating duplicative efforts to record and capture data, thus maximizing manpower toward work activities;

♦Completed detailed geological maps of the Coastal Plain Aquifer Systems that allow accurate identification of the location and quantity of groundwater grounds;

♦Privatized maintenance operations on most state lakes and some fish hatcheries;

♦Completed 3 major renovations and 12 repair and improvement projects for Boating Access Facilities statewide;

♦ Convened a large series of stakeholder groups, developed consensus on a number of issues that would help to stabilize the state's valuable blue crab fishery.

Key Strategic Goals

Management
Protect, manage and sustain the public's enjoyment of natural resources through programs that support hunting, recreational boating, fishing, wildlife watching, soil and water conservation, land and water planning and management, public access, and technical assistance. Continuously refine these and other programs based upon current and anticipated future needs.

Science and Technology
Develop and apply resource management technologies to foster sustainable levels of natural resources.

Education and Public Involvement
Educate the public about natural resources issues and involve them in resource management decisions.

Landscape Conservation
Advance a habitat stewardship and management program to provide for the long-term conservation of the states natural resources. Prepare and implement a comprehensive strategy to protect, understand, manage and restore terrestrial and aquatic habitats, including farm and forestlands that are necessary for the long-term conservation of the state's natural resources.

Internal Management and Operations
Continuously review the agency infrastructure, human resources and funding sources to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

Opportunities

Various opportunities exist that aid DNR in fulfilling its mission and achieving its strategic goals. The agency will continue to implement the DNR Board's vision of placing highest priority on protecting and managing the state's natural resource base. Major legislative efforts for habitat conservation and permanent land acquisition will be continued. New sources of federal and private funds will be actively pursued for protection and management of natural and cultural resources. Actions to protect human life and property will be emphasized through law enforcement activity and boater/hunter education programs in order to continue to reduce accidents and loss of life and property. Development and application of the best available scientific information will serve as a focus area in the agency's mission of managing and protecting natural resources. Public outreach and education efforts through the DNR website, legislative recommendations from publicly appointed advisory committees, an open public policy process, and the agency's educational programs will provide a basis for maintaining and improving relationships with DNR's constituents and stakeholders.

Barriers

The major barrier to fulfilling the agency's mission and achieving its strategic goals is the $12.8 million (41 percent) reduction in state appropriated funds, and an additional $4 million reduction from agency revenue accounts that has impacted DNR from July 2001 through June 30th 2004. Those reductions affected all of the agency's programs and it's ability to meet objectives established for DNR by statute and the DNR Board. Finding new and adequate funding is of utmost importance to successfully protect and manage the unique natural and cultural resources of South Carolina.

For the first time in decades, due to lack of funds to support their positions, DNR has not hired new law enforcement officers to replace those lost through attrition during the last five years. This situation finally changed when the 2005-2006 budget approved funding for 21 new Law Enforcement Officer positions.

The new streamlined SCDNR has faced the fiscal challenges of the past six years and is ready to move on and continue its mission and objectives in the most efficient and effective manner possible. The regional hubs now allow all divisions to come together to look at problems, situations and opportunities on a regional basis. The hub concept has also allowed the Law Enforcement division to temporary deal with the loss of over 90 positions through officer deployment and realignments that attempt to disperse workloads and navigate around labor issues until new officers can be hired.

The use of technology in the field, from upgrading the department's communication system, to the department's information technology, will be integral to the DNR's ability to function and perform for the public and protect this state's natural resources. Some examples are: the implementation of an in-house point of sale license and registration/renewals system; and upgrading the department's UHF communication system so that it not only functions in remote and outlying areas, but can also be easily brought back on line during an emergency through mobile remote towers and generators.

Use of the Accountability Report

The accountability report is utilized by SCDNR to monitor the agency's progress in accomplishing our strategic plan goals, measuring organizational performance, addressing areas in need of improvement and setting improvement initiatives in order to better focus on primary core missions.

DNR had 812 **full**-time equivalent positions at the end of FY 2004-2005.

Major Operational Locations	Four Regional Hub Offices
Rembert Dennis Building (Columbia)	Clemson
5 Geology Road (Columbia)	Columbia
Dennis Wildlife Center (Bonneau)	Charleston
Marine Resources Center (James Island)	Florence
Waddell Mariculture Center (Bluffton)	
	Wildlife Management Area Offices
Freshwater Fisheries Work Centers	Yawkey Wildlife Center
Greenwood	Samworth and Santee Delta (Georgetown)
Rock Hill	Santee Coastal Reserve (McClellanville)
Barnwell	ACE Basin / Donnelley and Bear Island (Green Pond)
Eastover	Webb Wildlife Center (Garnett)
Pine Ridge	
Bennettsville	**Hatcheries**
Bonneau	West Columbia (Cohen Campbell Hatchery)
	Cheraw (Cheraw Hatchery
Land, Water and Conservation District Offices	Heath Springs (Springs Stevens Hatchery)
46 counties offices, primarily in each county seat	Bonneau (Dennis Center)
	Mountain Rest (Wahalla Hatchery)

Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

Major Budget Categories	02-03 Actual Expenditures		03-04 Actual Expenditures		04-05 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	$33,091,824	$16,082,686	$30,887,344	$13,306,731	$29,374,300	$17,900,379
Other Operating	22,490,643	2,391,089	22,040,894	1,981,825	22,326,064	2,323,093
Special Items	19,311	0	19,311	0	419,311	0
Permanent Improvements	9,012,460	0	32,464,014	0	0	0
Case Services	0	0	0	0	0	0
Distributions to Subdivisions	1,379,467	409,650	2,091,388	414,000	1,630,761	414,000
Fringe Benefits	10,005,456	4,888,968	10,007,859	4,437,611	9,508,513	4,553,962
Non-recurring	0	0	0	0	450,000	0
Total	**$75,999,161**	**$23,767,393**	**$97,510,810**	**$20,140,167**	**$63,708,949**	**$18,290,560**

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	04-05 Actual Expenditures	04-05 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	$0	$0
Capital Reserve Funds	$0	$0
Bonds	$0	$0

Key Customers segments linked to key products/services.

SCDNR manages, protects, enhances, conserves and propagates the state's natural resources through science, research, education and state and federal statutory and regulatory frameworks. As the advocate for and steward of the state's natural resources, SCDNR's primary customers are the citizens of South Carolina, and specifically sportsmen's and members of a broad range of hunting, fishing, conservation and environmental organizations.

The SCDNR's customers include residents of South Carolina, as well as non-residents. Based upon the most recent survey commissioned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and conducted by the Bureau of the Census, 1.7 million people, age 16 and over, participate annually in wildlife-associated recreation in South Carolina. Of this total, 812,000 engage in fishing, 265,000 in hunting, and 1.2 million participate in wildlife-watching activities to include observing, feeding or photographing wildlife. Fishermen and hunters participate in 10.7 million days of fishing and 4.7 million days of hunting annually. The 1.7 million people who participated in fishing, hunting, wildlife-watching activities and other wildlife related recreation in South Carolina in 2002 spent over $1.3 billion. These statistics show that in addition to managing natural, cultural, and historical resources of the state, SCDNR is also a major economic development and tourism agency. Additionally, the SCDNR assist other state, federal and local government agencies; universities and colleges; and planning agencies.

By The Numbers, Other customers and key products and services include, but are not limited to:

850,000	Records submitted annually to county treasurers for tax purposes
704,882	Resident & Non-Resident Licenses and permits purchased last year
396,915	Owners of actively registered watercraft
57,000	Subscribers to the *S.C. Wildlife* magazine
44,031	Individuals that participated in the Individual Antlerless Deer Tag Program
18,000	Children participating in conservation education programs
5,000	Individuals that requested watershed and river corridor planning technical assistance
1,820	Landowners that participated in the Antlerless Deer Quota Program
1000	Landowners that were consulted
275	Requests for hydrological data and technical assistance
46	Land, Water and Conservation Districts

Key Stakeholders (other than customers)

The SCDNR's key stakeholders that are not customers are the numerous hunting, fishing, conservation and environmental organizations, various state, county and municipal entities, and professional associations. Some of these groups have members who, individually, are customers, but the organizations as a whole are stakeholders. Many of these stakeholders, through partnerships with SCDNR, are in fact suppliers to the department. The chart below is a sample of such organizations.

| SCDNR Key Stakeholders Other Than Customers (including but not limited to)		
Hunting & Fishing Organizations ♦**Hunting:** S.C. Sportsman's Coalition Ducks Unlimited Wild Turkey Federation Quail Unlimited Five Rivers Coalition ♦**Freshwater Fishing:** Bass Anglers Sportsman's Society Trout Unlimited Greenville Striper Kings Midlands Striper Club Lake Murray Guides Association ♦**Saltwater Fishing:** Recreational Shrimper's Association S.C. Marina Association S.C. Shrimper's Association The S.C. Crabbers Association Coastal Conservation Association	♦**Conservation & Environmental Organizations:** Harry Hampton Wildlife Fund Wildlife Federation S.C. Farm Bureau The Nature Conservancy S.C. Forestry Association Nemours Environmental Foundation Focus Groups Palmetto Conservation Foundation The Conservation Fund The Land Trust Alliance S.C. Land Trust Network S.C. American Fisheries Society S.C. Fisheries Workers Association S.C. Wildlife Society Wildlife Action, Inc. Sierra Club Audubon Society Coastal Conservation League S.C. Forest Watch	**Other state, county and municipal entities:** S.C. Conservation Bank S.C. Emergency Preparedness Division Local Emergency Preparedness Offices Various law enforcement and entities State water users (industry, agriculture, and regional, county and municipal water processors and providers S.C. Department of Education Regional Climate Centers **Professional Associations** S.C. Wildlife Officers Association S.C. Association of Conservation Districts Soil and Water Conservation Society Climatological Society S.E. Assoc. of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Int'l Assoc. of Fish & Wildlife Agencies **Corporate Partners** Duke Energy Crescent Timber Champion Timber

Key Suppliers

DNR has a diversity of suppliers that provide input for the agency's operations. This has evolved as DNR has maintained a traditional focus to develop partnerships and cooperative efforts with state and federal agencies to include: S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control; S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism; S.C. Forestry Commission; Department of Commerce; Sea Grant Consortium; Medical University of South Carolina; Clemson University; Francis Marion University; College of Charleston; University of South Carolina; State Technical Education System; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Forest Service; National Marine Fisheries Service; U.S. Coast Guard; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, to name a few.

Other suppliers of input to DNR are: owners of over 2,030 acres of private land in 53 public dove fields; timber companies; U.S. Forest Service, other state and federal agencies; private individuals in the 1.1 million acre Wildlife Management Area Program; federal grant agencies providing over $4 million for marine resources research and monitoring projects; 1,463 environmental permit applicants related to commercial and residential development; nearly 100 requestors seeking resource planning and stewardship assistance; over 200 communities identified as flood hazard areas; city, county and regional water authorities; local river management and conservation organizations; SCDNR Advisory Committees; Deputy Law Enforcement Officers; boating dealers; marinas; sporting goods dealers and manufacturers; vehicle dealers; ATV dealers; law enforcement suppliers; agricultural and wildlife management suppliers; pond and aquaculture owners/operators; commercial fishermen; shooting preserves owners; hunting guides and lodges; and commercial and recreational oyster bottoms lessees.

S.C. Department of Natural Resources Organizational Chart

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                    │        DNR BOARD         │
  ┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄│   Michael G. McShane     │
                    │        Chairman          │
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                    │         DIRECTOR         │
                    │     John E. Frampton     │
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INTERNAL AUDIT Williams	ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR Chamblee

	LEGISLATIVE Meggie
	SPECIAL PROJECTS Dobbins
	ENVIRONMENTAL Duncan

OFFICE OF SUPPORT SERVICES Collins	EXECUTIVE SECRETARY Scheibler
LAW ENFORCEMENT Taylor	CHIEF COUNSEL Mabry
WILDLIFE AND FRESHWATER FISHERIES Carmichael	HUMAN RESOURCES Cowell
MARINE RESOURCES Boyles	FEDERAL AID COORDINATOR Winslow
LAND, WATER AND CONSERVATION Vang	

Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 03-04 Budget Expenditures	FY 04-05 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross Reference for Financial Results
I. Support Services	Administrative functions provide day-to-day operation of the agency and encompass a wide variety of activities that promote and support the implementation of all agency functions and the overall management of the agency.	State: 1,311,524 Federal: 0 Other: 1,867,301 Total: 3,178,825 % of Total Budget: 5.2%	State: 2,058,899 Federal: 0 Other: 1,631,110 Total: 3,690,009 % of Total Budget: 5.6%	7.11, 7.22
II. A Outreach	Provides public information, outreach and educational services through a wide range of public and agency programs and activities.	State: 1,118,891 Federal: 88,107 Other: 1,021,292 Total: 2,228,190 % of Total Budget: 3.6%	State: 806,228 Federal: 154,917 Other: 1,046,341 Total: 2,007,486 % of Total Budget: 3%	7.31, 7.32
II. B Boat Titling	Provides and maintains the system for processing renewals, new registrations, titles, and transfers of watercraft and outboard motors in the state and submits records to county treasurer for tax purposes.	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 1,405,076 Total: 1,405,076 % of Total Budget: 2.3%	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 1,874,961 Total: 1,874,961 % of Total Budget: 2.8%	7.10, 7.28
II. C Game Management	Natural resource biologists and technicians research, monitor and survey a broad range of native wildlife species, including non-game, game and endangered vertebrates. These individuals plan, direct and collaborate with Wildlife Section Regional Projects in this activity. Wildlife biologists and technicians utilize current technology and science to manage and protect wildlife species and their habitats throughout the state.	State: 0 Federal: 1,949,778 Other: 5,058,053 Total: 7,007,831 % of Total Budget: 11.6%	State: 0 Federal: 9,873,389 Other: 5,196,111 Total: 15,069,500 % of Total Budget: 22.8%	7.7, 7.9
II. D Freshwater Fisheries	The Freshwater Fisheries Section has among its objectives the protection, enhancement and conservation of South Carolina's inland aquatic resources, and to provide recreational fishing opportunities for the state's citizens. Fisheries biologists and technicians utilize current technology and science to manage and protect fisheries species throughout the state. Activities are carried out on a regional and statewide basis to protect, conserve and enhance South Carolina's freshwater fishery and other aquatic resources.	State: 94,615 Federal: 2,028,367 Other: 1,955,339 Total: 4,078,321 % of Total Budget: 6.7%	State: 0 Federal: 2,385,545 Other: 2,018,391 Total: 4,403,936 % of Total Budget: 6.6%	7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7

Below: List any programs not included above and show the remainder of expenditures by source of funds. N/A

Remainder of Expenditures:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:

Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 03-04 Budget Expenditures	FY 04-05 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross Reference for Financial Results
II. E Law Enforcement	The Division of Law Enforcement is responsible for enforcement of state and federal laws that govern hunting, recreational and commercial fishing, recreational boating, and other natural resources conservation concerns to insure protection of life, property, and natural resources. Also assists other state law enforcement agencies with homeland security, litter violations, executive protection and natural disasters and general law enforcement support functions for public safety matters.	State: 4,880,707 Federal: 834,888 Other: 6,811,647 Total: 12,527,242 % of Total Budget: 20.7%	State: 4,907,036 Federal: 980,136 Other: 7,524,868 Total: 13,412,040 % of Total Budget: 20.3%	7.17, 7.18, 7.19, 7.20, 7.21, 7.23, 7.26, 7.27, 7.29, 7.30
II.F Boating Safety	Enforces boating safety as mandated by state and federal law, promotes safe boating and investigates boating accidents.	State: 0 Federal: 1,158,368 Other: 1,537,611 Total: 2,695,979 % of Total Budget: 4.4%	State: 0 Federal: 1,067,322 Other: 1,466,273 Total: 2,533,595 % of Total Budget: 3.8%	7.24, 7.25, 7.26, 7.27
II.G Marine Resources	The Division of Marine Resources is responsible for the management and conservation of the state's marine and estuarine resources. The Division conducts routine monitoring and research on the state's marine resources and makes recommendations for the management of those resources.	State: 3,477,717 Federal: 4,209,519 Other: 1,616,170 Total: 9,303,406 % of Total Budget: 15.4%	State: 2,863,873 Federal: 7,955,067 Other: 3,974,012 Total: 14,792,952 % of Total Budget: 22.4%	7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 7.15, 7.16
II. H Wildlife Diversity	Includes the state's Endangered Species Program and Heritage Trust Program, both established to protect and enhance a variety of declining species and diminishing habitats.	State: 0 Federal: 550,453 Other: 610,510 Total: 1,160,963 % of Total Budget: 1.9%	State: 431,652 Federal: 767,944 Other: 101,953 Total: 1,301,549 % of Total Budget: 1.9%	7.8, 7.9
II.I. Land & Water	Land, Water and Conservation develops and implements programs that manage and conserve the state's land and water resources by providing guidance in resource development and management through planning, research, technical assistance, public education and development of a comprehensive natural resources database.	State: 4,431,249 Federal: 1,638,142 Other: 706,125 Total: 6,775,516 % of Total Budget: 11.2%	State: 3,885,067 Federal: 1,895,587 Other: 1,189,835 Total: 6,970,498 % of Total Budget: 10.5%	7.33, 7.34, 7.35, 7.36, 7.37, 7.38

Below: List any programs not included above and show the remainder of expenditures by source of funds.

Remainder of Expenditures:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:

Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 03-04 Budget Expenditures	FY 04-05 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross Reference for Financial Results
III. Employee Contributions		State: 5,030,888 Federal: 1,845,621 Other: 3,045,301 Total: 9,921,810 % of Total Budget: 17%	State: 3,841,890 Federal: 1,952,176 Other: 3,266,246 Total: 9,060,312 % of Total Budget: 13.7%	7.1, 7.2, 7.3
		State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	
		State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	
		State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	
		State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	

Below: List any programs not included above and show the remainder of expenditures by source of funds.

Remainder of Expenditures:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:	State: Federal: Other: Total: % of Total Budget:

Category 1 – Leadership

1.1a-f: The leadership system in DNR describes the direction of the agency and the means by which it is achieved. The primary focus of the agency's leadership is based upon DNR's Vision which states: "As the guardians of the state's natural resources, the Department of Natural Resources will strive to ensure healthy, sustainable levels of natural resources for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations." This Vision Statement sets the long-term direction and is manifested through DNR's Strategic Plan. Each year, DNR reviews its accomplishments to ensure performance expectations are achieved and progress is made to meet the Vision Statement. Accomplishments are presented to the DNR Board for their review and policy direction. This action also provides a forum by which the public may review progress toward those priorities deemed most important.

1.2: Senior leadership establishes and maintains a continuous focus on customers. As the manager of the state's natural resources used and enjoyed by the public year-round, there is constant contact with customers ranging from those that own and operate boats, purchase hunting and fishing licenses, manage land and water resources, to commercial and recreational businesses, farmers, planning agencies, water authorities, university faculty and staff, and developers.

1.3 The Director of the Office of Support Services and staff continually monitor the status of agency income and budget against expenditures and anticipated expenditures. The Division Director then communicates such findings through regular reports and meetings with the Director, Associate Director and fellow Deputy Directors on a regular basis. Senior leaders maintain fiscal accountability through continual monitoring of their respective budgets and expenditures. Weekly division meetings are held to brief key staff on progress of department projects, functions, and budget status reviews. The Director and Associate Director hold monthly meetings with Deputy Director's and other key staff. Deputies are given strict fiscal guidelines by the Director and are held accountable for following those guidelines. Legal and regulatory accountability is maintained through the constant involvement of three staff attorneys in the Legal Office. Under their guidance, staff is in constant contact with the local, state and federal regulatory agencies that have purview over agency operations to insure that legal and regulatory requirements are understood and complied with.

1.4: Senior leaders in DNR regularly review key performance measures. This is done primarily through the annual goals and objectives developed for each division, which are linked to DNR's Strategic Plan and provide target levels for performance. These measures are a basis for the Employee Performance Management System review for all senior leaders. The DNR Board members evaluate the DNR Director, and their recommendations are submitted to the Agency Head Salary Commission.

1.5: Employee feedback is routinely submitted to senior leaders through direct contact, regional workshops, special purpose committees and through the chain of command within the agency's divisions. Employee surveys are conducted to secure feedback on particular issues or problems. Input from employees is attained through DNR's website on matters having agency-wide significance, such as updating the Strategic Plan. Senior leaders review this information and feedback, determine what is applicable in each division and implement needed changes to improve leadership effectiveness and

management of the agency. They also use inter and intra-divisional task forces to review particular issues/problems and provide feedback and performance review findings.

1.6: DNR addresses current and potential impacts on the public of its products, services, facilities and operations in a variety of ways. These impacts are evaluated through legislative, regulatory, policy-making and related processes, to include extensive public involvement and meetings, in order to gain a diverse cross section of input. The impact of programs and operations is noted through legislative contact, constituent organizations, commercial and recreational interests, advisory committees, and through other private/public entities. In each case, senior leaders review information provided on impacts of programs and services to ensure the resource is properly managed and protected, as well as representing the best interest of the public. In programmatic areas where there is potential risk**,** such as hunting, boating and outdoor enjoyment, DNR actively promotes public outreach efforts to adequately inform the public of associated risks. These potential risks are further addressed through special education and training classes such as Hunter and Boater Safety. When risks, such as boating-related fatalities, become major public policy issues, the agency will pursue specific laws and/or regulatory controls to protect the safety of people and property.

1.7-1.8: Senior leadership establishes and communicates key organizational priorities for improvement through legislative and budgetary processes. Senior leaders are directly involved in the preparation of DNR's legislative package, detailing legislative priorities for the year. These proposals are reviewed by the DNR Board and upon approval, are submitted to appropriate committees in the General Assembly for consideration. A similar process is followed for development and submission of the annual DNR budget proposals, which are prioritized based on needs of the agency for improvement and funding. Both the legislative package and budgetary proposals are linked to critical natural resource issues and needs as identified through staff and public input, interest group input and recommendations from legislators and/or key political leaders. It is through this input and these various processes that DNR can support and strengthen the community and determine areas of emphasis. Senior leadership works to effectively implement these processes to maintain a primary focus on customers, the DNR vision and the well being of the state's natural resources.

Category 2 – Strategic Planning

During FY 2004-2005, DNR operated its programs based upon the DNR Board's Strategic Plan entitled *The Natural Resources Agenda: A Strategy for Managing South Carolina's Natural Wealth,* and DNR implemented the plan's primary goals and strategies to accomplish significant results and major achievements over the past year. In early 2005, the Director and the Associate Director began a process designed to reenergize the agency's planning function and organized an agency-wide team to begin scoping a visioning document to guide the development of the agency over the next five years. A draft document, "DNR Vision for the Future", has been completed and has been processed further by an additional series of teams whose mission was to work through all levels of the agency to review and refine the document. Upon completion of their mission, a series of all-hands meetings were held throughout the state to further refine this plan. The refined document was then provided to each employee for additional input and suggestions. This process will continue into FY 2005-2006, when the agency will organize to develop an agency-wide process to implement the Goals and Objectives through the development of a department-wide Operational Plan. By developing this "Vision for the Future" and proceeding through this planning initiative into FY2005-2006, the Department will make a huge advancement in strategic planning and forecasting to create a culture of accountability and progress.

2.1: The Primary focus of the planning process in DNR during FY 04-05 is the Strategic Plan, which was first adopted by the DNR Board in 1996. The first comprehensive strategic document prepared by the

agency in 1996 provided excellent direction to the newly structured agency. The plan was updated in 2001 and delineated into major strategies: 1) management, 2) science and technology, 3) education and public involvement, 4) landscape conservation, and 5) internal management and operations. For each strategy, there is a development of action items that cover all of the programs and activities of the agency. The plan provides a focus for budgeted programs of DNR and requires all of these programs be linked or related to strategies to accomplish the actions noted in the plan. Each division utilizes this focus to develop a programmatic delivery system that has a broad customer base and focuses on reaching intended targets identified in the plan. It also provides a forum and benchmark for setting priorities through a comprehensive decision-making process based upon the strategies and action items. This decision-making process is clearly reflected in the interaction of program development through input from the Governor's Office, General Assembly, SCDNR Board, advisory committees, constituent organizations, professional groups, and the public to insure resources are used in the most efficient manner.

2.2: Each program is required to develop specific goals and objectives. These are used to deploy strategies and action items in the plan so that results/outcomes are developed and evaluated. The deployment of these strategies and the relationship to the plan occurs each year as goals and objectives are developed for the programs in the agency. Additionally, they are reviewed and justified through the budgetary process implemented by staff and the DNR Board. The plan provides direction through the agency's strategic agenda, providing the foundation upon which the agency operates and determines how DNR accomplishes its mission. Components of this agenda are integrated into DNR's budget programs and are as follows: 1) places the resource first through permanent protection and management of habitat and cultural (archaeological) resources of special significance; 2) protects human life, property, natural resources and safety of the persons using those resources; 3) manages natural resources under its jurisdiction sustainably and as a system, insuring their long-term integrity and diversity; 4) uses best available sound scientific and technical information in making natural resources decisions; 5) conducts applied research to improve the base of scientific knowledge upon which natural resource management decisions are based; 6) protects, manages and enhances current and future public's use and enjoyment of South Carolina's fish, wildlife, aquatic, soil, water, geological and cultural resources; 7) educates and communicates with the public about South Carolina's natural resources and environment, and provides accountability by routinely involving the public in the department's decision-making process; 8) speaks for the state's natural resources in commenting on proposed alterations to the environment; and 9) maintains an agency culture that continuously seeks to improve operations and effectiveness in a professional manner for its employees and customers.

2.3: Strategic objectives and action plans are communicated and deployed to staff through the strategic planning process and updates that occur with the DNR Strategic Plan. Senior leadership also has specific strategic objectives and actions plans as a formal part of their Employee Performance Management System and is evaluated on this basis; thus, the senior leaders in each division are allocated specific objectives and action plans through various programs and projects. Also, senior leaders communicate and deploy strategic objectives through the DNR Board, which establishes policy guidance for accomplishing such objectives throughout the agency. DNR's budgetary process also provides a means for communicating and deploying strategic objectives. This is done at the state and federal level as funding proposals and grants that are based upon specific objectives in DNR's Strategic Plan are pursued. Performance measures are also communicated through project reports developed for grants and/or federal aid utilized for programs in the agency. More detailed performance measures in DNR are maintained in an extensive database for Long Term Performance Measures. These measures are updated each year and are available for use in the strategic planning process and reported to the public in DNR's Annual Report.

2.4: Under Strategy 1: Management, our key action plans are: Plan 1: Establish an environmental baseline and identify trends by assessing the condition of the state's natural resources and periodically

reporting on their status including recommendations to manage, improve or restores ecosystems, lands, waters, habitats and species. Plan 3: Ensure the protection of life, property and natural resources through maintenance of a well-trained, professional natural resources law enforcement force appropriately distributed throughout the state, and Plan 5, Acquire and incorporate social and economic, as well as biological and physical, data into policies and processes to manage the state's natural resources and provide information on the social, cultural, economic as well as ecological significance of natural resources to the public. Under Strategy 3: Education and Public Involvement, our key action plans are: Plan 1: Educate the public about the state's natural resources and encourage them to make more informed contributions to the management, use, stewardship and enjoyment of our natural resources, Plan 3: Promote safe, ethical and responsible use of the state's natural resources, Plan 4: Promote awareness of natural hazards and educate the public in ways to mitigate loss or injury, Plan 5: Emphasize the importance of education as a portion of every DNR employee's work responsibilities, and Plan 6:   Utilize public opinion surveys and the talents of the Department's Advisory Committees to gauge public opinion and educate the public on important natural resources issues. Under Strategy 5: Internal Management and Operations, our key action plan is Plan 6: continue to attract and retain talented employees available to carry out the Agency's mission in a manner that includes career development and competitive compensation for staff.

2.5:   Strategic objectives, action plans and performance measures are communicated and deployed primarily through the agencies strategic plan, *The Natural Resources Agenda: A strategy for Managing South Carolina's Natural Wealth*. The Director has instructed his Deputies that personnel review through the State EPMS system is to relate directly to the strategic plan and be linked to each employee's job duties and evaluation. Each employee is informed of the location of the strategic plan on the agency's website and informed that their familiarity with it is required by the above process.

2.6 The agency's strategic plan is available to the public through the agency's Internet website at www.scdnr.state.sc.us.

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Strategic Planning	Key Cross Reference for Performance Measures
		Related FY 03-04 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiatives	
	Strategy 1: Management Protect, manage and sustain the public's enjoyment of natural resources through programs which support hunting, recreational boating, fishing, wildlife watching, soil and water conservation, land and water planning and management, public access, and technical assistance. Continuously refine these and other programs based upon current and anticipated future needs.	**Action 1:** Establish an environmental baseline and identify trends by assessing the condition of the state's natural resources and periodically reporting on their status including recommendations to manage, improve or restore ecosystems, lands, waters, habitats and species.	7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 7.29, 7.30
		Action 2: Identify and provide for recovery, restoration of threatened resources and for needed research in this area.	7.16
		Action 3: Ensure the protection of life, property and natural resources through maintenance of a well-trained, professional natural resources law enforcement force appropriately distributed throughout the state.	7.17, 7.18, 7.19, 7.20, 7.21, 7.23, 7.24, 7.25, 7.26, 7.27
		Action 4: Develop, implement and encourage multi-objective management plans for sustainable use of natural resources with appropriate public involvement	
		Action 5: Acquire and incorporate social and economic, as well as biological and physical, data into policies and processes to manage the state's natural resources and provide information on the social, cultural, economic as well as ecological significance of natural resources to the public.	7.5, 7.6, 7.36

		Strategic Planning	
Program Number and Title	**Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective**	**Related FY 03-04 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiatives**	**Key Cross Reference for Performance Measures**
	Strategy 2: Science and Technology: Develop and apply resource management technologies to foster sustainable levels of natural resources.	**Action 1**: Obtain information required to support science-based decision-making and management for the state's natural resources through applied research, monitoring, surveys and cooperative partnerships with other resource/research agencies, academic institutions and conservation organizations.	7.4, 7.7, 7.8, 7.9, 7.11, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14,7.15, 7.34, 7.35
		Action 2: Collect and integrate scientific information and data into the agency's decision-making process for all issues and actions.	
		Action 3: Maintain, develop and implement technologies to enhance natural resources stewardship and conservation (including, but not limited to, fish hatchery, aquaculture and aquatic population restoration and rebuilding technologies).	7.4, 7.6, 7.15, 7.33, 7.34
	Strategy 3: Education and Public Involvement: Educate the public about natural resources issues and involve them in resource management decisions.	**Action 1**: Educate the public about the state's natural resources and encourage them to make more informed contributions to the management, use, stewardship and enjoyment of our natural resources.	7.31, 7.32, 7.38
		Action 2: Assess and communicate public interests, needs and knowledge as relates to natural resources.	7.5, 7.6
		Action 3: Promote safe, ethical and responsible use of the state's natural resources.	7.21, 7.27
		Action 4: Promote awareness of natural hazards and educate the public in ways to mitigate loss or injury.	7.37
		Action 5: Emphasize the importance of education as a portion of every DNR employee's work responsibilities.	
		Action 6: Utilize public opinion surveys and the talents of the Department's Advisory Committees to gauge public opinion and educate the public on important natural resources issues.	7.5, 7.6

		Strategic Planning	
Program Number and Title	**Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective**	**Related FY 03-04 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiatives**	**Key Cross Reference for Performance Measures**
	Strategy 4: Landscape Conservation: Advance a habitat stewardship and management program to provide for the long-term conservation of the states natural resources. Prepare and implement a comprehensive strategy to protect, understand, manage and restore terrestrial and aquatic habitats, including farm and forest lands, that are necessary for the long -term conservation of the state's natural resources.	**Action 1**: Expand habitat protection, restoration and conservation programs, emphasizing expanded acquisition and conservation easements for properties with high ecological value.	7.16
		Action 2: Support local, regional and state efforts to conserve and sustain natural resources through comprehensive land use planning.	
		Action 3: Advocate environmentally sound approaches to economic development planning, permitting and other decision-making in order to maintain and sustain the state's natural resources.	7.29, 7.30
	Strategy 5: Internal Management and Operations Continuously review the agency infrastructure, human resources and funding sources to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of operations.	**Action 1**: Provide for effective staff development and training in natural resources management, planning and customer service, including continuing education, leadership training and formal education.	
		Action 2: Explore and develop applicable technological innovations to improve natural resources management, planning and customer service.	
		Action 3: Continually evaluate efficient use of present funding and pursue new sources of funding for management, conservation and protection for the state's natural resources.	7.10, 7.22, 7.28
		Action 4: Maintain and enhance facilities and infrastructure to continually improve management and stewardship of the state's natural resources and customer service.	
		Action 5: Develop opportunities to promote diversity both within the agency and in its constituents to enhance participation in nature-related activities by all citizens of South Carolina.	
		Action 6: Continue to attract and retain talented employees available to carry out the agency's mission in a manner that includes career development and competitive compensation for staff.	7.1, 7.2. 7.3

Category 3 – Customer Focus

3.1-3.2: Through development of performance measures for programs in the agency, processes are identified that deliver services and provide customer satisfaction throughout the state. DNR places a great deal of emphasis on all employees being customer focused. With a broad-based staff located throughout the state, DNR employees are exposed daily to the agency's customer base and respond to their needs and expectations. One of the agency's primary listening and learning methods is through its advisory committees. Each division has at least one citizen advisory committee that is either provided for in statute or created by Executive Order. The purpose of these advisory committees is to solicit public input and to advise the DNR Board on matters of policy and issues that affect the state's natural resources. Pubic meetings are usually held by each committee every two months in locations across the state to make it convenient for the public to attend and interact with the committees and staff. DNR's website has installed a comments section that allows our customers to pose questions or lodge complaints about agency services, products and processes. Key individuals in each program area have been identified to receive and respond to these inputs from our customers, and the volume of contacts and responses will be tracked and analyzed in the future. In recent years, the volume of comments, questions and expressions of concern received in DNR's Executive Office has increased enormously. In order to deal with this challenge, an Executive Office Ombudsman function has been created to provide a more formalized and accountable system of response and information dissemination.

3.3-3.4: DNR has identified those persons, organizations and governmental agencies that are either recipients or beneficiaries of work efforts, or purchasers of products and services produced by the agency. DNR works to determine and fulfill internal and external customers' key requirements by asking questions, defining terms, and setting standards for continuous improvement. The agency works to continuously monitor key processes to ensure that customer needs are met. A partial listing of agency customers is provided in Section II.

DNR maintains close contact with its customers and undertakes methods to listen and learn about changing customer/business needs. These methods enable the agency to secure information needed to improve services/programs and measure customer satisfaction. In a recent survey by USC entitled *Growth In South Carolina: A Public Perspective,* one of the major findings of this survey noted that South Carolinians overwhelmingly want both continued growth and a high quality environment with protected natural resources.

3.5 Through the actions noted, DNR has built positive relationships with customers and stakeholders. As a resource management agency that operates throughout the state, DNR field staff has been an integral part of the community, which has resulted in developing credibility with the customer base. As a law enforcement agency, DNR has been effective in enforcing laws in a manner that protects the state's natural resources for use and enjoyment by a large portion of the state's citizens. With the state's natural resource base being such an important component of its culture, DNR's ability to preserve and protect this culture has resulted in building positive relationships. DNR has also been effective in the community by assisting other state, local and federal agencies during emergencies, manhunts, hurricanes, security, communications, search and rescue, and recovery activities.

Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis & Knowledge Management:

4.1: DNR's performance management system is a reflection of the agency's vision and mission and how programs operationalize the vision and mission to produce effective business results. One category used to gauge DNR's performance is the financial arena. The organization needs a sustainable financial base from year to year in order to meet the vision and mission of DNR. The level of state funding is an

integral part of this category as DNR secures approximately 24% of its budget from state funds. The agency also collects revenue from a variety of sources that provide key support to law enforcement and wildlife/fishery programs. The levels of hunting and fishing license sales, boat titling and registration fees, marine resources licenses and permits, magazine subscriptions and related revenue sources are key performance measures to track as they affect programs, operations, and ultimately, the mission of DNR. Grants also serve as an important funding source for the agency and the level of extramural grants funded has a critical impact on key programs and projects. Another category in which DNR develops measures is its customer base. With a finite level of natural resources and an expanding population in the state, the level of customer participation in outdoor activities and the trends in this participation has a key link to the vision and mission of DNR. In addition, measures of requests for data/information, technical assistance, maps, educational products/services, conflicts between resource users, and changing constituent groups are all critical to the agency's performance. The category of collecting scientific information on natural resources managed by DNR is directly linked to the agency's vision and mission. A variety of programs exist in DNR where health, well-being and sustainability of natural resources are measured to ensure proper management and protection. These programs include the State Climate Office, hydrology, aquatic nuisance species control, flood mitigation, environmental review, habitat protection, the Southeastern Regional Climate Center, endangered species, Heritage Trust, wildlife management, freshwater fisheries, marine resources, and the S.C. Geological Survey. DNR makes key management decisions based upon science in order to utilize the best information available in this process.

4.2: DNR's key measures are economic impact of hatchery production and expenditures, participation in hunting and fishing, wildlife watching, and wildlife related recreation compared to other states, revenue trends measured as watercraft titling and registration renewal methods and license sales comparisons with other states, boater access, marine species abundance surveys, gamefish tagging and charter vessel reporting trends, commercial landing trends, and artificial reef activity, law enforcement effort measures, hunting accident/fatality trends compared to other states, hunter safety student participation trends, boating safety measurements and case loads, boater safety student trends compared with numbers of boats registered, litter enforcement measures, numbers of and participation in education classes and programs, USDA cost share funding trends, Geological Survey mapping trends, nuisance aquatic plant coverage trends, numbers of comprehensive environmental reviews, numbers of flood insurance policies and GIS data access trends.

4.3: In the aforementioned categories, effective use of performance measures to make decisions is based upon data quality, integrity, timeliness, accuracy, reliability, quality, security, and availability for decision- making. DNR ensures these factors occur through a variety of methods. Through the use of scientific research, the agency collects data pursuant to a protocol based upon standards for data quality and reliability. For making decisions on seasons, bag limits, hunting and fishing methods, etc., the data is collected based upon the time and availability needed to make such decisions and is complete before it is used in this process. Many of the agency's data collections are done through grants and contracts that require a final report for submission to the appropriate agency. In order to maintain credibility for utilizing such grants and to secure reimbursement for funds expended on a grant, the grantor will review the final report to ensure data quality, reliability, completeness and availability. In the financial category, there are established standards that must be followed to maintain data quality and reliability. DNR routinely has internal and external financial audits to see that the standards are met. By maintaining a well-managed financial system with a diversity of checks and balances, DNR ensures such financial data is complete and available for use at the appropriate times for decision-makers. As a public agency serving a very broad customer base, DNR is dependent upon maintaining a quality database to make decisions regarding these customers. Through the use of current information technologies and a highly skilled workforce, the agency provides reliable and timely data for its customers and for use in the decision-

making process. There are also peer reviews of the agency's data collection and use to further ensure its quality and reliability.

4.4-4.5: DNR uses comparative data and information in a continuous manner to provide effective support for decision-making. In the scientific arena, the analysis of data to include trends, regression, correlation analysis and the like, is an integral component of the scientific process. These types of analyses and others are used to draw conclusions on biological issues related to DNR's mission to protect and conserve the resource. In the law enforcement arena, the agency maintains a comprehensive intelligence system used to develop intelligence and comparisons on natural resources violations in order to support effective decision-making for staffing, patrol patterns, duration of patrols and the time of day/night or season. Data collection and analysis relating to hunting and boating accidents/fatalities are important in investigating such occurrences to determine if criminal charges may exist and to provide feedback. This feedback provides trends and comparisons that support decision-making on methods to ensure the safety of human life and property. Changing demographics and land-use trends in the state provide valuable information to support planning and management decisions in the agency. Human dimensions data and changing landscape information are constantly developed by DNR to support decisions relating to future direction of programs and the allocation of resources to meet the vision and mission of the agency. Whenever possible, DNR will use comparative data and information from other agencies and/or states to support decisions, if compatible. With the dynamic nature of natural resources management from state to state, it is often difficult to identify compatible data for comparative purposes. Given this complexity, DNR will, at times, use its own database to make comparisons from one time frame to another for use in the decision-making process.

4.6:   With the loss of personnel as a result of budget reductions and the anticipation of further losses of a significant portion of the agencies leadership as the TERI program begins to run its course, the agency has become more acutely aware of the ongoing and accelerating loss of institutional knowledge. Our Project WILD leadership-training program was one response to this issue, but leadership is just beginning to focus on standardizing methods to maintain and accumulate employee knowledge and the identifying and sharing of best practices. The Director has instructed his Deputy's to institute a succession program in each division to insure a training process is in place for future key staff position changes. The Information Technology Section of the Office of Support Services has been tasked with exploring and implementing technological programs that will facilitate the collection and accessing of existing published, printed and electronically filed information for ready retrieval, and methods of capturing existing institutional knowledge that will be needed in the future.

Category 5 – Human Resources

In FY 04-05, the Department of Natural Resources began to stabilize after experiencing budget reductions over the past five years. At the end of FY 04-05, the Department had 885 filled positions, a slight increase over the 874 positions filled at the end of FY 03-04. While the overall total number of positions filled increased slightly, records indicate that there still were 19 fewer filled, permanent FTE positions at the end of FY 04-05 (669 FTE positions filled) than there were at the end of FY 03-04(688 FTE positions filled).

Additionally, because the Legislature reinstated the proviso requiring vacant positions to remain vacant no more than twelve months before being deleted, the Department lost 96 FTE positions in FY 04-05, reducing the Department's total FTE allocation from 908 FTE positions to 812 FTE positions.

5-1   Motivating and encouraging employees to excel continues to be a high priority at the Department of Natural Resources. Part of this motivation process includes rewarding and recognizing job

accomplishments in both monetary and non-monetary formats. The Department has awarded salary increases very conservatively over the past several years due to the drastic budget reductions; however, slowly DNR is acknowledging its employees for the added responsibilities they have assumed due to the reduction in staffing levels over the past five years. In FY 04-05, DNR awarded salary increases to 134 employees, 15% of the entire employee population, at an average 8% increase. Additionally, the Department elected to award one-time bonuses to some employees in recognition of their contributions to the Department during these austere budgetary times. Each Deputy Director was charged with determining the appropriate criteria for awarding these bonuses with each division having a finite amount of funding to be awarded. A total of 93 bonuses were awarded in FY 04-05. Using the flexibilities of the bonus program is an excellent, cost effective method of recognition and acknowledgement that builds employee morale, yet has minimal fiscal impact since the bonuses do not become part of the employees' base salaries.

DNR continues to acknowledge employee accomplishments at Board meetings, deputy director meetings and division meetings. Additionally, DNR communications, such as the *SC Wildlife* magazine, DNR press releases, and the DNR website recognize employee accomplishments regularly. Because of the national and international exposure many of DNR's staff and programs enjoy, employee recognition is often at the regional and the national levels. Based upon past surveys, employees continue to prefer recognition to occur at the division and section levels with activities such as oyster roasts, ice cream socials, and pizza parties occurring at the section and division levels.

During this year's annual Public Employee Recognition Week, the Department awarded the State Service Awards, as well as the Employee of the Year Award.   Additionally, the State premiered a new employee program during this week, Perkscards, which allow employees to obtain discounts on goods and services of participating vendors. The Law Enforcement Division also annually holds an Employee of the Year Banquet recognizing all Law Enforcement winners from each region and recognizing the overall award recipient.

During FY 04-05, DNR implemented its Rewards and Recognition Program. DNR was awarded the South Carolina Budget and Control Board's Human Resources Award of Excellence for this program. The premise of this program is to provide formal and informal recognition strategies for employees at all levels. DNR highly encourages day-to-day, peer-to-peer recognition as exemplified by the simple act of saying "thank you," which is encouraged in the informal process. Employees can choose to use their first thank you card received each quarter to enroll in a lottery for prizes. In FY 04-05 308 employees submitted thank you cards for this lottery, 38% of DNR's total workforce. Managers at the Section Level and above are permitted to give Spot Awards ($50 gift certificates/cards) for good performance that is considered worthy of more than a "thank you." In FY 05, twenty-nine (29) of these spot awards were awarded to employees.

Another extremely popular program with employees is a newly implemented volunteer program for former DNR employees who have retired or left employment, yet want to stay connected with the Department's mission. This *STARS* (Staying Together After Retirement Starts) Program is a win-win initiative that provides retirees the opportunity to contribute to the natural resources while providing the Department with much needed assistance at no cost.   With the initial kickoff, one hundred retirees attended the events with the Department gaining 270 volunteer hours from 21 retirees at special events and activities.

Scholarships are still awarded to deserving dependents of DNR employees through the Harry Hampton Fund and through the Greenville Saltwater Sportfishing Club. These programs are excellent morale

builders for employees with college age children who appreciate DNR's partners' interest in investing in their future.

The Director periodically during each fiscal year holds regional staff meetings to personally update employees on DNR initiatives, budget status and Agency priorities. In the meetings held during FY 05, the Director also presented the newly developed "*DNR Vision for the Future*" and solicited feedback from employees on the Department's objectives and strategies. Currently, committees comprised of employees from all divisions and all levels have been selected to develop strategies for achieving the listed goals. By developing this "Vision for the Future", the Department has made a huge advancement in strategic planning and forecasting to create a culture of accountability and progress.

5.2 The Director has made a commitment to achieve an agency culture committed to a well- qualified workforce that is provided the appropriate development opportunities to advance in their careers. A committee has been working on an agency-wide training and development plan that incorporates both mandatory and elective development opportunities. Additionally, this training plan will be the foundation to create specific career development plans for employees that emphasize achievement of specific work experience milestones and competencies as pre-requisites for any advancement. This plan will incorporate agency training as well as training and development programs offered at the State level. DNR continues offering an internal leadership development program (W.I.L.D.), which identifies employees interested in acquiring future leadership positions. DNR continues to partner with other agencies through the State Agency Training Consortium to offer courses to employees without cost to the agency or the employee. The Department is also piloting an electronic computer-training program for basic and advanced skills in software such as Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Employees are able to train at their desk and are tested electronically to determine if the training was effective.

5.3 DNR is in the process of completing its transition to a universal review date for its evaluation system. This will provide for less rater variation in evaluations because employees will be evaluated for the same time frame for the most part. Additionally, the evaluation system also incorporates a development segment that allows communication between employee/supervisor concerning career goals and developmental objectives. All supervisors were trained on the EPMS System, and annual courses are offered by the Department's Human Resources Office as either a refresher course or for new supervisors so that the EPMS process can be an effective management tool.

5.4 Periodically, the Department surveys employees either through formal surveys to all employees, targeted surveys to particular groups or general employee meetings to assess employee satisfaction and concerns. Additionally, exit interviews are reviewed in the Human Resources Office to determine any indicators of dissatisfaction. Relationship with fellow employees and the mission of the agency continue to be factors in sustaining job satisfaction for DNR employees. With the current budget situation, there is concern that the employee satisfaction level may decrease due to increased workloads, lack of equipment or outdated equipment that cannot be replaced, and limited opportunity for monetary rewards.

5.5 The Department's Safety Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Department is in compliance with safety regulations. This is accomplished primarily through raising awareness of safety issues, providing training to supervisors and employees, and conducting periodic safety checks to ensure compliance. The committee has developed a formal safety plan for the Department that addresses safety issues, required training, other recommended training and awareness. This plan has been provided to deputy directors for comment; however, budget restrictions have delayed final implementation.

The Department conducts various wellness activities to include wellness walks and health screenings, as well as periodically including articles encouraging healthy lifestyles in agency communications to

employees. CPR training is offered to DNR employees intermittently, and there are plans to offer this course as part of the annual training curriculum, as well as other safety related courses.

5-6. The Department's outreach programs provide continuous involvement in the community. Education programs provide to schools throughout the state the opportunity to increase their knowledge and awareness of the state's natural resources. The fishing rodeos, the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic, Reel Kids, National Hunting and Fishing Day, and Beach Sweep River Sweep events are just a few examples of the Department of Natural Resources' partnering efforts with the community. The Department also encourages its employees to participate in such events as the Walk for Life, United Way Campaign, and the March of Dimes Walk. Quarterly, the Department sponsors a blood drive for the local Red Cross. Scholarship programs for dependents of DNR employees are offered through the Harry Hampton Fund and the Greenville Saltwater Sportfishing Club.

Category 6 – Process Management

6.1-6.2: DNR has developed a network of key processes for products and services to provide effective management of work in the agency. The key processes are based upon DNR's mission and major strategic goals of: a) management, b) science and technology, c) education and public involvement, and d) landscape conservation. There are a variety of program delivery processes related to the management strategic goal. The key programs in this area include wildlife management and technical assistance, law enforcement, freshwater fisheries management plans and technical assistance, conservation districts, marine resources fisheries management and mariculture, endangered species and protected elements management, and the agency's 1.1 million acre Wildlife Management Area Program. Primary program delivery processes for DNR's science and technology goal include the Marine Resources Research Institute, wildlife and freshwater fisheries research, hydrology, State Climate Office, State Geological Survey, Waddell Mariculture Center, Yawkey Wildlife Center, and the Southeastern Regional Climate Center. All divisions in the agency have delivery processes through programs for education and public involvement. Major products and services in this area include natural resources planning and public attitudinal surveys, DNR's website secures public input on management plans and projects, SCMAPS, Hunter and Boater Safety/Education, Take One Make One, Project WET, Project WILD, *SC Wildlife* magazine, DNR News Program, SC Reel Kids, and Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs (HOFNOD). Landscape conservation is also a critical strategic goal. Key programmatic design and delivery processes include DNR's habitat acquisition program, Heritage Trust Program, Scenic Rivers Program, environmental planning, environmental coordination and permitting, conservation districts, drought management and water resources planning. Each of these programs and systems incorporate the use of up-to-date technology and information so as to provide the most effective service delivery. Through direct contact and input from user groups and constituent-based surveys of customers that use the products and services of these delivery processes, DNR is able to maintain changing customer requirements.

6.3: The day-to-day operation of the key delivery processes noted in Section 6.1 are very important to meeting the key performance requirements that ultimately lead to the business results in Category 7. These operations are able to meet these key performance requirements through a diversity of outputs from services and products of the agency. While all of the outputs are too numerous to list, the key outputs from DNR's major strategic goals are as follows: a) management – number of Wildlife Management Area acres/hunters, number of public dove fields, number of deer depredation permits issued, number of finfish caught by recreational anglers, number of state lakes managed, total number of fishery species produced and stocked, number of management projects for protected elements, and number of acres under conservation plans; b) science and technology – number of wildlife and freshwater fishery research projects, extramural dollar value of marine resources research and monitoring projects, number of

technology transfer opportunities from mariculture research, number of water quality/quantity database projects conducted, number of data requests filled for climate information, percentage increase in climate information dissemination via the Internet, number of wildlife diversity research, survey and monitoring projects conducted, and the number of geological maps produced and published for scientific use; c) education and public involvement – number of public attitudinal surveys conducted, number of visits to DNR's website, number of *SC Wildlife* magazine subscribers, number of programs and participants for conservation education programs, number of workshops and teachers trained, number of hunter and boating safety students certified, and number of customers reached through DNR news releases and media programs; d) landscape conservation – number of acres of habitat acquired per year, number of dedicated Heritage Preserves and/or additions, number of communities identified as flood hazard areas, percentage of cropland and pasture with adequate soil and water conservation management, number of environmental permits/projects reviewed each year, number of Scenic Rivers managed, and number of drought management plans developed and monitored.

6.4: DNR has an effective level of support processes that are used in the production and delivery of the agency's products and services. These support processes are used to provide needed assistance and guidance for the agency's major strategic goals. Major support processes in DNR are: a) planning, surveys and performance measures; b) legal; c) human resources; d) legislative affairs; e) environmental permits/coordination; f) data processing and information technology; g) supply and equipment; h) finance and accounting; i) procurement; j) licenses and fees collection; k) boat titling and registration; l) graphics, duplicating and mail services; m) news media and public relations; n) audio/video productions and o) engineering. Each of these processes includes highly skilled staff resources that maintain activities and performance based upon the most current information and technological strategies. Additionally, specialized training and career development plans are created and implemented to ensure the highest level of skill development and performance attributes. Through the agency's workforce planning tools and projects, DNR is able to improve and update these processes to achieve higher levels of performance. One area in which the agency is making considerable progress is in Procurement Services of the Support Services Section within the OSS division. The procurement Web site was initially designed in 1998 to open up the electronic age of Doing Business With SCDNR. The business community, a vitally important customer and tax revenue constituent, needed a mechanism to simplify the old, antiquated system of doing business. It was felt that DNR's procurement site would allow DNR's vendor base of 11,654 vendors an opportunity to acquaint themselves with several key areas in the procurement cycle. The site would also teach them how best to do business with the State of South Carolina and the Department of Natural Resources.

One web page allows the vendor to review new, innovative techniques for requesting bids. Instructions on how to use this tool are included in the "What's New in Procurement Services" section. A second page will allow the vendor to review all solicitations, awards and public notices issued by DNR on-line in "DNR's Bulletin Board" section. MBE vendors can receive information on how to become a Certified Minority Business in South Carolina, which may qualify vendors for a MBE bid preference. At the initial start-up of the Web site in 1998, the web site received 1,000-1,200 hits per month. By the end of FY04 – 05, monthly site hits were at 24,542 hits per month, a 52% increase in web site usage. With the agency's increase in procurement operational authority to $250,000 per procurement transaction, web site usage should significantly increase as additional purchasing administration is retained within DNR.

DNR recognizes the information technology age is ever changing, and it is vitally important that DNR keep pace with customers' demands for the latest in business technology. DNR, having recognized the need to further simplify the process of working with our business community and constituents, has initiated a dedicated telephone number from which vendors can request bid solicitations that were reviewed either on-line via DNR's Web site or in the SC Business Opportunities Newspaper. This option

provides access to buyer contact information, commodity service descriptions and other useful information.

Those who visit and use the "Procurement Web Site" now have a communication avenue to express ideas, thoughts, questions and even concerns through the "Lets Talk" page. Should the customer have questions, comments or suggestions regarding hunting, fishing, license issues, rules and regulations or other resource related matters, they can post comments to the "comments section" where a DNR employee will electronically respond to the question or comment. Suggestions for improving the format and content of the Web site and/or any purchasing-related questions may also be submitted directly to the procurement staff at this Web page.

6.5: The management and support provided for key supplier/contractor/partner interactions and processes to improve performance are based upon the actions of the individual work units in DNR. This area has received some degree of attention and direction in the agency and will be a new area of focus in the future.

Category 7 – Business Results

7.1-7.6: DNR has developed the following business results based upon major programs in the agency that are related to the Strategic Plan. A critical agency responsibility is to produce statistical and survey information on performance and improvement measures and benchmarking efforts. DNR recognizes this responsibility and also recognizes the need to improve on previous years' efforts in this area. An important component of the Strategic Plan update initiative planned for 2005-2006 will be to determine meaningful performance and improvement measures for the agency so that they can be tracked and evaluated through time.

Human Resources

The Department had 220 FTE vacancies as of 06/30/04, excluding the 22 positions lost in 2001 because of the separation incentives. This vacancy rate is 24% of the 908 total allocated FTE positions for this agency. Overall, including permanent FTE positions, temporary grant positions and temporary positions, the Department's staffing levels are down 30% since FY00, with 262 fewer employees. (See Figure 7.1)

SC DNR
Total Filled Positions
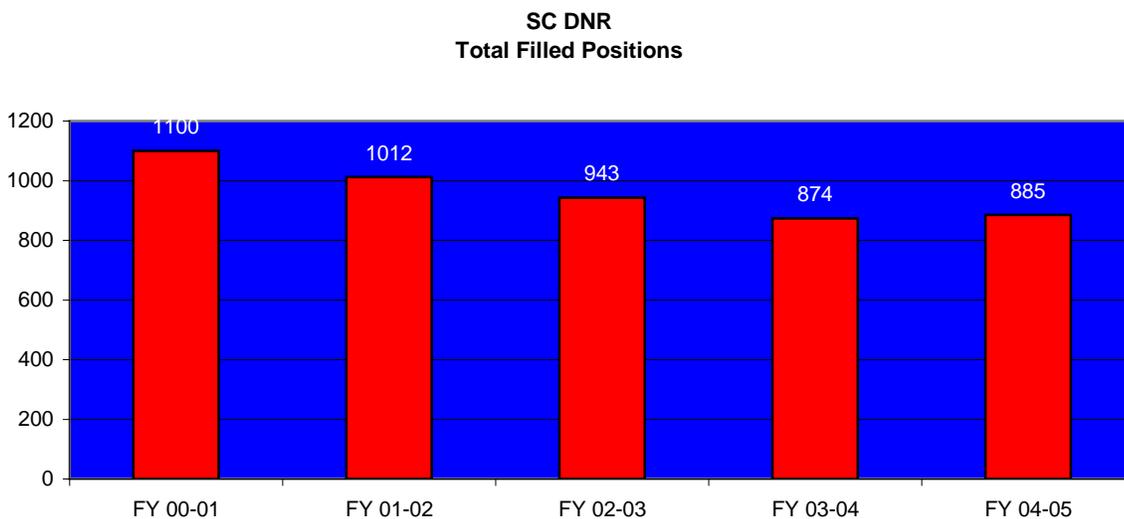
(Figure 7.1)

Historically, DNR's turnover rate has been significantly lower than the state's turnover rate; however with 75 permanent employee terminations in FY04, DNR has risen to a 10.36% turnover rate compared to the state's 12.49% turnover rate. The higher than average turnover for DNR in FY 03-04 is primarily attributed to the 49 employees who participated in the August 2003 Separation/Retirement incentives offer. (See Figure 7.2)

EMPLOYEE TURNOVER ANALYSIS %
DNR vs. STATE
FYS 1999 - 2004
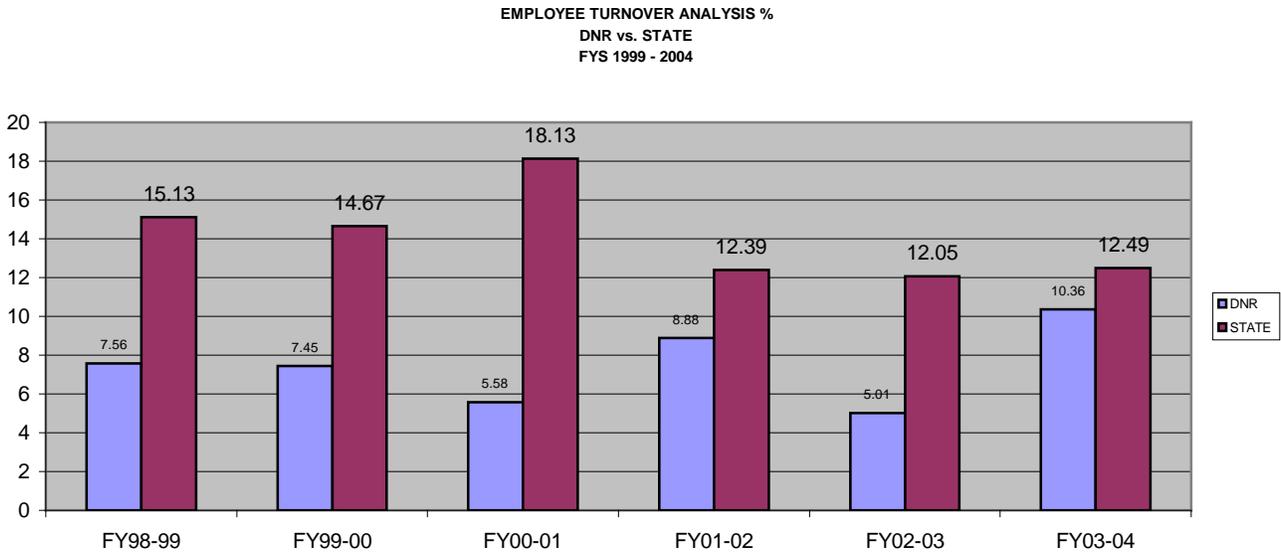
(Figure 7.2)

Only 11% (82/688) of permanent FTE employees received any type of employee salary action in their current jobs. While workforce planning and succession planning are high priority initiatives in all state agencies, retention of existing employees for DNR has risen to the forefront of imminent needs. (See Figure 7.3)
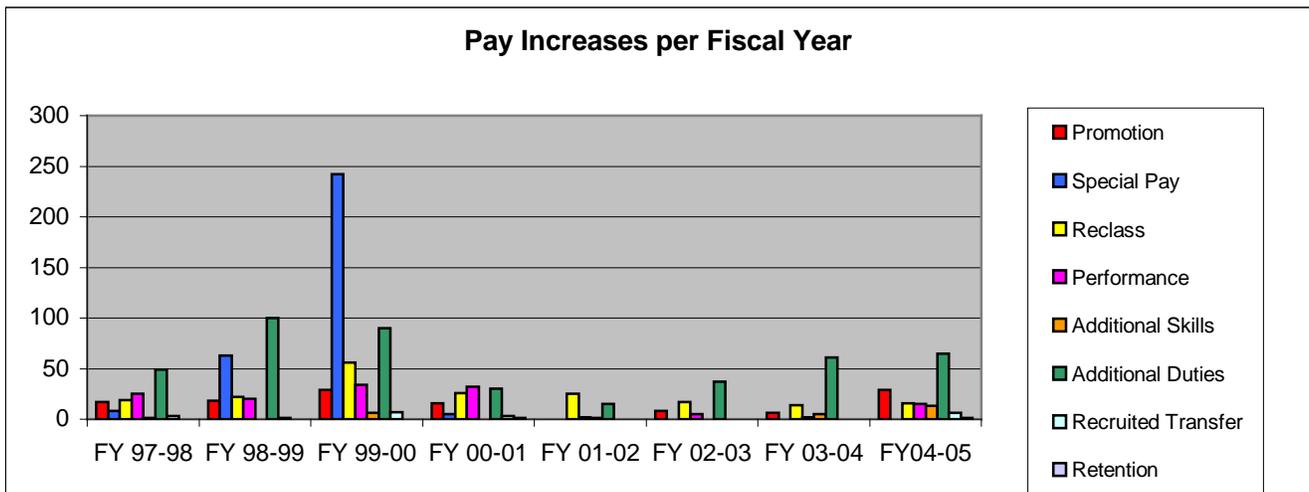
(Figure 7.3)

Program: Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries

Freshwater fishing has a total economic impact of over $717 million in South Carolina. Fishing for striped bass and trout generates an economic impact in excess of $93.9 million and $17.4 million, respectively. In South Carolina, the products from the DNR's fish hatcheries support approximately 80% of the striped bass fishery and 90% of the coldwater trout fishery. The total annual cost for the operation

of the Department's freshwater hatcheries averaged approximately $1.5 million from 1996 to 2001. (See Figure 7.4) The economic impact of striped bass and trout fishing alone, when compared against the cost of the entire fish hatchery program, yielded a cost benefit ratio of 62 to 1 to South Carolina's citizens.

Economic impact of striped bass and trout fishing versus total hatchery expenditures for the period 1991 through 2001.
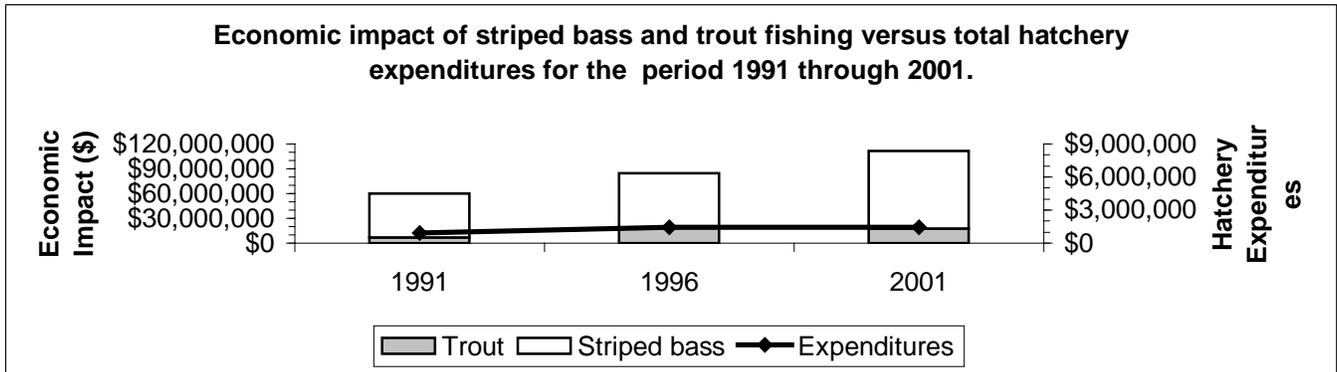
(Figure 7.4)

The Freshwater Fisheries Section has conducted surveys of customers concerning hatchery products, technical assistance and general angler attitudes. These surveys and the public attitudinal information provide a basis for the Strategic Plan update and detailed feedback from the public as to where resources need to be focused in the future. These public opinion surveys are an important management tool for the agency and provide a solid basis for developing a comprehensive planning process, as well as developing budgetary recommendations for the allocation of resources in the agency.

Survey results of the residents of South Carolina from 1994 and 2002 indicate that the percentage of the population who feel DNR does a good or excellent job managing the states fisheries has increased over the period from 47% in 1994 to 52% in 2002 (Figure 7.5). Over the same period the percentage of residents who indicated they did not know how DNR performed decreased from 39% in 1994 to 35% in 2004. Over the eight year period from 1994 to 2002 South Carolina residents have become more aware of DNR's performance in managing the state's fishery resources and their opinion DNR's performance has improved.

Percentage of SC residents rating of SCDNR's perfromance managing the State's fisheries.
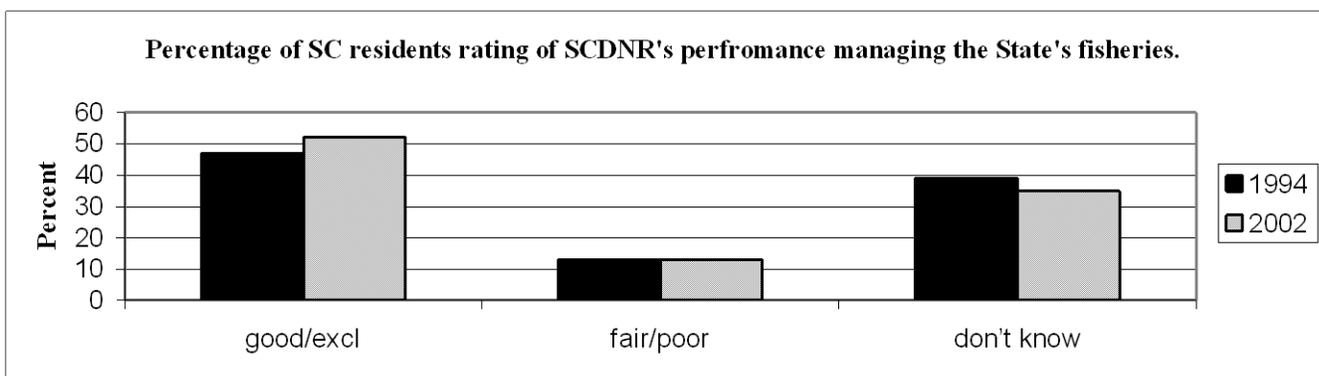
(Figure 7.5)

In a 2004 survey of fishing license holders, active anglers were told that DNR was responsible for the protection, conservation and enhancement of the state's fisheries resources while providing recreational fishing opportunities. Active anglers were then asked if these responsibilities were appropriate and if they were satisfied with DNR's performance meeting their responsibility (Figure 7.6). Eighty-nine percent (89%) of active anglers thought the responsibilities were appropriate while only one percent (1%) did not agree.   Eighty-two percent (82%) of active anglers were satisfied with the performance of DNR at

meeting its responsibilities to manage the state's fisheries. Only six percent (6%) of licensed anglers were dissatisfied.

Licensed angler's satisfaction with SCDNR's managment of the state's fishery resources.
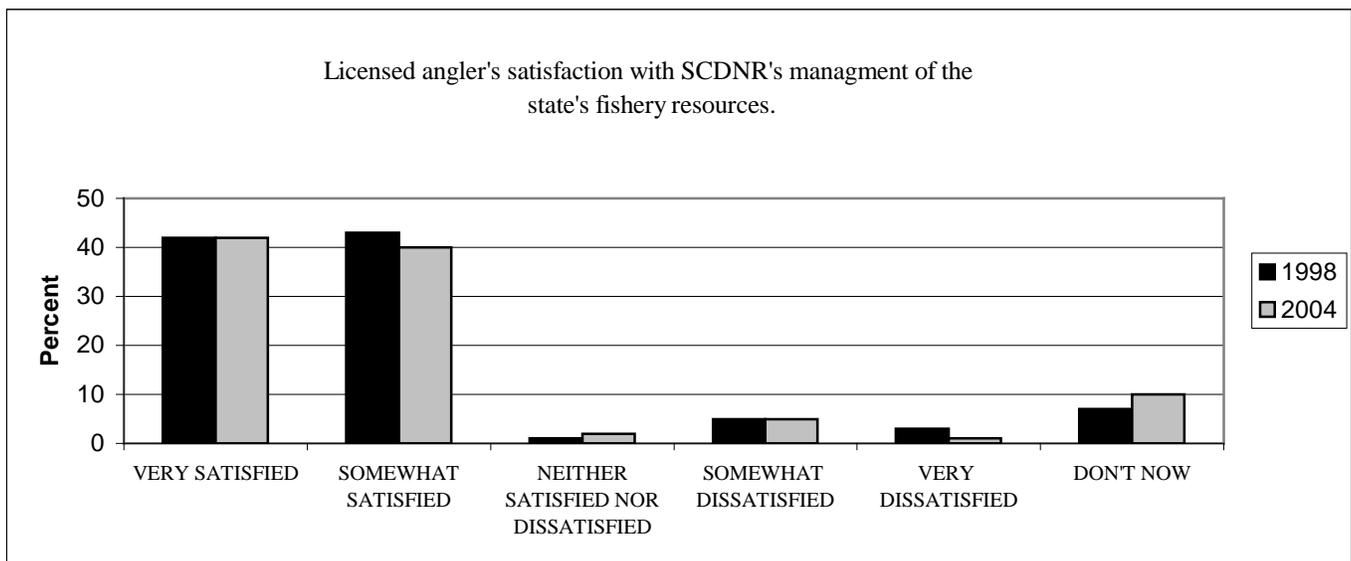
The core mission of DNR's Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division is to protect, manage and sustain the public enjoyment of natural resources through programs that support hunting, fishing, wildlife watching and other forms of outdoor recreation. South Carolina's abundant and well-managed fish and wildlife resources support a large number of hunting and angling constituents. This includes residents and nonresidents that select South Carolina as a hunting and fishing tourist destination. The annual economic impact of wildlife-associated recreation in the state is estimated to be over $1.3 billion.

Participation in fishing or hunting for SC, GA, FL, NC and the national average from 1985-2001. Expressed as a percentage of the population 16 and older.
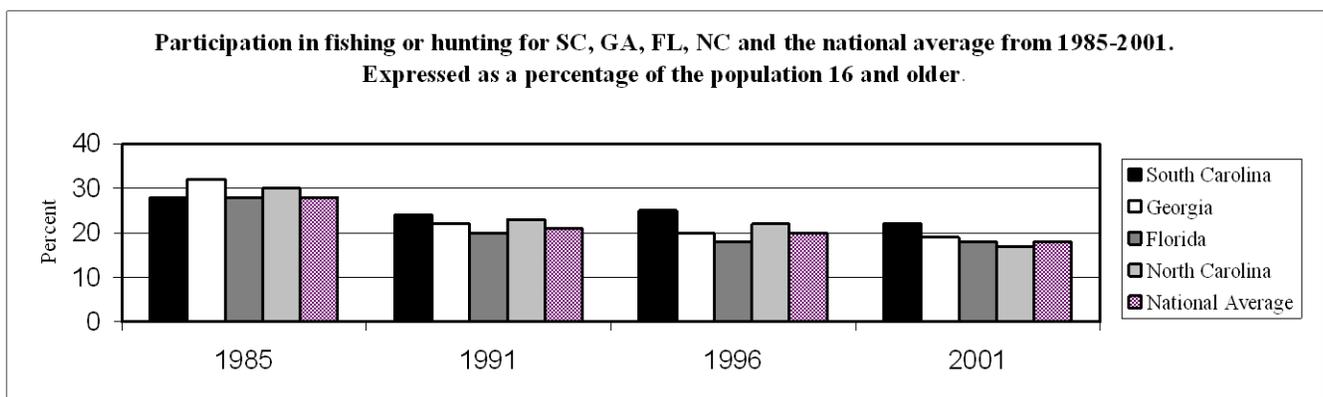
While participation in hunting and fishing has declined since 1985 nationally, the decline in South Carolina has been slower than in our neighboring states and the nation (See Figure 7.7). We trailed our neighbors and the national average in the percentage of population participating in hunting and fishing in 1985. However, from 1991 through 2001, a larger percentage of South Carolina's residents have hunted and fished than residents of Georgia, Florida and North Carolina. South Carolina's participation rate has been higher than the national average since 1991.

Participation in wildlife watching for SC, GA, FL, NC and the national average for the period 1985-2001. Expressed as a percentage of the population 16 and older.

Legend: ■ South Carolina □ Georgia ▨ Florida □ North Carolina ▨ National Average
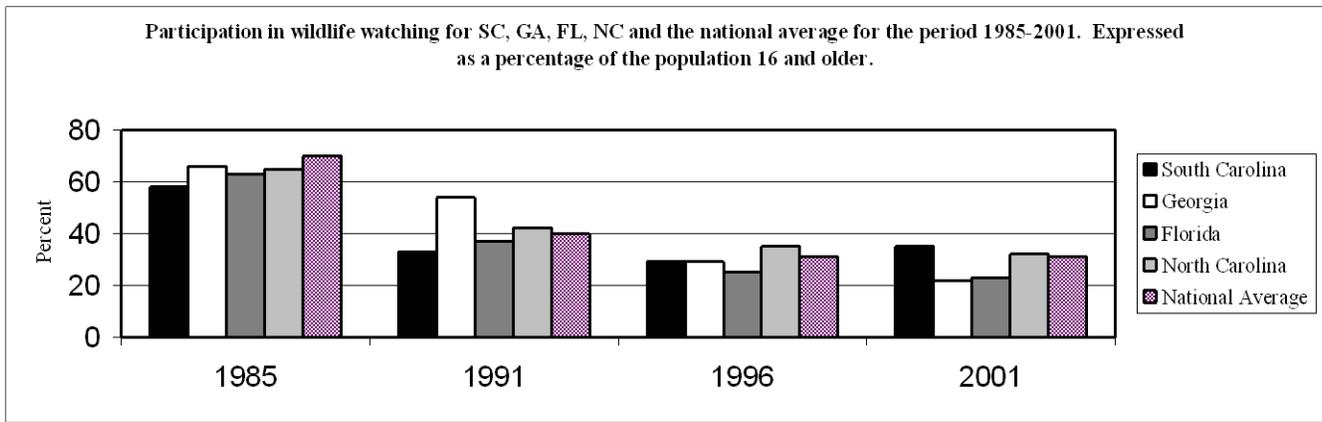
(Figure 7.8)

While participation in wildlife watching has declined across the region and the nation, the decline in South Carolina has been slower than in other states in the region or the national average. From 1996 to 2001 South Carolina experienced increased participation in wildlife watching; an increase not observed in neighboring states or the national average. (See Figure 7.8)

Participation in wildlife related recreation for SC, GA, FL, NC and the national average for the period 1985-2001. Expressed as a percentage of the population 16 and older.

Legend: ■ South Carolina □ Georgia ▨ Florida □ North Carolina ▨ National Average
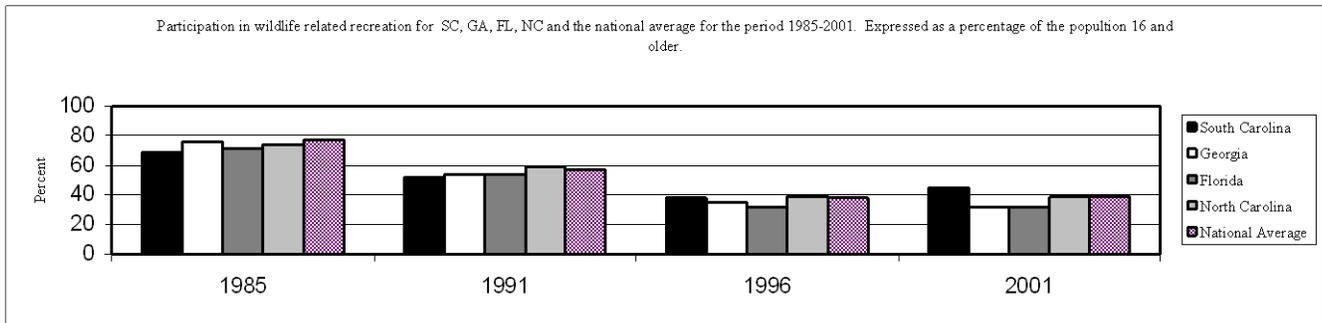
(Figure 7.9)

Participation in wildlife related recreation has decline across the region and the nation since 1985. However South Carolina's rate of decline in participation has not been as great as that observed in our neighboring states or in the national average. Between 1996 and 2001 South Carolina actually experienced an increase in wildlife related recreation. There was no evidence of increased participation in South Carolina's neighboring states or the national average. (See Figure 7.9)

Program: Watercraft Registration and Titling

All watercraft and outboard motor titling and registration for the State of South Carolina are handled through the Boat Titling and Registration Program. For the past several years, South Carolina has ranked 4th in the nation in per capita boat ownership and a ranking which remains steady. Currently, 396,915 are actively registered, a 9.6% increase from 2004. This area remains a particular focus point for the DNR and customer service is of vital importance. In the ever-constant quest for more convenient and efficient methods of accomplishing the on-going task of renewing registration of watercraft, four methods of renewal are offered. Consumers can renew by physically coming into one of the Registration Offices, by mail, phone, or Internet. Renewal can be done in person at the four Regional Hubs located in Columbia, Charleston, Florence and Clemson. In addition to the standard mailing in of renewals, an "800" number and Internet renewal are available through an agreement with the Great Lodge company. This method is obviously growing in popularity, as anticipated. In 2004, the number of consumers utilizing this option rose to 7% of the 75,365 renewals, up from the 6% from the previous year. (See Figure 7.10)

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Renewal Methods
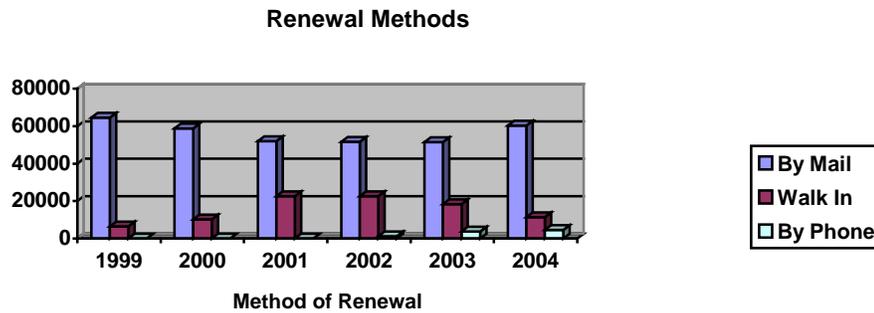
(Figure 7.10)

Program: Licenses Sales

Through the use of electronic information exchange, we have provided timely information concerning hunting and fishing opportunities, and increased nationwide exposure of South Carolina's natural resources. The primary function of the Licensing program is administration of licensing and permitting both resident and non-resident sportsmen as required by law. This program, however, positively affects and/or interacts with a number of other areas of the agency. This program produces significant revenue for the agency and its evolution toward promotion of SC outdoor sporting resources at a national level through our association with Bass Pro Shops has been a very positive step. Information from other states was unavailable at the time this report was due and will be updated the next report.

With a volume of 704,882 licenses purchased last year, representing our front line of constituent interaction in many cases, customer service is a primary factor in all aspects of this area. A goal for this year was to increase sales of licenses by further enhancing customer service and making the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses more convenient. In May of 2004, a program that allowed customers to renew licenses, permits and tags through the mail was implemented. Approximately 450,000 multi-purpose renewal mailers were sent to our customers. This convenient mailer offered the option of using check or credit card to order hunting or fishing licenses, anterless deer tags, shrimp baiting permits or non-game fish tags. License orders were processed and returned to the customer, saving the time and expense of a trip to their local license vendor also allowing DNR to maintain more customer data in-house. Although too early to report results of this mailer, the initial results are promising.

For the past six years in conjunction with BASS PRO shops and Great Lodge Company, license renewal has been available by phone. This program was expanded three years ago to provide Internet access as well. A full 10% of our license revenue was processed through BASS PRO and Great Lodge this year.

This past year, DNR combined with Great Lodge to initiate a test Point of Sale license system. This program allows vendors to print licenses for the customer at the point of sale. This system eliminates the paperwork associated with license sales, and provides an immediate database of customers to DNR. Six test vendors were brought on line this past year, and it is anticipated that this program could expand in the coming years if adequate funding is made available.

Program: Boater Access

The main component of the Boating Access Program is the SCDNR Engineering Section, which provides assistance to state, county, and municipal government entities in the design, construction and renovation of boating access facilities throughout South Carolina. The Engineering Section also provides design and construction assistance for other water recreation related structures, such as fishing piers and boarding docks.

There are 3 main goals that the Engineering Section strives to meet. Those goals are:
1). Meet current and future demands for boating access.
2). Renovate existing access facilities to meet both state and national safety and usability standards.
3). Disseminate information on available boating access to the public.

In 1990, the Engineering Section commissioned the *South Carolina Registered Boat Owner Survey*, which was prepared by Clemson University. The objectives of the study were "to identify characteristics of registered boat owners, to determine the use of public boat launch facilities to estimate the demand for public boat launch facilities, to evaluate the condition of boat launch facilities, and to determine the quality of public boat launch facilities." The most significant finding was: The total demand for the use of public launch facilities in the state of South Carolina is projected to be 11,131,653 visits by the year 2010. This is a 75.4 percent increase in use during the 20-year time period 1990-2010. Demand is projected to be greatest for the "coastal county" group (89.2 percent increase), followed by the "lake county" group (76.0 percent increase), "primary inland water county" group (70.4 percent increase), and "secondary inland water county" group (70.0 percent increase). In general, use of public boat launch facilities should be expected to increase in the future, with the greatest increase projected for the public boat launch facilities along the coast.

Further studies where commissioned to analyze individual counties and Lake Groups in the areas that the Clemson Study projected the highest demand, with the coastal counties receiving the most focus. Also, a study was done for the counties bordering the Santee Cooper Lake system. The Engineering Section has used these studies to identify the facilities that need to be renovated, and also to locate areas that may need additional landings to be constructed. Since 1996 the Engineering Section has been responsible for the renovation or construction of 85 boating access facilities throughout the state, 50 of the 85 were sites detailed in the boating needs studies. Even though much progress has been made in boating access, there remains much to be done. The biggest limiting factor is money – there are inadequate funds to renovate all the facilities or to build the types of new sites necessary to meet demand. Additional studies are needed to determine how demand has changed from the previous studies, and also to generate more creative ideas to meet this demand. The Engineering Section is currently partnering with DHEC, Office of Coastal Resource Management to develop strategies to reduce, or even eliminate some of the regulations that slow the construction of sites in critical areas of the coastal counties.

In 2002, the Engineering Section completed the SC Boating Facilities Guide of which 7000 hard copies were made available and to date, approximately 6950 have been distributed to the general public upon request. Due to cost constraints, this guide does not contain maps as were provided in the previous Atlas. This information was also posted on DNR's web site. One major objective of the Engineering section is to provide mapping data in a revised guidebook that was previously omitted due to lack of funding. This document was so successful and very popular with the general public and provided a wealth of knowledge of the state's boating access facilities. The Engineering Section is currently working with the Information Technology Section to develop an updated Facilities Atlas, with maps, that will be available to the public and accessible on the DNR Website.

Program: Marine Resources

Marine recreational fishermen represent a large and significant portion of the SCDNR customer base. This customer base represents a diverse group of both licensed and non-licensed consumptive and non-consumptive users including anglers targeting finfish, oysters and clams, shrimp and crabs. The customer focus in this case can be broadly summarized as: 1) providing continued and better recreational fishing opportunities for the citizens and guests of South Carolina; and 2) ensuring that the natural marine resources of this state are protected and conserved for future generations.

In order to meet these needs the Marine Resources Division (MRD) of the SCDNR utilizes staff and funding opportunities from a wide variety of sources. In addition to state appropriations, the SCDNR utilizes federal funds from USFWS Sportfish Restoration Program, a "user pays, user benefits" approach that requires a 25% state match.

The South Carolina Marine Gamefish Tagging Program encourages anglers to tag and release fish not only for scientific purposes, but also as a conservation measure to help conserve stocks. In the past seven years (1998–2005) the program supplied tagging kits to anglers who tagged 44,384 fish of priority species. Red drum is one of the most sought after species of marine finfish in this state. As a result of these efforts, SC fishermen have been releasing alive over 75% of the red drum taken in the recreational fishery, promoting angling ethics and conserving this popular gamefish for future generations. (See Figure 7.12) Angler success for red drum is also increasing and fishery independent monitoring conducted by the MRD provides evidence that the red drum stock, which has been over-fished, is improving. This has been aided by a new red drum stocking program using fish license revenues, which added 2.4 million fingerlings and 17 million genetically marked 3 day-old larvae to SC estuaries in 2004. (See Figures 7.11 & 7.13)

Figure 7.11

Red Drum Survey Abundance

Figure 7.12

Red Drum Release Rates

Figure 7.13

Charter Vessel Catch Rates
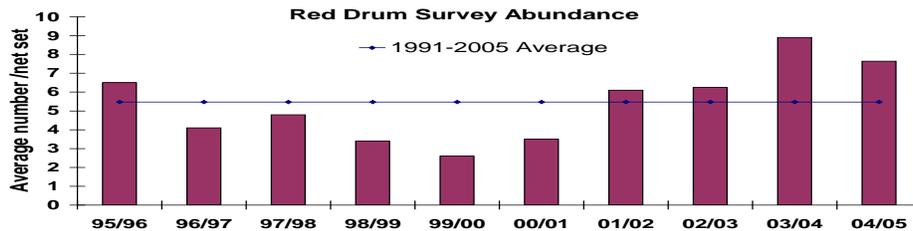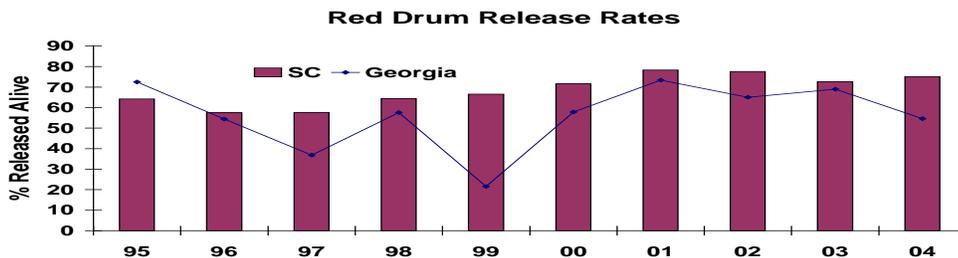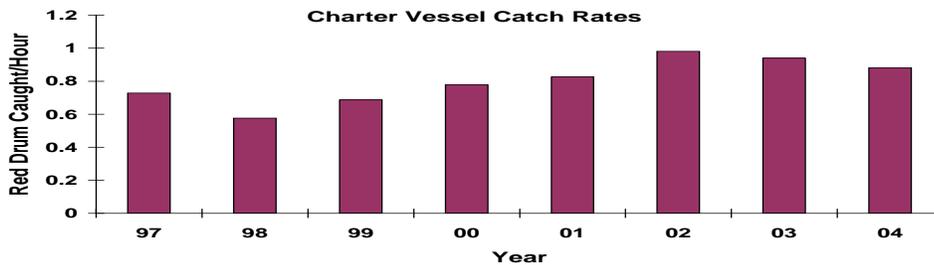
The S.C. seafood industry plays an important role in the lives of 1500-2000 commercial fishermen, countless seafood wholesale and retail dealers, and is an important component of the coastal economy and its heritage. During calendar year 2004, the total weight of wild saltwater stocks landed in this state was 14,228,271 lbs. with an ex-vessel value of $19,910,468. The customer focus in this case can be broadly summarized as the fishermen's desire to ensure sustainable, economically viable marine fisheries. Significant components of the SC seafood harvest are the shrimp and blue crabs. During FY 2005, 488

commercial shrimp trawl licenses were sold, a decline of 67 (12.1%) from the previous year. The commercial shrimp season typically opens in spring and closes sometime after New Years Day depending mainly on environmental factors. Landings are comprised mainly of two species, white and brown shrimp. In addition, the fall 60-day recreational baiting fishery of shrimp was comprised of 10,609 licenses in fall 2004. After early rapid expansion, the baiting fishery has stabilized in recent years although the fishery continues to account for a substantial annual harvest.

The commercial blue crab fishery had 393 licenses (seven nonresident) in the license year ending on June 30, 2004, representing a decrease of 41 (9.4%). This fishery operates year round, and fishermen are not limited in the number of traps they may license. The Marine Division utilizes not only licensing and permitting requirements, but also good science and management to help sustain the shrimp and blue crab fisheries. Since 1995, the combined shrimp and blue crab catch has been relatively close to the long-term average, although reported catches through 2003 were in a state of decline, which was attributed a sustained, severe drought. However, both states are showing recovery following an end to the effects of the drought. Shrimp catch and blue crab fishing effort continues to be negatively impacted by poor economic conditions related the to importation of foreign product. (See Figure 7.14)
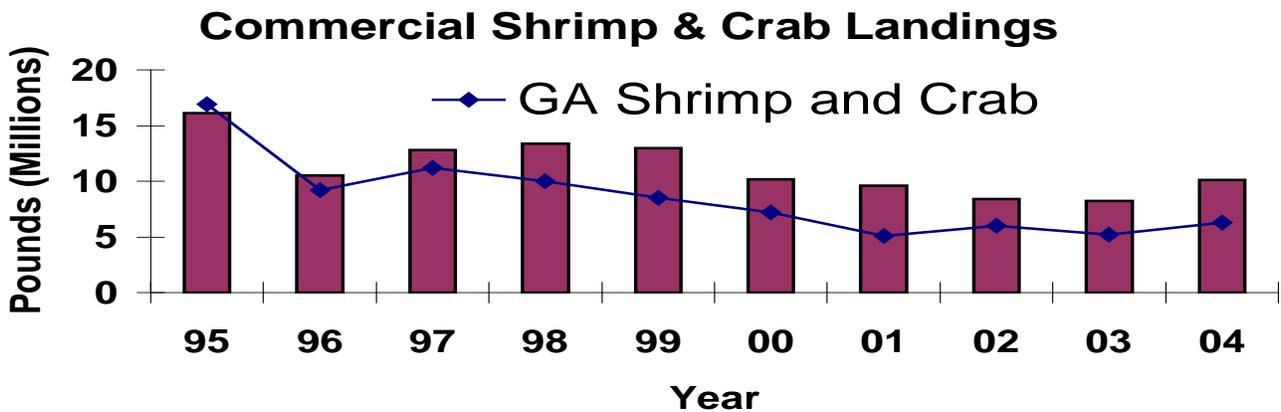
(Figure 7.14)

During FY 2003-2004 there were 84,773 resident and 23,441 nonresident saltwater fishing licenses sold to shell fishers and boat anglers. Boat anglers represent a large portion of the SCDNR customer base. This customer base is extremely important, not only because of it's size, but also because they help support a number of recreationally oriented programs through their purchase of saltwater fishing licenses. The customer focus can be broadly summarized as: 1) providing continued and better recreational fishing opportunities for the citizens and guests of South Carolina; and 2) ensuring that the natural marine resources of this state are protected and conserved for future generations.

The Marine Artificial Reef program is an excellent example of how the MRD fulfills its obligation to SC boat anglers by increasing and improving saltwater fishing opportunities. Established in 1975 the program now maintains 48 permitted reef sites. Over the past eight years 140 deployments have expanded the amount of fishable bottom on these sites by 6,186,600 cu ft. (Figure 7.15)

SC Artificial Reef Activity
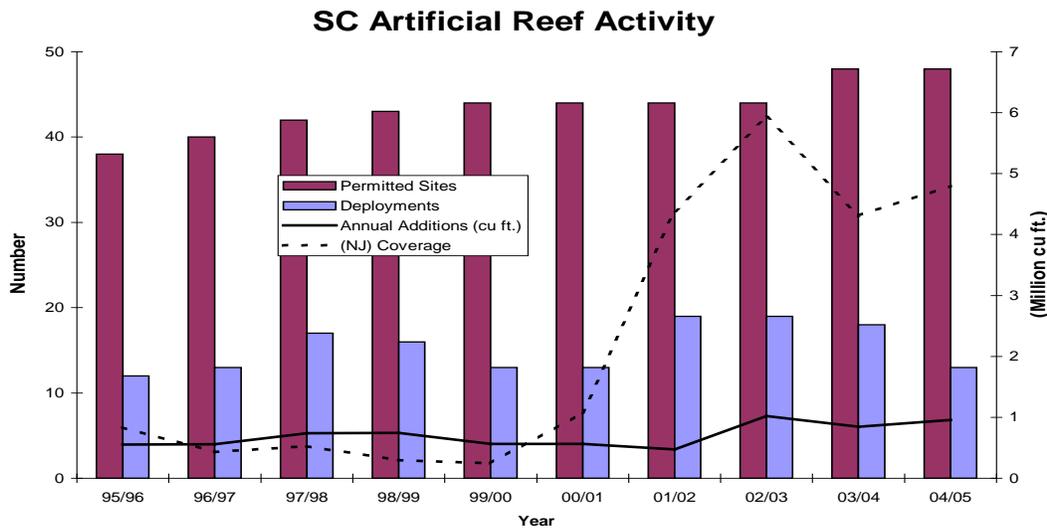
(Fig. 7.15)

Program: Law Enforcement Operations

7.1-7.5: Tasked with the responsibility of managing and protecting the natural resources of the state, DNR is in a unique and challenging position of balancing the public desire to utilize our natural resources for recreational and commercial purposes, with the need to implement restrictions (laws and regulations) on the use of the resources to ensure their long-term viability. The Law Enforcement Division (LED) has the primary responsibility of protecting these resources and those who utilize them through the enforcement of laws and regulations. In addition to enforcement efforts, the LED conducts educational and public awareness programs to promote safety, improve compliance with the laws and regulations, and enhance ethical behavior. DNR law enforcement officers also routinely assist other law enforcement agencies with a variety of enforcement tasks. By combining resources with other agencies to meet specific needs (response to Homeland Security, natural/manmade disasters, civil disturbances, manhunts, search and rescue operations), DNR, along with other law enforcement agencies, is able to serve the public in a cost-effective manner. (See Figure 7.16)

In order to assess job performance and the effectiveness of efforts to protect the state's natural resources and those who utilize them, the LED collects and monitors data relating to officer case load for Title-50 cases (game, fish, and boating) and non-Title-50 violations identified in 50-3-410 (littering, alcohol violations, disorderly conduct and simple possession of marijuana.) During 2004-2005, DNR officers made 17,231 game, fish and boating cases and made 1,617 non-title 50 cases. This equates to approximately 116 cases per field officer. (See Figures 7.17 & 7.18)   In addition, these officers also provided 4,479 hours assisting other law enforcement agencies in the state. Although it is not the LED's intent to measure officer performance based on caseloads alone, nor is it totally accurate to correlate customer satisfaction to officer caseload, it does present an opportunity to assess the type and number of violations that are being committed.

Based on an assessment of this data, law enforcement resources can be reallocated to address significant issues/concerns. Due to retirements and other losses, DNR has 48 officer vacancies. This represents an approximate 20% reduction in DNR law enforcement officers. This number does not include the 42 FTE positions lost due to being vacant in excess of one year. In many situations, activities of DNR officers are directly focused on issues/concerns that the public has identified. The ultimate result of enforcement

efforts should allow the public to enjoy the state's natural resources, with the knowledge and understanding that measures taken to ensure the protection of the resources and those who utilize them are paramount. The areas that are monitored reflect areas of concern to DNR and the general public. (See Figure 7.17 & 7.18)

To increase efficiency and accountability, during FY 2004-2005 the Law Enforcement Division undertook an extensive analysis of its' officer reporting systems. This endeavor included analyzing reports sent from the officers, through the Regions, to Columbia headquarters, and the return informational computer reports that were sent back down to the Regions and field officer. A number of changes to the daily and monthly reporting systems, and other less frequently used reporting systems were implemented as part of this process. The goal of these changes was to streamline the reporting process, and provide valid data that could be utilized for strategic and operational decision-making by supervisors at all levels. All of the changes that directly effected field operations were instituted with the input of regional supervisors. There were several driving forces behind the changes including:

-The need to eliminate duplicative efforts in recording and capturing data;
-The need for consistency and the elimination of last minute information requests;
-The need to maximize manpower toward work activities and away from reporting activities; and
-The need to establish credibility of computer reported information.

Duplicative efforts in reporting violations data were eliminated by revising the officer Daily Activity Books to reflect "activity" data only. A decision was made to include a season opener and special events data sheet in each activity book to eliminate the confusion associated with last minute requests for information on these events. Monday morning reports were eliminated.

Finally, all of the monthly reports including violations, and activity reports that are generated by the computer were revised to incorporate these changes. A new email reporting system was implemented to replace the older paper reports that had to be copied for each Region. All monthly and yearly reports are now emailed to Regional supervisors and command staff on the 15th of every month.


(Figure 7.16)

(Figure 7.17)

Law Enforcement Non-Title 50 Cases FY 1996-2005
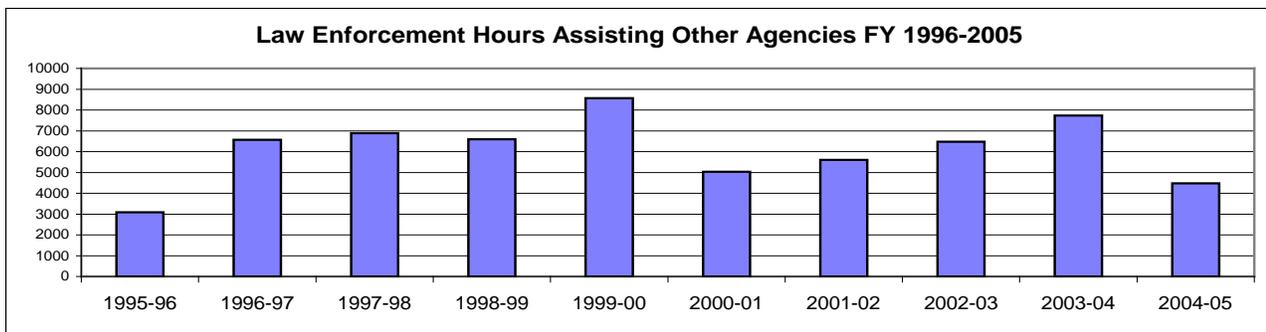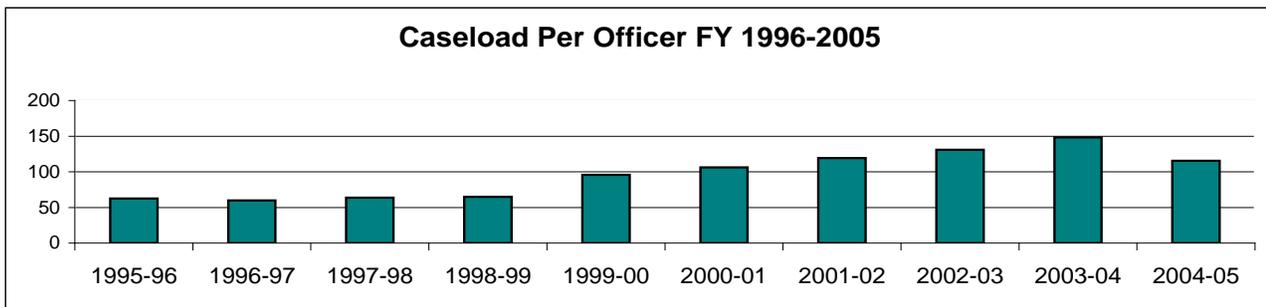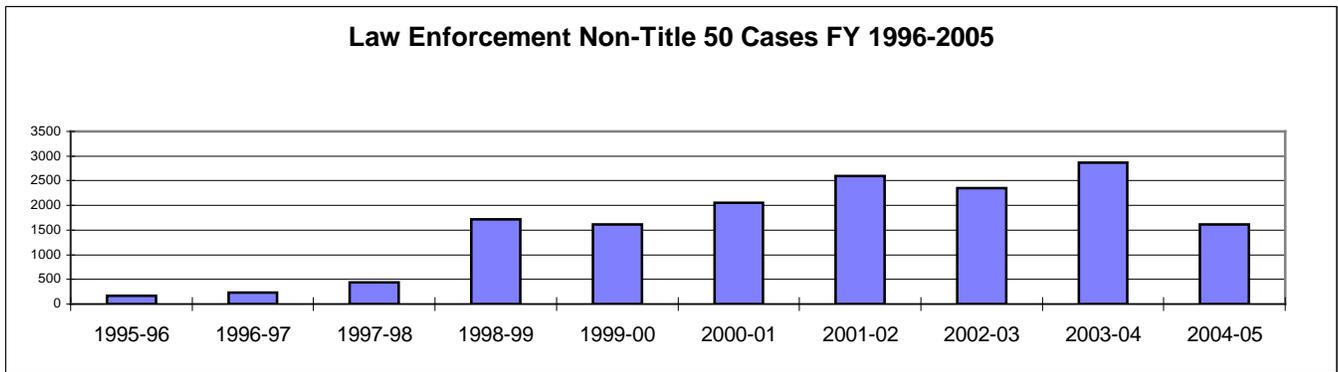
(Figure 7.18)

Program: Hunter Safety

7.1-7.2: The Law Enforcement Division collects and monitors data on several key functions that relate to job performance and constitute satisfaction. The areas that are monitored reflect areas of concern to DNR and to the hunting public. For FY 2004-2005 there were 19 non-fatal and 1 fatal hunting accidents that were reported to DNR. (See Figure 7.19)

Hunting Accidents/Fatalities FY 1996-2005

(Figure 7.19)

Number of Hunter Safety Student Particapants FY 1996-2005
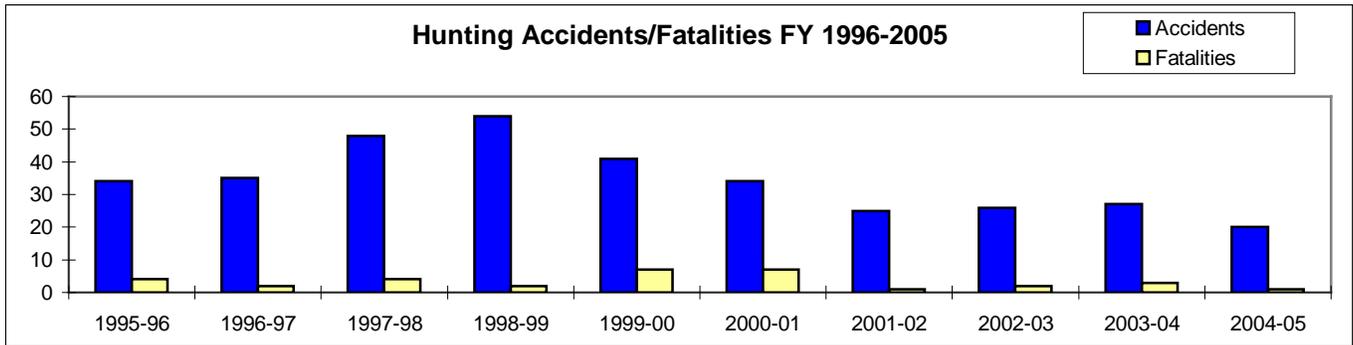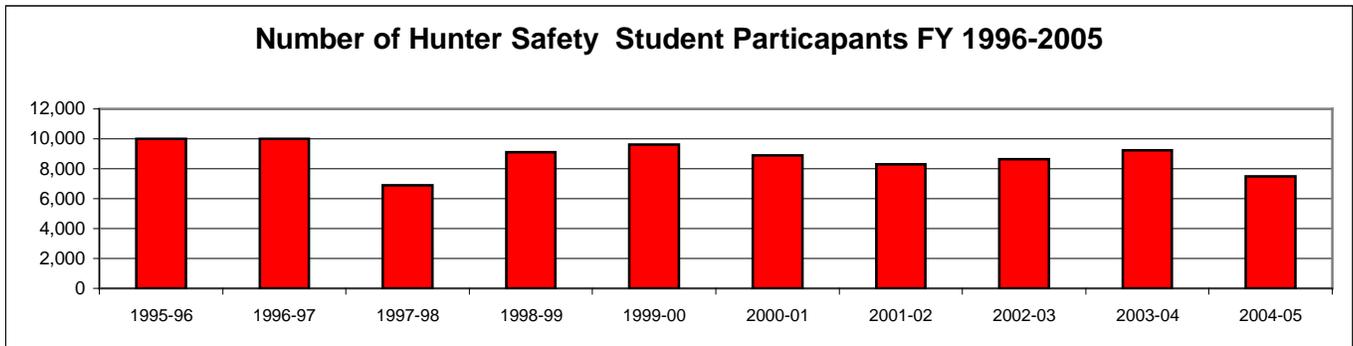
(Figure 7.20)

The Hunter Education Course is mandatory for all hunters born after June 30, 1979, prior to purchasing a license to hunt. However, there are many hunters who take the course in an effort to improve their knowledge of hunting and other outdoor skills even though they are not required to attend. Many South Carolina hunters who travel out-of-state to hunt will take the course in this state in order to comply with the laws of the state in which they will be hunting. For FY 2004-2005, the total number of student participants in the Hunter Safety Program was 7508. (See Figure 7.20)

7.4: A good measure of constituent trends is reflected in the total number of licensed hunters. Due to the varied game that is hunted in the state and the methods that are used, DNR has to work closely with different hunting constituent groups and the general public to address issues/concerns that affect them. This association has allowed DNR to be successful in obtaining legislation and additional resources to deal with specific hunting related issues/concerns. The partnering has also led to the development of Public Service Announcements (PSA's) to address hunting safety and improvement of the educational programs intended to address hunting safety and ethical behavior. (See Figure 7.21)

Total Number of Hunters Licensed in SC FY1996-2005
FY 1995-2002 does not include Lifetime or Gratis type license

Year	Hunters
1995-96	~225000
1996-97	~240000
1997-98	~228000
1998-99	~222000
1999-00	~215000
2000-01	~215000
2001-02	~218000
2002-03	~350000
2003-04	~360000
2004-05	~395000
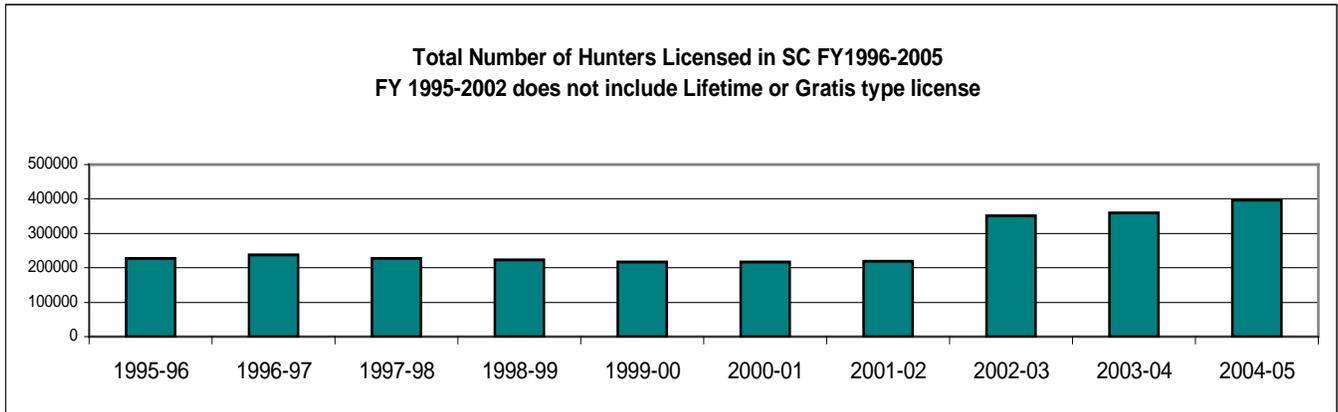
(Figure 7.21)

7.5: The total number and type of enforcement cases that are made are indicators of regulatory/legal compliance. From a review of cases made with regard to the nature and location of the violations, DNR is able to prioritize law enforcement resources and adjust the focus of education programs and public awareness campaigns to address hunting related issues/concerns. This information is also useful in establishing legislative priorities. In addition to addressing safety-related concerns in our education programs and public awareness campaigns, DNR also places great emphasis on the ethical use of our resources. In an effort to promote good citizenship and compliance with the laws that regulate hunting in our state, it has been DNR's experience that a viable and visible law enforcement presence tends to have the greatest influence in addressing hunting related problems. (See Figure 7.22)

Number of Law Enforcement Cases - FY 1996-2005

| Year	Cases
1995-96	~14000
1996-97	~13500
1997-98	~15000
1998-99	~15000
1999-00	~24000
2000-01	~27500
2001-02	~27000
2002-03	~24000
2003-04	~23000
2004-05	~20000
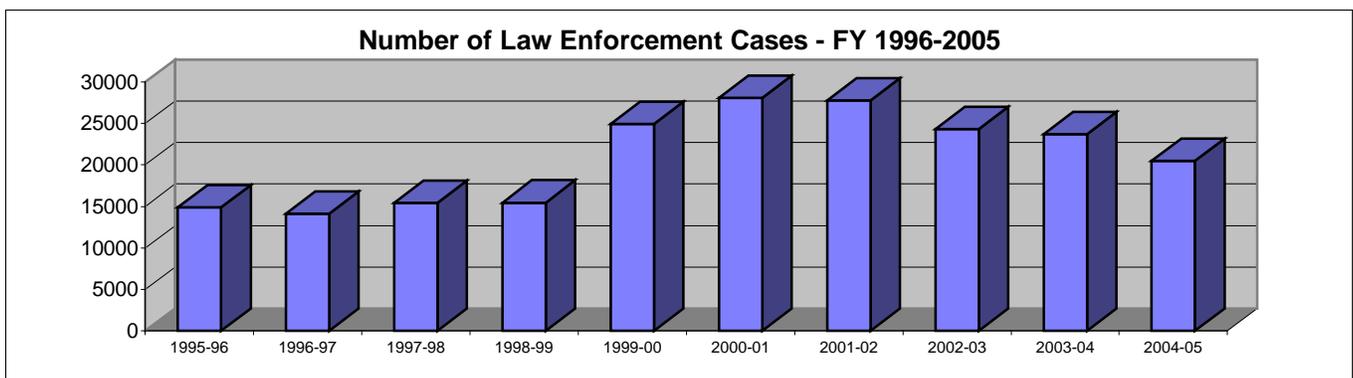
(Figure 7.22)

Program: Boater Safety

The Law Enforcement Division collects and monitors data on several key functions that relate to job performance and constituent satisfaction. The areas that are monitored reflect areas of concern to DNR and to the boating public. To increase public awareness on the importance of wearing a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) while boating, "Zippit", the SCDNR Boating Safety mascot was created. Zippit

represents a wearable PFD that is required by law as boating safety equipment. Officers can wear the Zippit costume at various events and it's brilliant orange color is an eye-catching reminder to wear your PFD at all times while boating. For calendar year 2004 South Carolina recorded 104 boating accidents and 13 fatalities. (See Figure 7.23) These numbers equate to 26 accidents and 3.3 fatalities per 100,000 registered boats. Based on calendar year 2004, South Carolina ranked ninth in the country in total boat registrations. For comparative purposes, using the information on the two states ranked above and below South Carolina as base line data; we tracked this data for the past three years to see how our efforts to reduce boating accidents and fatalities compare to these states. (See Figure 7.23 & 7.24) In addition to tracking boating accidents and fatalities, DNR also monitors the number of "negligent boating operation" cases made. For FY 2004-2005 there were 167 negligent boating operation cases. (See Figure 7.25)
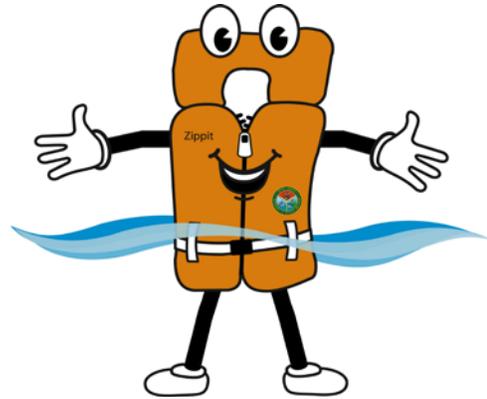

Zippit

(Figure 7.23)

(Figure 7.24)

**Boating Safety -- Negligent Operation**
FY 1996-2005
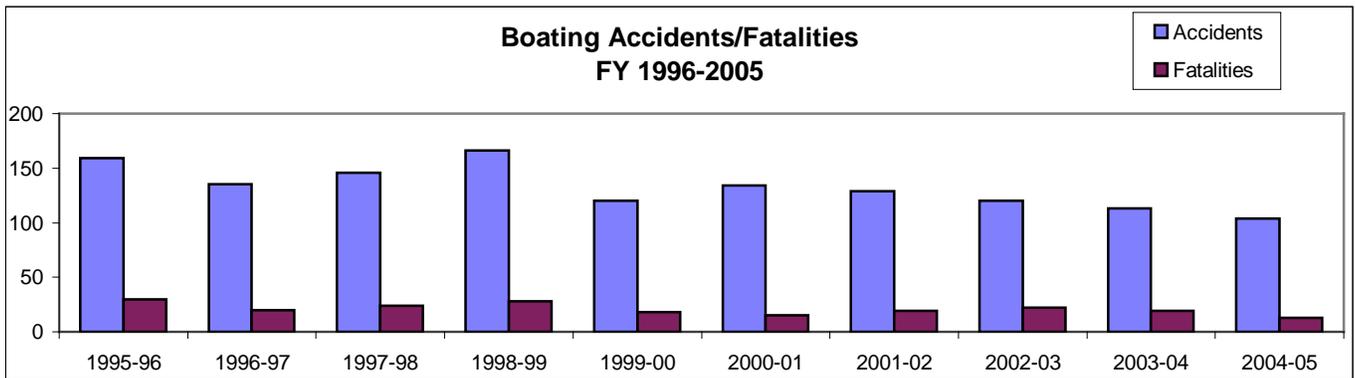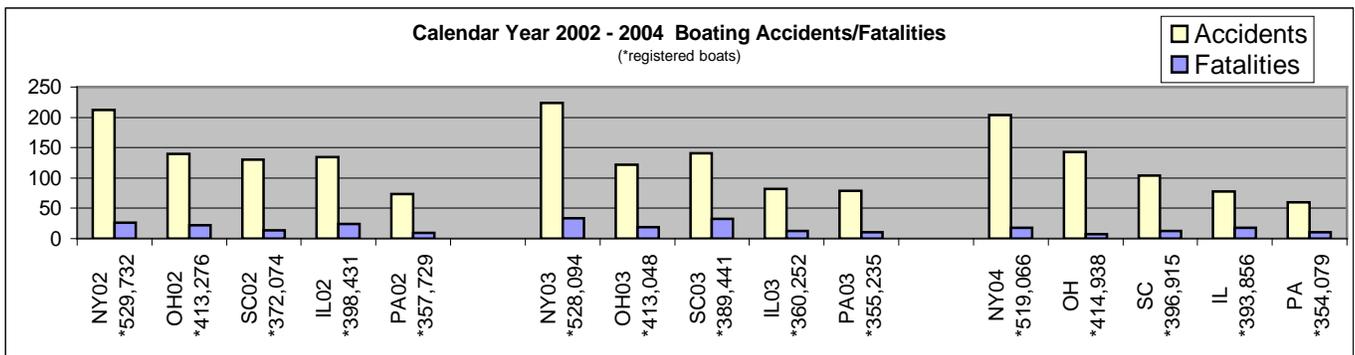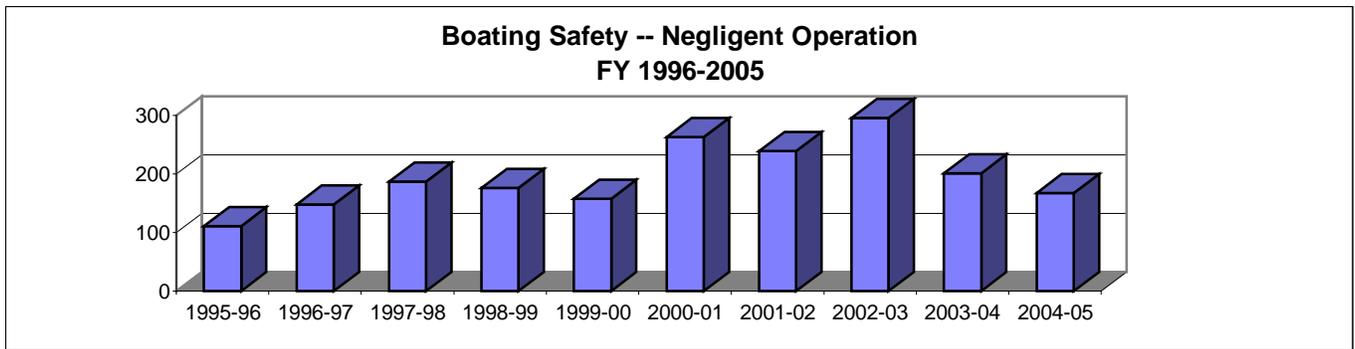
(Figure 7.25)

The DNR Boater Education Course is mandatory for boaters under the age of 16 who desire to operate a watercraft powered by a 15 horsepower or larger motor without adult supervision. There are many other boaters who take the course in an effort to improve their knowledge of boating related issues even though they are not required to attend. For FY 2004-2005 the total number of reported student participants in the Boating Safety Program was 3,717. (See Figure 7.26)

Boating Safety Students - FY 1996-2005
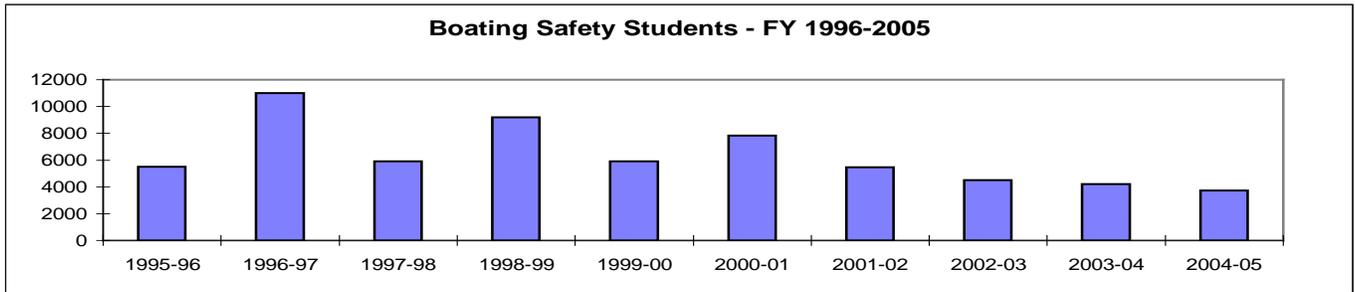
(Figure 7.26)

7.4: A good measure of constituent trends is reflected in the continued growth in the number of boats registered in the state. Growth of recreational boating in South Carolina has required DNR to work closely with the boating industry and boating groups/associations to address issues/concerns. This association has allowed DNR to be successful in obtaining legislation and additional resources to deal with specific boating related issues and general growth of the activity. The partnering has also lead to the development of PSA's to address boating issues and educational tools. There were 396,915 registered boats in South Carolina in calendar year 2004. (See Figure 7.27)

**Number Registered Boats in SC Calendar Year 1995-2004**
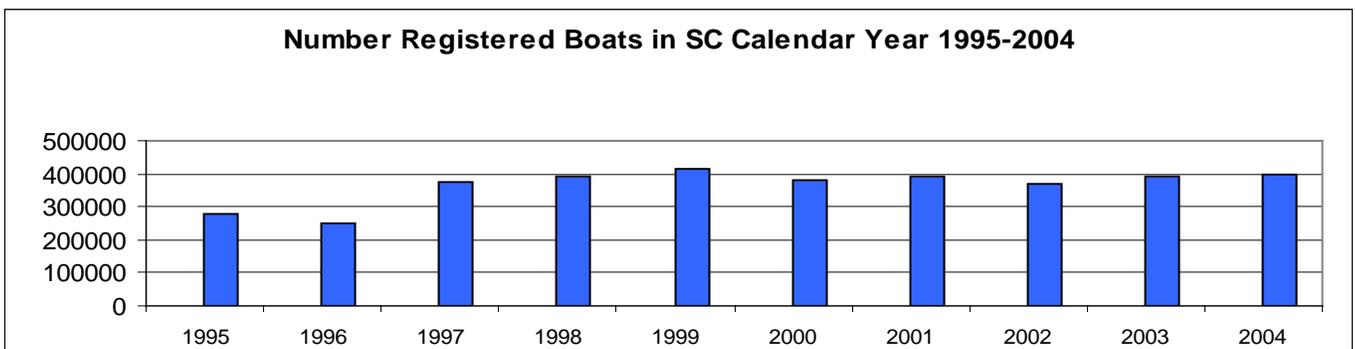
(Figure 7.27)

7.5: The number and type of enforcement cases made are indicators of regulatory/legal compliance. From a review of cases made with regard to the nature and location of the violations, DNR is able to

prioritize law enforcement resources and adjust the focus of education programs and public awareness campaigns to address boating related issues/concerns. This information is also useful in establishing legislative priorities. In addition to addressing safety related concerns in our education programs and public awareness campaigns, DNR also places great emphasis on the ethical use of our resources. In an effort to promote good citizenship and compliance with the laws that regulate boating on the waterways of our state, it has been DNR's experience that a viable and visible law enforcement presence tends to have the greatest influence in addressing boating related problems.

Program: Palmetto Pride

Our communication center mans and operates a 24/7 statewide "800" telephone "litter busters" hotline to assist individuals in reporting litter violations. (See Figure 7.28 & 7.29)

**Number of Litter Buster Hotline Calls Received at DNR's Communication Center FY 2004-05**

(Figure 7.28)

Number of Bags of Litter Per Mile FY 2004-05
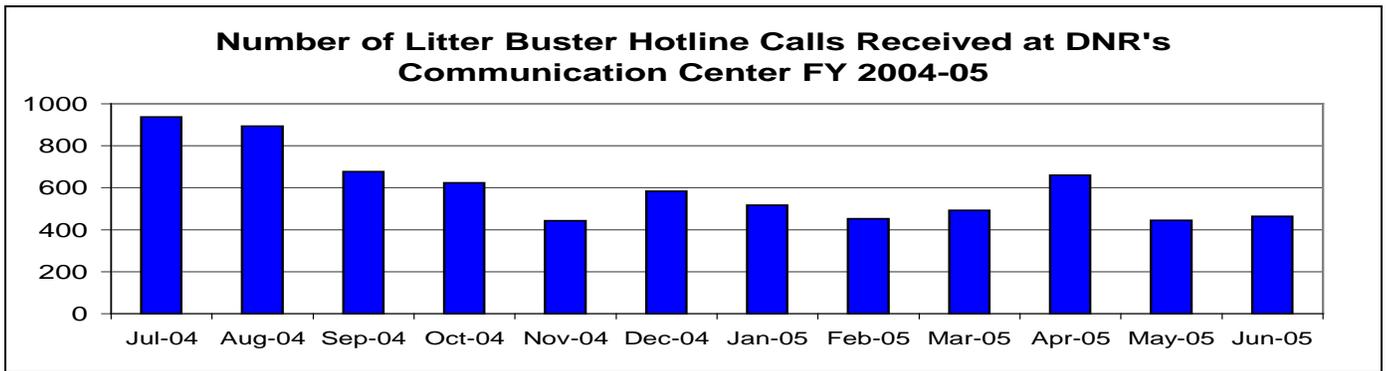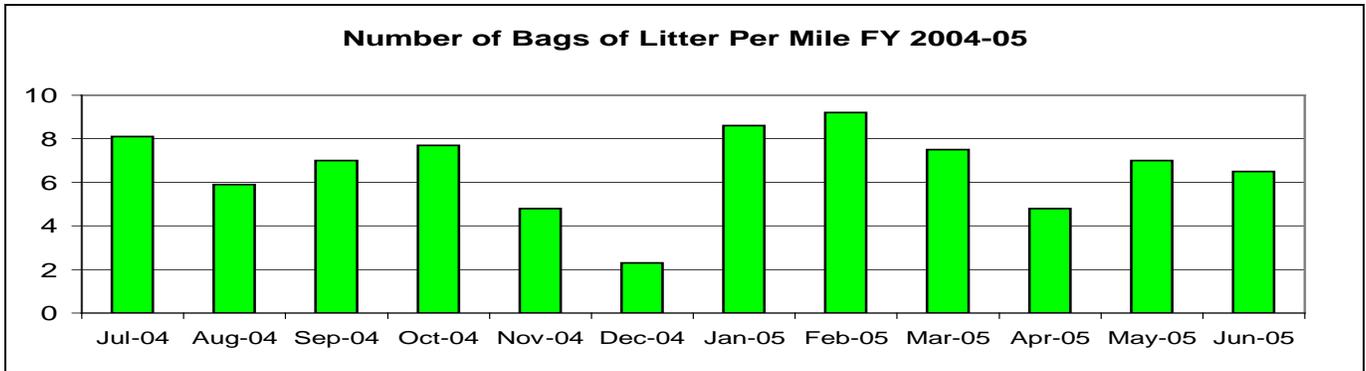
Source: S.C. Dept. of Corrections / Palmetto Pride   (Figure 7.29)

Program: Education

DNR employees are encouraged to actively participate in DNR's education and outreach events. These programs and events are scheduled during the year at various locations around the state. These programs and events allow the employees of the agency to interact with the public that the agency is serving and increase their awareness of natural resources. (See Figures 7.30 & 7.31) Educational programs include Project Wild, Project Wet, Camp Wildwood, Envirothon, Aquatic Education, Coastal Adventure Cruise Program, Becoming an Outdoors Woman, Take One Make One, as well as various writing and art competitions conducted through schools and conservation districts. Outreach events include Beach and River Sweep, Hooked on Fishing Rodeos, Marine Resources Fair and Open House, and the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic. Recent reductions in funding will result in changes in agency program and outreach efforts.

 # DNR Educational Events/Classes

(Figure 7.30)

 # Participants in DNR Educational Programs
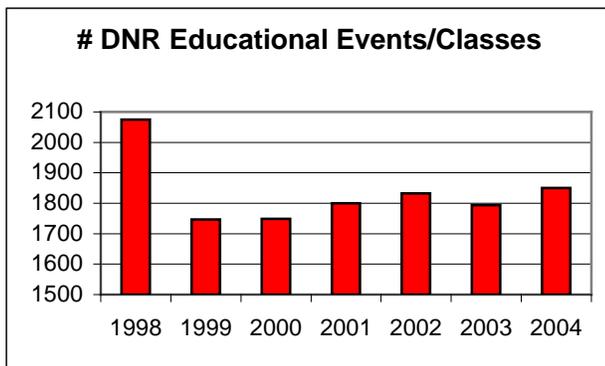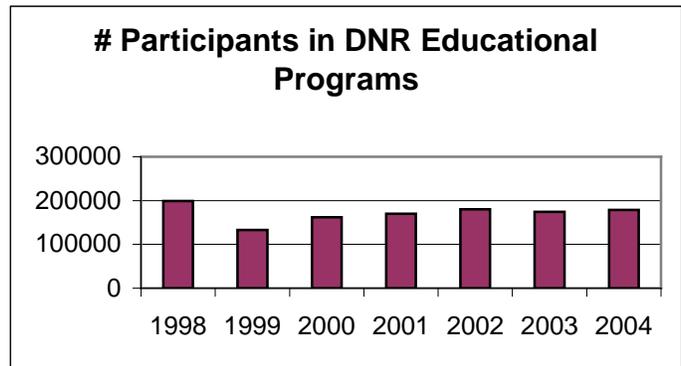
(Figure 7.31)

DNR's website was created in 1994. It contains organizational and administrative information such as job postings, procurement solicitations and awards, hunting and fishing rules and regulations, research on fisheries and wildlife management initiatives, several sources of primary data including river and lake levels, precipitation and temperature station histories, and a series of GIS natural resources layers. There are numerous methods of measuring customer satisfaction and website effectiveness. DNR maintains several on-line forums, fact pages and e-mail opportunities for user feedback. A customer satisfaction survey was conducted in May 2001 as part of an overall website evaluation, and more than 140 users responded. The results indicate a 92% overall satisfaction with the website and their likelihood to revisit DNR's website. Public awareness is further enhanced through the 60,000 subscribers to the *SC Wildlife* magazine, approximately 375 statewide and regional news releases, the *SC Wildlife* TV program and public service announcements aired by approximately 225 radio and TV stations in the state.

The video production unit of DNR produces from four to eight public service announcements for television in a typical year, while the Communications Director produces approximately 20 for radio. The exact number varies according to the outreach and promotional needs of the individual DNR divisions. Recently produced PSA's include the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic, National Hunting and Fishing Day, hunting and boating safety, oyster shell recycling, Take Me Fishing and DNR Free Fishing Days. Budget reductions have curtailed the number of PSA's being produced, along with the educational, promotional and institutional videos that are often produced for use at speaking engagements, as well as educational, promotional and public events.

PSA's are mailed to 200 radio stations and 25 TV broadcast outlets in the state. They are also sent to adjoining states whose broadcast signals serve South Carolina residents. This saturation further increases the likelihood of public service announcements being seen in any given market, each of which contains at least four nationally affiliated TV networks.

In 2004, the video section produced the *South Carolina Wildlife* television series for SCETV. The program airs several times per week on the South Carolina digital channel and monthly on the SCETV network. *South Carolina Wildlife* features DNR programs and activities, field trips to state natural areas and information on conserving, protecting and enjoying our natural resources.

DNR recognizes the need to further develop and improve our public outreach, information and education programs. In the coming year, the DNR communications office (news, public affairs and video) will explore opportunities to further enhance the public's perception and understanding of the agency's goals, mission and purpose; opportunities such as renewing agency participation in the S.C. Broadcasters Association, Non-Commercial Sustaining Announcement (NCSA) program. NCSA participation offers government agencies and non-profit organizations an economical and effective means of airing frequent

promotional announcements on radio and TV. Despite limited funding for promotional efforts, NCSA participants get affordable statewide distribution, reach and frequency of public service announcements. The communications office will also look for opportunities to involve the media in the field, covering the activities of our staff including law enforcement, biologists, scientists and other resource managers. We're also considering the implementation of a "Media Day" luncheon at the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic and the return of the DNR Media Fishing Tournament on Lake Murray.

Program: Land, Water and Conservation -Geological Survey Program

The S.C. Geological Survey is the sole source provider of geologic map information to the public within the State. Stakeholders and the STATEMAP Advisory Committee continue to define critical areas needing new geologic information. Once defined, critical areas are prioritized, and the development of action plans is guided by that prioritization. During FY 2005, priority was given to selected parts of the I-20 Growth Corridor between Columbia and Aiken, Lake Marion, Jocassee Gorges, and Congaree National Park. Effective land-use and regional planning established the I-20 Growth Corridor as first priority; approximately 430 square miles were mapped. Protection of stakeholders from the impact of possible earthquakes established the Lake Marion area as second priority; approximately 150 square miles were mapped. Protection of stakeholders, a core function, established the Lake Marion and Greenville-Spartanburg areas as third and fourth priorities. Development of knowledge in those areas is proactive and could lessen the impact of possible earthquakes. Approximately 290 square miles were mapped in the two areas.

Cycle time for introduction of new map products was maintained at 18 months and continues to be controlled by external funding, i.e. STATEMAP and the National Park Service. Georgia and North Carolina also participate in the STATEMAP program and maintain the same product cycle time. Value was added to new map products by placing the information in an electronic format. Electronic refinement added value to other maps covering approximately 783 square miles. Development of derivative products optimized available resources to bridge learning gaps. (See Figure 7.32)

Area Mapped by State
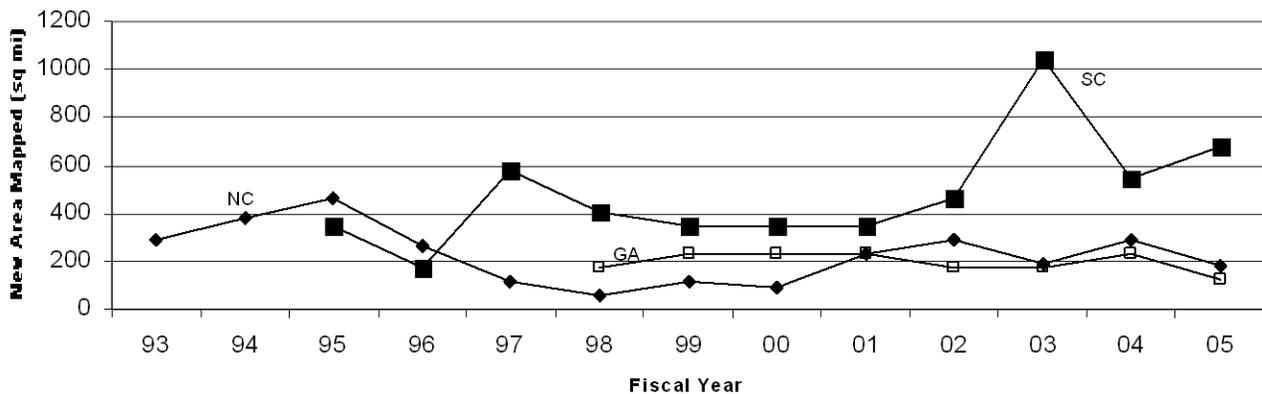
(Figure 7.32)

Aquatic Plant Management Program

The purpose of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Program (Section 49-6-10) is to prevent, identify, investigate, manage, and monitor aquatic plant problems in public waters of the state. The

Program works closely with the Aquatic Plant Management Council (Section 49-6-30). Funding for the program is cost-shared between available federal, state, and local (public and private) sources. Aquatic plant management operations were conducted on 25 water bodies at a cost of $470,814 using federal and local funds. The ultimate success of the program is measured by the presence of aquatic nuisance plants in the state's public waters. During the past year, the total area infested with nuisance aquatic vegetation was 8,790 acres. This represents a 4% increase in coverage from FY 2004 primarily due to the increased awareness of *Phragmites* in the coastal areas of the state. It also represents an 80% decrease from peak coverage in 1996. (See Figure 7.33)

Nuisance Aquatic Plant Coverage in Public Waters
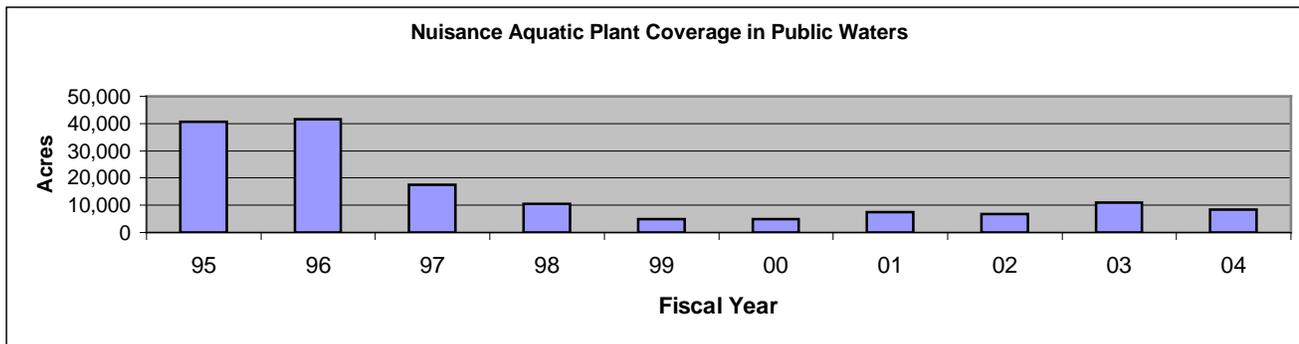
(See Figure 7.33)

Environmental Review Program

The purpose of the Environmental Review Program is to coordinate the agency-wide review of environmental permits and other environmental actions affecting natural resources in the 38 inland counties of the state. Primary objectives of the program are to 1) keep abreast of local, state and Federal environmental regulatory requirements, 2) coordinate the inter-divisional review of all environmental review requests, 3) ensure that all agency comments and positions on environmental reviews are scientifically sound, timely and in conformance with DNR policies and procedures, and 4) ensure that all comments and positions are unified and that the agency speaks with one voice.

Customer satisfaction and mission accomplishment may be assessed by the timeliness of review completion and response, and by the comprehensiveness of reviews conducted. For the time period 1997 - 2005, more than 90% of all requested environmental reviews have been completed within the requested time period. The number of comprehensive reviews conducted (those for which a field site visit and and/or G.I.S. evaluation are performed) increased steadily for the five-year period 1997 – 2001. From 2002 - 2004, travel restrictions due to budget reductions led to a leveling off in the number of comprehensive reviews conducted. In 2005, the number of comprehensive environmental reviews completed declined from previous years (See Figure 7.34). This is primarily attributed to a reduction in the number of public notices received from the environmental regulatory agencies. During 2005 program staff also represented the Department in a planning process for the proposed Interstate 73 corridor in the Pee Dee area of the state.

Number of Comprehensive Environmental Reviews
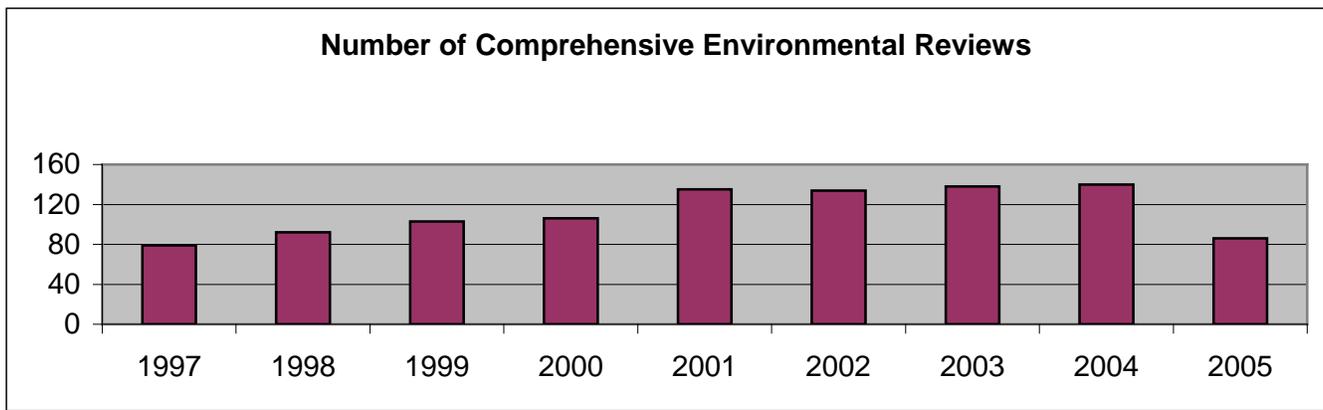

(See Figure 7.34)

Laboratory Services Program

The purpose of the Laboratory Services Program is to provide analytical, chemical, and biological services in support of the agency's resource management, assessment and monitoring programs and activities. The laboratory specializes in analyzing water, sediment, and tissue samples, and provides analyses on over 32 chemical constituents for field staff from all divisions with in the department and occasional requests outside the agency. Time-critical chemical analyses are provided for a number of programs including herbicide residue analyses for the Aquatic Plant Management Program.

During FY 2005, the laboratory conducted 404 analyses on 54 total samples from all DNR resource management divisions. Quality assurance and quality control measures were maintained. Staff participated in the DNR Safety Committee and also held the position of Flood Mitigation Assurance Program Coordinator.

Flood Mitigation Program

The purpose of the Flood Mitigation Program is to minimize the impact of floods and reduce flood related disaster costs in South Carolina. The program provides technical assistance to communities in administration of the National Flood Insurance Program and financial assistance for flood mitigation planning and projects with funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

During FY 2004, program staff trained over 200 community officials and professionals, provided technical assistance to over 2,000 citizens, and delivered information with over 1,600 website visits. The program is in its second year of the Flood Map Modernization Initiative that will provide more accurate GIS based Flood Insurance Rate Maps. FEMA has awarded SCDNR approximately $9.5 million to support the effort so far. A new cooperative agreement program (Map Modernization Management Support) was initiated with FEMA to support the Map Modernization effort. Funding for two additional positions has been requested. One measure of the effectiveness of the program is community participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). There are 201 communities now participating in the NFIP. South Carolina ranks sixth in the nation for flood insurance policies in effect. The number of policies in 2005 exceeds 149,000 and has steadily increased over the past 20 years (See Figure 7.35). South Carolina leads all neighboring states (GA, NC, TN) in the number of flood insurance policies.

Number of Flood Insurance Policies in SC

2003 Average for neighboring states
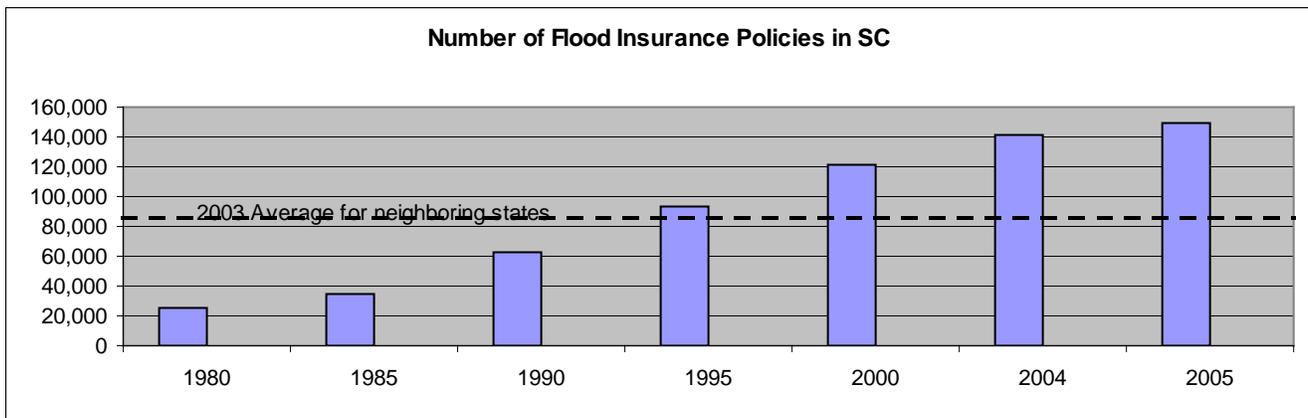
(See Figure 7.35)

Hydrology Program

Staff members are working with the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR) and with two power utilities, Alcoa Power Generation and Progress Energy, on the Federal relicensing application for hydropower facilities on the Yadkin-Pee Dee River. Staff are also working with the NCDENR and Duke Power on the Federal relicensing of the Catawba River, and with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources on minimum flow requirements at Augusta Shoals on the Savannah River. A comprehensive flow model of the Savannah River basin has been developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is being used by staff to evaluate and compare different drought contingency plans.

Detailed maps of the Coastal Plain aquifer systems have been made and are being used by the staff and by hydrologists with the U.S. Geological Survey to produce a ground water flow model of Coastal Plain aquifer systems. The model will extend into North Carolina and Georgia to address potential interstate ground-water issues. Hydrologists are also studying the replacement of a section of the Edisto Island Causeway with a bridge as a means to restore the natural flow regime of the tidal creek and the marsh ecosystem. As part of this project, eight monitoring stations have been installed, and a new Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler will be used to measure flows in the tidal creeks.

Staff monitored 56 wells for water levels changes, 2 wells for saltwater intrusion at Edisto Island, and 3 stations on the North and South Santee Rivers for river stage and seawater intrusion. Three technical reports were published by staff and are available on the DNR webpage.

The South Carolina State Water Assessment Report of 1983 is being revised and will constitute a comprehensive statewide assessment of the State's surface and ground-water resources. It will include additions and revisions that reflect information gained since 1983 and will provide a basic foundation for the continued development of water-resource policies in the State.

Habitat Protection Section

The Director brought SCDNR habitat protection efforts together in a new Habitat Protection Section in the fall of 2004. This section is designed to work across division lines and handle all land transactions where SCDNR would be responsible for interests in land and also deal with habitat protection issues.   It provides enhanced coordination of several SCDNR programs including the National Estuarine Research Reserve Program, Focus Area Initiative, Scenic Rivers Program, Forest Legacy Program, and Heritage Trust Program. This section also coordinates with the Environmental Review staff to provide guidance

with FERC relicensing issues and selection of appropriate mitigation sites when the intent is for SCDNR to hold title of such property.

The section ensures that lands acquired by SCDNR are in line with the agency's mission and can be easily incorporated into the existing management program. When projects are selected, the section identifies all potential funding sources and selects the sources most appropriate for each acquisition. This allows the agency to better utilize its funding sources and leverage those funds with other sources of federal and private funding.

Since July 1, 2004, SCDNR has obtained title to nine tracts, totaling approximately 11,809 acres. SCDNR also purchased an easement on an additional 6,328 acres that was part of the Cooper River Conservation Project. The Focus Area Initiative worked with USFWS to create five additional focus areas and to modify boundaries of existing focus areas to better address conservation needs. Over 1500 person hours were volunteered to river management through advisory councils and other meetings and conservation activities in FY 04/05, and 60% of FY 04/05 of the goals and objectives established by advisory councils were implemented. The number of volunteers in the FY 04/05 Beach Sweep/River Sweep was 2,455 and they picked up approximately 20 tons of trash.

Technology Development Program

The Division established the Technology Development Program (formerly the Natural Resource Information Management and Analysis Section) to provide a holistic, integrated approach to systems, database, and information management. The administrative services computing group of the agency was merged into the Technology Development Program in 2002. This combined all information technology support into a single program to address short and long-term technology needs. This Program provides operational support, data processing standards, information management and analysis, and application design services to the agency through successful implementation of five primary objectives: 1) develop and maintain a technological infrastructure; 2) develop, maintain, and integrate Statewide digital spatial and tabular data; 3) provide complex spatial and statistical analyses, applications programming, and cartographic and multimedia development; 4) develop short- and long- range system design and implementation plans and establish standards and procedures for information management; and 5) disseminate information and data to the general public through the development and maintenance of DNR's website.

The operational priorities and goals of the technology program are established through an evaluation of scientific and administrative staff needs and adherence to professional information management standards, procedures, and protocols. Customer satisfaction is measured by efficient staff access to current software and data, with minimal system and network interruption. In-house staff provides most of the information management services, although critical natural resource data are jointly funded and developed with appropriate federal mapping agencies. This provides cost share opportunities and ensures compliance with accepted national mapping standards. In addition, data developed by the program are provided to other government agencies, public organizations, and citizens through the GIS data clearinghouse via the Internet.

The primary concern over the past year was to consolidate and improve the computing environment throughout the agency. Several critical components were initiated. Upgrades to the communications infrastructure between the Columbia office and the Regional offices and field stations were initiated to provide standardized high-speed file transfer and data access to all agency staff. Elimination of older network technology reduced maintenance costs by 50% while increasing data access capabilities for those

sites that were completed. Where feasible, staff continued to replace expensive frame relay connections to the remote field stations with high-speed, more cost-effective communications frameworks.

A consultant was retained in early 2004 to assess the information technology needs of the agency. Their study clearly supported the need to upgrade the financial, human resources, procurement, licensing, titling, and other critical operations programs of the agency. The plan recommended a combination of commercial software packages that are supported on a wide range of hardware platforms complemented by open source computing resources where feasible. This approach will eliminate the reliance on proprietary mainframe systems and the need for in-house software maintenance. It also will provide a more efficient interface to the statewide enterprise architecture under development by the State Chief Information Office. DNR staff continued to work with the Comptroller General, Treasurer and Chief Information Office to identify programmatic needs for conversion of mainframe financial systems to the S.C. Enterprise Resource Planning System.

Similarly, Technology Development staff continued to identify and assess mainframe and personal computer databases for conversion to the Oracle relational database management system. Database applications were developed for the aviation flight reporting, Palmetto Sportsman's Classic, wood duck box management, SC Reel Kids, DNR invoicing and license scanning programs. Additionally, staff initiated development of an on-line license sales system, a web-based job applicant system, a web-based violations query and retrieval system and conversion of the Hunter-Boater Education program data from Microsoft Access to Oracle. A program was completed that provides access to DNR boating records to SLED and National Crime Information Center staff. Each of these systems consolidates numerous client databases into a comprehensive database management system that provides more efficient access to data.

DNR has maintained several key natural resource GIS data layers, such as soils, wetlands, stream networks and elevations, since the mid-1990s. These data are used by staff to better manage the state's natural resources. They also are provided at no cost to other state and federal agencies, local governments and the public through the Internet. This system provides substantial data base development, processing, and file transfer cost savings. Access to the data is accomplished by downloading specific data layers stored as 7.5-minute quadrangle data files. In the past two years, DNR initiated the development of a new system that would provide Internet mapping services through the agency web site. When completed, this will provide for enhanced Internet-based visualization and query of various natural resources data layers without requiring special software on the web site visitor's computer. The IMS server was installed and the data clearinghouse was 75% converted to the new system before key staff departure delayed its completion. The clearinghouse, which has operated since 1997, has had a substantial annual increase in GIS data downloaded via the web until 2003-2004. Last year more than 175,000 GIS files were downloaded which is down from the peak year of 2003. (See Figure 7.38) This is primarily attributed to the lack of current Digital Orthophoto Quarter Quadrangle data. The standard cycle of imagery data update was scheduled for winter 2004 but lack of funding caused DNR to cancel the project. A DOQQ development project is scheduled for winter and spring 2006 funded by contributions from twelve state and federal agencies.

Conservation Districts Section

Section staff provided technical assistance to the public in conjunction with the 46 conservation districts and the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Technical duties of staff include planning and application of soil and water conservation practices, promoting wildlife habitat, monitoring soil erosion, assessing sediment and storm water problems and conducting technical clinics and workshops.

Staff provided direct technical assistance in planning and implementation of Farm Bill program applications through a cooperative working agreement with NRCS. Staff provided assistance to conservation districts and land users on Farm Bill programs including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), Conservation Security Program (CSP), Farm and Ranch Protection Program (FRPP), among others. Technical assistance, totaling 1169 staff days, was provided for land protection and management, conservation planning, water quality and watershed protection.

Through Farm Bill conservation programs, $25.3 million in federal cost share assistance was provided for installation of Best Management Practices, a $1.7 million increase over the previous year. An additional 307,231 acres were placed in a conservation plan, bringing the grand total to 8.2 million total acres in South Carolina covered by a conservation plan. (See Figure 7.36)
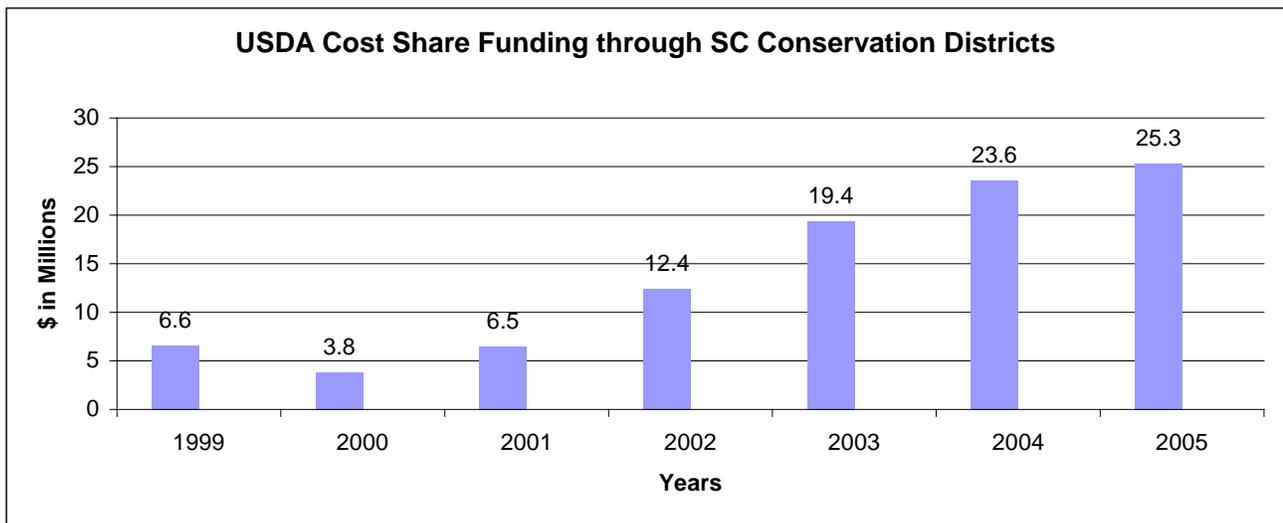
(See Figure 7.36)

The Department entered into agreements for staff to provide technical and administrative assistance in three watersheds targeted by SC DHEC to receive special funding under the Clean Water Act. Assistance will be provided on a cost-shared basis, with the agency obtaining approximately $68,000 over the duration of the grants.

The State funded Aid to Conservation Districts at the $414,000 level in FY 2004-05. This funding enabled the 46 conservation districts to continue to provide assistance to local land users and other citizens. Direct staff assistance was provided by DNR to the 46 conservation districts and 230 commissioners on a regular basis through meetings, planning sessions, training workshops, technical assistance, and public outreach.

Staff assisted Watershed Conservation Districts with administrative, legal and technical support. Issues addressed include easement challenges and interpretations, property rights issues, navigability questions, maintenance questions, budgeting, inspections, and Watershed District Law interpretation.

Section staff provided management support to selected Heritage Trust Preserves around the state. Staff conducted monitoring, management, and protection activities on 38 Heritage Trust Preserves. In a new initiative, staff provided local support and coordination with the SC Scenic Rivers Program on the Ashley, Black, and Little Pee Dee Scenic Rivers.

Due to budget cuts, field staff positions remain vacant requiring a redistribution of the workload. Employees were encouraged to be innovative, to look for ways to improve service, to interact with supervisors, and to network with coworkers and others to accomplish job tasks in spite of budget limitations.