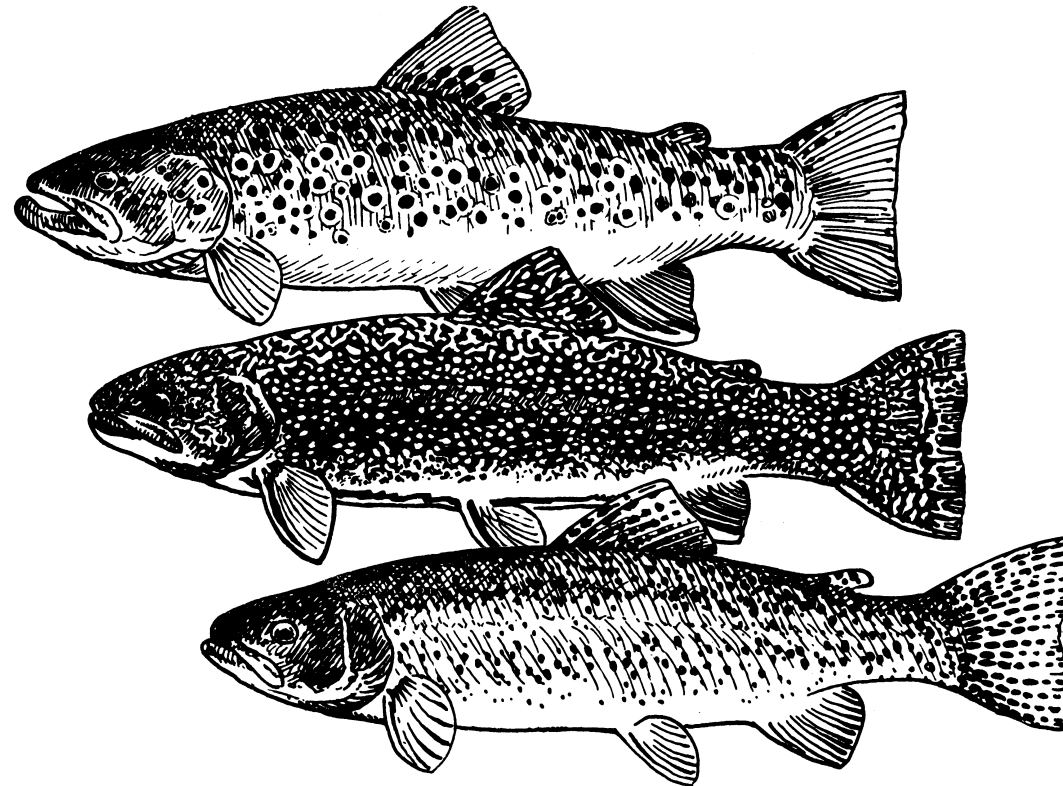


2026 Tennessee Coldwater Summit

Session 1:

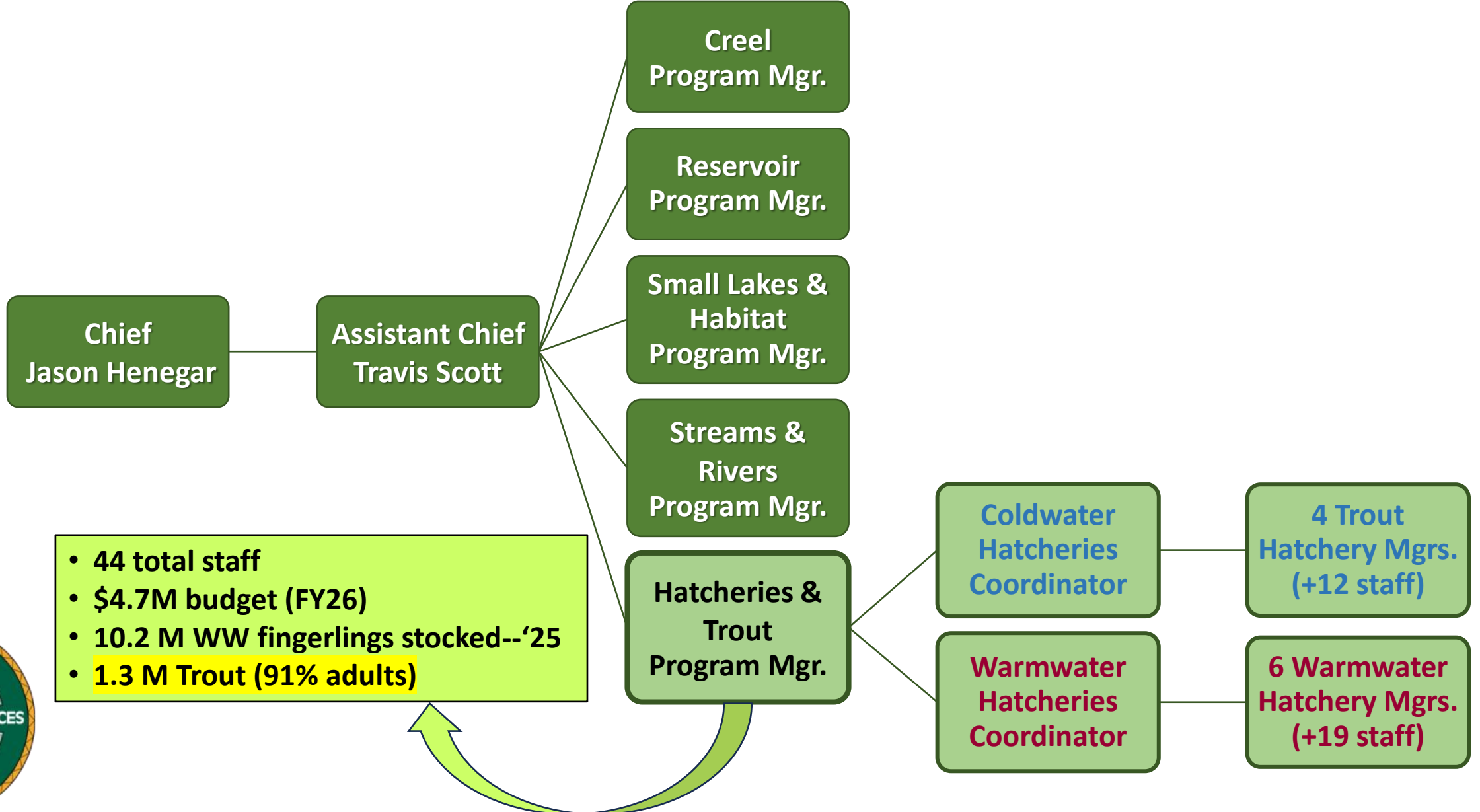
TWRA Fisheries Division—Who are we and who do you say we should be?



Jim Habera
TWRA

Hatcheries and Trout Program Manager

TWRA Fisheries Division Reorganization



Fisheries Division Strategic Plan (2025-2030)

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency Fisheries Division

Development of a Comprehensive Strategic Plan (2025-2030)
Core Function Analysis of Major Functions of the Division



Prepared by:
Wildlife Management Institute
April 24, 2025

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

Fisheries Division
Strategic Plan
2025-2030



Vision

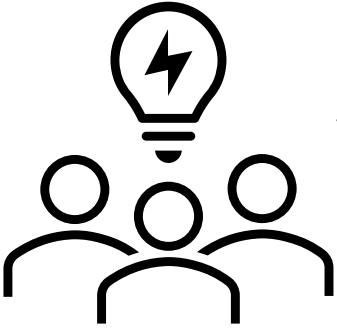
TWRA Fisheries Division envisions sustainable fish populations and associated habitats that fulfill their diverse ecological roles while also supporting a broad range of fishing opportunities for all.

Mission

The mission of TWRA Fisheries Division is to conserve and enhance Tennessee's fish populations and their habitats, promote ecological diversity of aquatic ecosystems, and improve angler experiences for all.



Vision



Vision: The future state of conditions that TWRA Fisheries is striving to achieve; functions as a blueprint or roadmap for success

TWRA Fisheries Division envisions sustainable fish populations and associated habitats that fulfill their diverse ecological roles while also supporting a broad range of fishing opportunities for all.



Mission



Mission: TWRA Fisheries Division's purpose or reason for existing; the mission serves as the key driver in accomplishing the vision

The mission of TWRA Fisheries Division is to conserve and enhance Tennessee's fish populations and their habitats, promote ecological diversity of aquatic ecosystems, and improve angler experiences for all.

Agency Mission:

The Mission of the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency is to preserve, conserve, manage, protect, and enhance the fish and wildlife of the state and their habitats for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the citizens of Tennessee and its visitors. The Agency will foster the safe use of the state's waters through a program of law enforcement, education, and access.

(includes Wildlife, Biodiversity, Law Enforcement, PR)



Mission

The mission of TWRA Fisheries Division is to conserve and enhance Tennessee's fish populations and their habitats, promote ecological diversity of aquatic ecosystems, and improve angler experiences for all.

Fisheries Division staff: "We make fishing better"



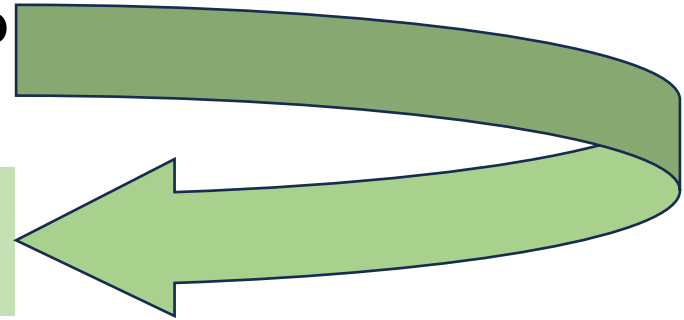
Add..."while looking out for the rest of our aquatic resources"



How Does Our Mission Statement Translate to Our Program Areas?



Through SP Strategic Focus Areas



(Act as the foundation for the strategic plan; expand on the Vision and Mission by establishing broad parameters around which goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics are arranged).

- ***Conservation***
- ***Communication***
- ***Customer Service & Satisfaction***
- ***Organizational Effectiveness***



Strategic Focus Areas → Apply to Each Program Area

- *Conservation*
- *Communication*
- *Customer Service & Satisfaction*
- *Organizational Effectiveness*

Creel
Program

Reservoir
Program

Small Lakes and
Habitat
Program

Streams and Rivers
Program

Hatcheries and Trout
Program



What Are The Key Program Area Initiatives and How Do They Enable Our Mission



The mission of TWRA Fisheries Division is to conserve and enhance Tennessee's fish populations and their habitats, promote ecological diversity of aquatic ecosystems, and improve angler experiences for all.



Streams and Rivers Program

Key Initiatives (Goals, Objectives, Strategies, & Tactics)

Conservation:

Goal: Fisheries Division will work to enhance fish populations across Tennessee.

Objective: Fisheries Division will maintain or enhance recreational fish species.

Strategy: Fisheries Division will strive to create, maintain, or enhance management plans to expand opportunities that fulfill a diversity of angling expectations.

Tactics:

- By January 2026, the Asst. Chief will develop appropriate strategies to incorporate public engagement as part of management plan development.
- By January 2028, the Mgr. 4 will update Tennessee's Trout Management Plan.
- By January 2030, the Mgr. 3 will update Tennessee's Trout Tailwater Management Plans prior to their expiration date.



Hatcheries and Trout Program

Key Initiatives (Goals, Objectives, Strategies, & Tactics)

Conservation:

Goal: Fisheries Division will use current fish production science and technology to improve and enhance recreational fisheries.

Objective: Fisheries Division will assess current stocking efforts from acquisition of brood stock, to spawning and growth, to final disposition of production fish.

Strategy: Fisheries Division will evaluate fish production success of TWRA hatcheries.

Tactic: -By January 2027, the Mgr. 3 will develop in-depth evaluations and best management practices for the production of coldwater species.



Hatcheries and Trout Program

Key Initiatives (Goals, Objectives, Strategies, & Tactics)

Communication:

Goal: Fisheries Division will connect people to recreational fishing and aquatic resources across Tennessee.

Objective: Fisheries Division will create and share messaging to prospective, existing, or lapsed fishing license buyers.

Strategy: Fisheries Division will work with other divisions to develop protocols and products to provide information about Fisheries resources and activities to current and prospective anglers, boaters, and other aquatic resource users.

Tactic: -The Mgr. 3 will provide weekly stocking schedules and reports the public.



Hatcheries and Trout Program

Key Initiatives (Goals, Objectives, Strategies, & Tactics)

Organizational Effectiveness:

Goal. Fisheries Division will improve, redesign, and update infrastructure and equipment to accomplish the Division mission.

Objective Fisheries Division will inventory and assess infrastructure and equipment, including deferred maintenance needs..

Strategy: Fisheries Division will perform needs assessment and develop maintenance plans for hatcheries.

Tactics: -By December 2025, the Mgr. 4 will develop and prioritize a plan to address hatchery renovation projects.

-By July 2030, the Mgr. 3 will address deferred maintenance items.



Greatest Needs and Challenges in Executing Our Mission

The mission of TWRA Fisheries Division is to conserve and enhance Tennessee's fish populations and their habitats, promote ecological diversity of aquatic ecosystems, and improve angler experiences for all.

- Population growth and development/urbanization → loss of angler access and fish habitat

- Aging hatchery infrastructure and deferred maintenance issues (\$650k at trout hatcheries)

- Declines in water flow and quality at trout hatcheries → reduced production

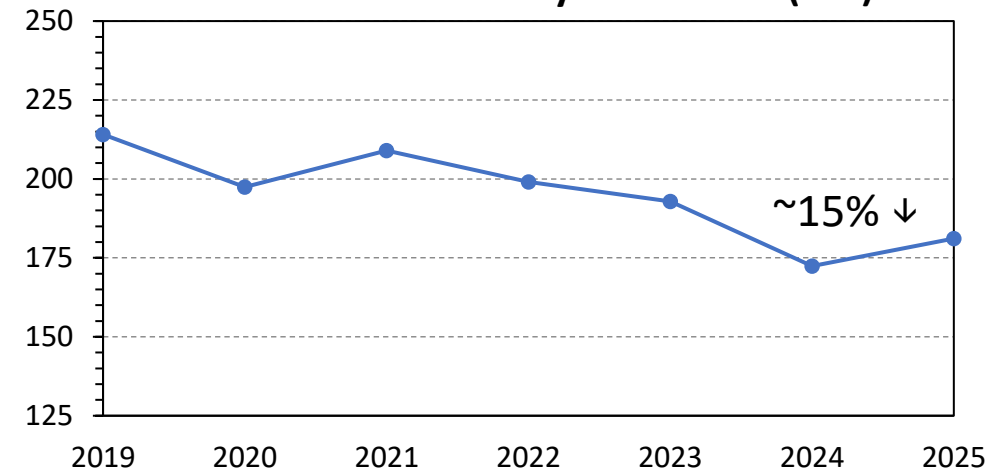
- Aquatic nuisance/invasive species (*Didymo*, *Myxobolus*-WD parasite, AL Bass, Silver Carp)

- Public misconceptions regarding Agency roles (tailwater flows and reservoir vegetation management)

- Increased operational costs/increased costs for anglers

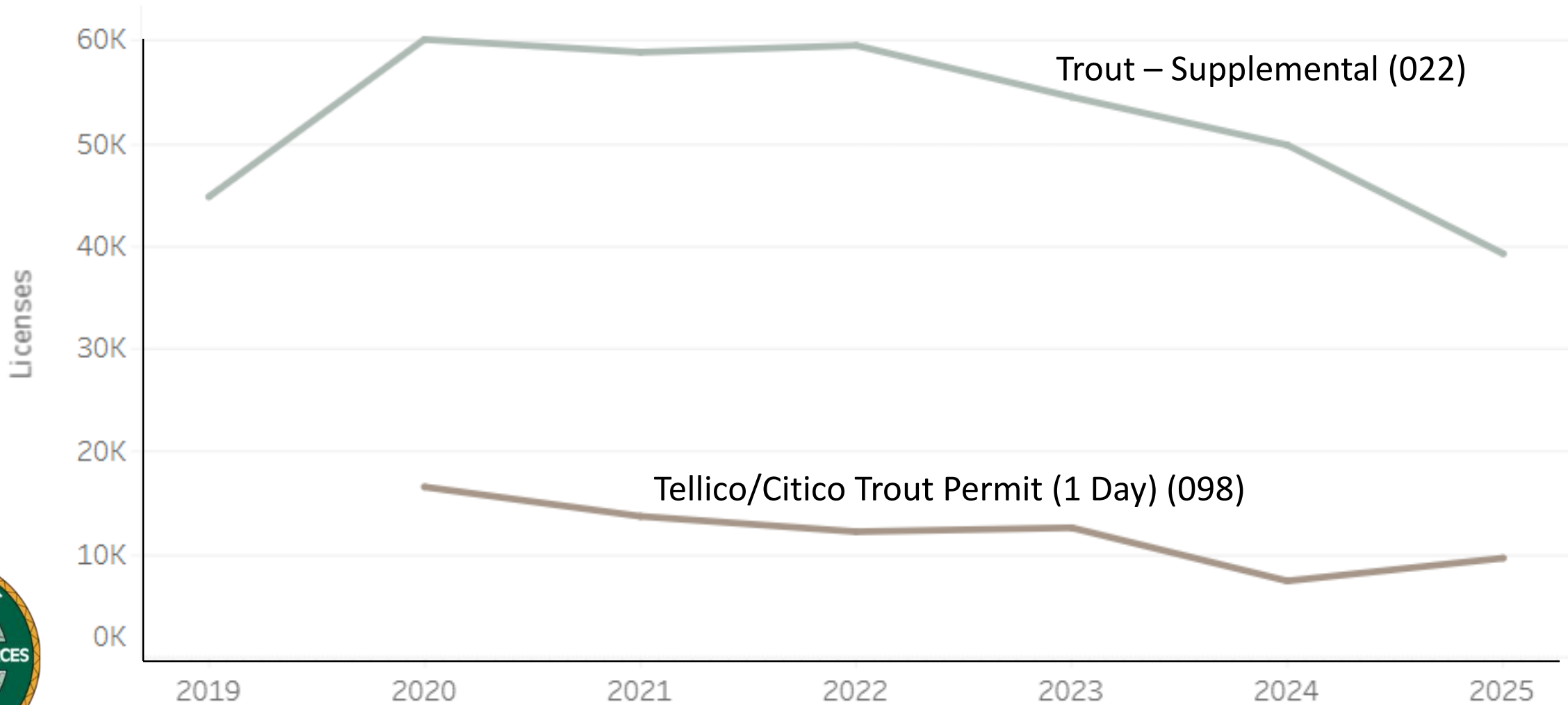
- Decline in license sales

TWRA Trout Hatchery Production (lbs.)



Greatest Needs and Challenges in Executing Our Mission

License / Permit Holders by Year



What Program Areas or Initiatives Do Stakeholders Wish Were Emphasized More or Less?

More emphasis:

- Trout stocking (numbers, species, and locations)
- Special (restrictive) angling regulations
- Law enforcement
- Angler access
- Outreach and Education (e.g., fishing information and clear onsite regulation signage)
- Water quality monitoring (TDEC)

Less emphasis:

- Trout stocking (e.g., Delayed Harvest & Winter Program locations)
- Special (restrictive) angling regulations
- Wild trout management (tailwaters)



What Program Areas or Initiatives Does Wish Were Emphasized More or Less?

More emphasis:

- Production of other species (e.g., Cutthroat Trout) at our trout hatcheries for a few targeted locations
- Developing a 'destination'-type trout fishery through habitat improvement and/or supplemental feeding (e.g., KY, VA, GA)
- Reservoir trout fisheries (e.g., status, angler use)
- Angler access
- Research

Less emphasis:

- One-time kids fishing events on Free Fishing Day (move toward spring or fall family/educational events)
- Trout stocking locations on private lands



Cutthroat Trout (Boone TW)



Buffalo Creek, Grainger Co.



How We Can Work Together to Overcome Challenges to Achieve Our Missions?

- Continue our partnerships—improve where needed, develop new ones.

- Native Brook Trout restoration
- Wild trout stream surveys
- Tailwater trout management
- Trout in the Classroom
- Trout stream habitat enhancement



- Look for new cooperative opportunities to collect needed information



- Stream temp. monitoring
- TW research project w/TTU (Norris/Ft. Pat)
- Norris TW Rainbow Trout fin clips
- eDNA sampling (BKT)?
- Angler use information?

- Develop an outreach event with TWRA's PR/Marketing Division to feature trout fishing (R3); Tennessee WildCast episode?



Questions?

