

2007 Showcase in Excellence Awards Recipient

Arizona Game and Fish Department – “Urban Fish Stocking”



Another on time Catfish stocking at Lakeside Lake (Tucson) provides fishing fun for many.

Company Information:

Highest Ranking Official:
Duane L. Shroufe, Director

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Type of work:
The Arizona Game and Fish Department operates within the Executive Branch of Arizona State government. State law mandates that the Department protect Arizona's wildlife resources, regulate watercraft use and enforce off-highway vehicle (OHV) laws. We do this by implementing policies for conservation, management and harvest of wildlife and by enforcing laws that protect wildlife and public health and safety.

Workforce: 625

Testimonial of Value of Arizona State Quality Awards Program

“Receiving the 2005 Pioneer Award for Quality was a tremendous accomplishment for the Arizona Game and Fish Department. However, we are not the type of organization that rests on its laurels and we didn't want anyone to feel that the Pioneer Award was the end of our journey. So, we decided to put some of our individual processes to the test by going through the Showcase In Excellence Awards application process. Our Urban Fish Stocking Process has been highly successful, has produced excellent results, and has been the source of benchmarking by other states. However, we subjected this process to the scrutiny of the Showcase In Excellence Awards criteria for two reasons – first and foremost to receive feedback to make it even more successful, and secondly in the hopes of receiving the kind of credible external validation that comes from this award. The Showcase In Excellence Award demonstrates to our customers, partners and stakeholders, to our peers, our advocates and critics, and most importantly to our employees, that the foundational principles of total quality are embedded throughout the Arizona Game and Fish Department.”

– Duane L. Shroufe
Director, Arizona Game and Fish Department

Highlights of Organizational Process:

The Urban Fish Stocking Process was established to provide close, convenient fishing opportunity for urban residents of Arizona. Many of these citizens, for a variety of reasons, are unable to utilize Arizona's other fisheries.

The Urban Fish Stocking concept is simple, if people can't get to the fish, we bring fish to the people. The process includes contracts with commercial fish suppliers to transport and stock over 200,000 pounds per year of catchable rainbow trout and channel catfish at two-week intervals. Further, sunfish are stocked twice annually with additional

fish deliveries for various community fishing events. By reliably and routinely stocking healthy, catchable trout, catfish and other species throughout most of the year into 20 nearby community park lakes, the Urban Fish Stocking Process creates instantaneous fishing opportunity, annually attracting over 55,000 anglers of all ages and backgrounds.

Process highlights include:

- The process was designed to reliably and safely stock fish in Arizona urban lakes in a way that is financially self-supporting. The process includes feedback from customers, and clearly defined inputs from suppliers and partners. Input is systematically obtained through continuous and varied approaches in order to remain in tune with the needs of the customer groups served.
- To continually determine process requirements, the Department's Fisheries Branch uses bi-weekly lake visits, angler surveys, phone, mail, and email. Feedback received through these mechanisms is used to adjust the fish stocking rates. Additionally, Fisheries Branch staff conduct fish clinics (presentations) which serve as another method of customer input, but also serve as opportunities to provide education and to attract new customers to urban fishing.
- The Fisheries Branch evaluates and improves the Urban Fish Stocking Process using a variety of performance metrics. Improvements include incorporating new technology such as the use of personal digital assistants for real time data management and use of field sampling equipment. These tools enable staff to make informed decisions during fish delivery. Other improvements such as improved park/lake signage help to promote urban fishing. Additionally, a lake design template was developed for use by municipalities for designing new urban fishing lakes to meet biological requirements for fish and access needs for anglers. Improved and extended fish supplier contracts result in better planning and cost control
- In 2001 the Department added sunfish and in 2006 it added largemouth bass to its stocking program. Each fish has a different attraction to anglers, which affects angler pressure and adds additional value to target customers.
- Customer-perceived value, as measured by Angler Creel Survey Data (customer interviews), indicates positive trends. The number of anglers increased from 42,500 in 1995 to 48,700 in 2005 and the number of angler days per year increased over the same period from 472,000 to 599,000.
- Angler satisfaction ratings of 6 or higher (on a 10-point scale) increased from 73.3% to 81.3% from 1995 to 2005.
- Sales of urban fishing licenses increased from 27,533 in 2002 to 36,793 in 2006 and continue to grow in 2007.
- The Urban Fish Stocking Process is a prime recruitment and retention tool for future and current core customers.
- The Arizona Game and Fish Department's Fisheries Branch leads the country in annual total pounds of fish stocked, stockings per year, and number of fish stocked per acre per year.
- In order to ensure positive results, the Urban Fish Stocking process incorporates in-process indicators in addition to end-of-process indicators. The in-process indicator, on-time fish stocking delivery, has performed at nearly 100% since 2004. This level of performance is indicative of the effectiveness of the relationship established with suppliers, and reinforces the importance placed by the Department on having relevant criteria for protecting and maintaining a quality product.
- Over the years, the staff of the Urban Fish Stocking Process have developed positive relationships with their customers and know many of them on a first-name basis. The staff are very accessible to their customers and are well trained to offer the highest levels of customer service.