A Message from the Director

The benefits of hunting and fishing are not always fully appreciated and their importance to our citizens, communities and society is sometimes overlooked.

Hunting and fishing have provided sustenance to many for generations. That is evident, but there is so much more.

Being outdoors and enjoying wildlife and wildlands can greatly benefit our health and wellbeing, and these activities bring people together where they can share common experiences, transcend the challenges of daily life, and reconnect with a long held and enriching wildlife heritage.

Beyond the direct benefits of hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation, funds necessary for wildlife conservation are provided from licenses fees and federal taxes on outdoor sporting equipment. With these funds agencies like the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish are able to restore species, improve habitat and provide educational programs. Rural communities across the state benefit as well with almost a billion dollars contributed annually to local economies.

And as a result of the support hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation provides, species as diverse as elk and the Rio Grande cutthroat trout thrive in New Mexico, and watersheds and forests that support these and many other wildlife species are improved continuously. Also made possible are landscape scale habitat improvements that reduce catastrophic fire risk and improve the quality and quantity of our water resources.

Your participation in the hunting and fishing sports also provides the means to teach our youth about the benefits of getting outdoors and how to be good stewards. We must ensure that future generations understand how important our wild, natural resources are and that they have the knowledge and skills to steward these resources in the future.

As you begin planning your year in the great outdoors, I ask that you think about these benefits and that you share your experience with someone new to hunting and fishing. Everyone needs to understand the important benefits wildlife conservation provides, whether health and well being, social or economic. With your continued help we can ensure that the future remains bright and that our natural resources continue to benefit all.

See you in the field.

Michael B. Sloane, Director — New Mexico Department of Game and Fish