Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Position Statement
A Key Leadership Imperative: Relevancy in Changing Times

Despite our best efforts, we are facing declines in participation. For some, the workforce composition in agencies no longer reflects the composition of their state’s citizenry. Additionally, the pace and complexity of our agencies’ challenges require cross-functionality and workforce adaptation. Diversity of opinion and perspective will make our decision-making richer and more effective. Management alone cannot effectively address these challenges. It takes leadership.

These concerns address three of the five critical issues identified by the membership in the strategic plan of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies: engender and maintain public and political interest in fish and wildlife; develop a new generation of fish and wildlife conservation leaders; and seek adequate funding to support fish and wildlife conservation from the full array of public beneficiaries.

Therefore, in order for agencies to increase our relevancy in changing times, we must do the following:

1. Encourage each generation of fish and wildlife conservation leaders to value differences in cultures and show it through their actions.

2. Encourage management commitment, leadership and support for the development and implementation of an action plan that will help agencies to:
   a. Respond to changing demographics,
   b. Improve quality of services and outcomes,
   c. Enhance the workplace environment,
   d. Meet state and federal regulatory and legislative mandates,
   e. Gain a competitive edge in the marketplace, and
   f. Build an understanding and appreciation of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation by a wider and more diverse group of young people in order to reinvigorate overall outdoor participation and develop a broader pool of applicants for future agency employment.