

Straight TALK

by John A. Arway

Executive Director

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission



PLAN: A Four-letter Word!

Our agency has just completed a lengthy strategic planning process, which has resulted in a plan. I have previously been involved in five or six planning processes for the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) or other groups. They all seem to be written to either justify what we already do or written in a way to support a wide range of activities, so the plan can never fail. They end up on a shelf or in a file drawer only to be referred to when someone asks if we have a plan.

When I interviewed for the director position, I told the Board of Commissioners that my view was that they would set the destination for the agency. I, as the director, with the help of my staff, would chart the course and direction. I recognized that there would be obstacles and that we would have to change our route from time to time to navigate around these obstacles. I was, and I am, confident that we can maneuver the PFBC ship to get to the Board's desired destination.

There are some of us who prefer to be dropped into the middle of a wilderness without a map or compass and enjoy the challenge of finding our way home by ourselves. I must admit that I am one of those risk takers, which is the reason for the title of this article. However, the safer approach is how we plan a family vacation. We usually plan the trip to ensure that we know which are the safest roads to travel, where the fuel and pit stops are along the way, how long the trip will take and how much time we can spend relaxing at our vacation destination. This is how I see our strategic plan working. Strategic means tactical, deliberate and calculated, which is why I asked the staff and the Board to place our draft plan on hold for three months. I wanted to get comfortable with it and understand it. Given that we are developing a plan for the next five years, I want it to include all of the necessary elements to challenge us, so that we will improve our programs to better service the public and our aquatic resources. After all, our performance will be judged by the success of the plan. The plan uses our mission as our foundation, which is simply stated as "Resource First." It has a vision that includes improving our fishing, boating and conservation programs. It discusses our core values, such as being stewards of our Commonwealth's aquatic resources and working together as a team to effect positive changes as public servants. The majority of the plan involves the issues that we have identified and the strategies and goals that we will be working on. We have developed measurable objectives and a tracking system to ensure accountability. I invite you to check out our plan on our website at www.fishandboat.com. Let me know what you think by submitting your comments through "The Fishing Hole."

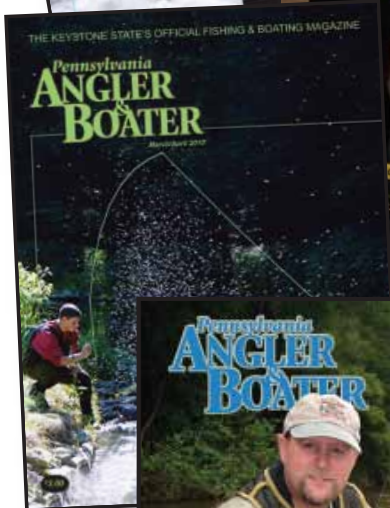
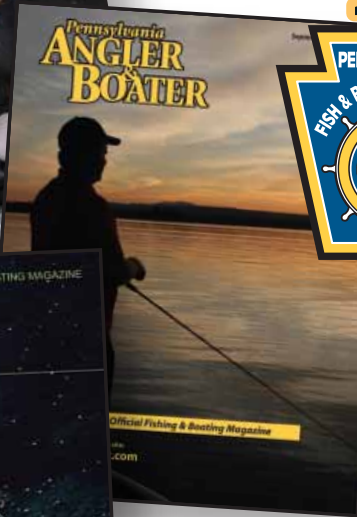
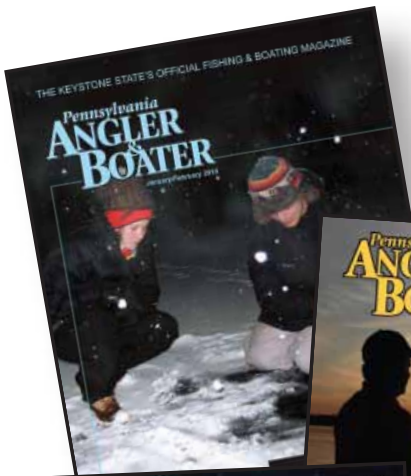
I'd like to thank Laurel Anders, Tim Schaeffer and Commissioner Worobec for championing this effort and the entire agency strategic planning steering team and Board of Commissioners for their input. I think we got it right, and I am looking forward to the future. See you on the water.



photo- PFBC Archives

Your Director

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