



January 17, 2025

HB 1017
2025-27 Appropriation Request
North Dakota Game and Fish Department

Chairman Monson and members of the Government Operations Division of House Appropriations, my name is Brian Hosek, Administrative Services Division Chief of the ND Game and Fish Department. I will be testifying on HB1017, our appropriation bill.

The ND Game and Fish Department is largely directed under NDCC Title 20.1 and many of those responsibilities reside under 20.1-02-05 which lists the power of the Director. The major statutory responsibilities can be summarized as: to manage and regulate the state's wildlife resources, game and non-game, for the use, enjoyment, possession, disposition, and conservation for the public of North Dakota.

The 2025-27 executive budget recommendation is \$115,602,907. This is an increase of \$10,875,393 from the 2023-2025 legislative base level appropriation of \$104,727,514.

My testimony will cover the following for the Department:

- Federal and Special Revenue
- Fund Balance
- Legislative Base changes
- 25-27 Budget Changes
- Other Sections included in the executive bill draft for HB1017
- Budget by Divisions

The Game and Fish Department is a special fund agency receiving revenue from game and fish license sales (hunting, fishing, boating registrations, etc.) and federal funding.

We receive no general fund dollars.

Audit Findings Report: No areas of concern were identified.

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Committee Division Outline

1. Explain the purpose of the agency and its various divisions/programs - Cite North Dakota Century Code provisions (page 1) and attach an organizational chart (slide 6).
2. Report any audit findings included in the most recent audit and action taken to address each finding (page 1).
3. Discuss current biennium accomplishments and challenges and next biennium goals and plans. (slides 52-59)
4. Compare the agency's request/recommendation totals, including full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, for the next biennium compared to the current biennium. (slides 20-25)
5. Discuss any new positions approved for your agency for the 2023-25 biennium by the 2023 Legislative Assembly, the timing of filling the positions, amounts transferred from the OMB pool for the filled positions, and funding appropriated and the amount estimated to be spent for each position for the 2023-25 biennium. (slide 49)
6. Discuss employee turnover and the number of vacant positions during the 2023-25 biennium to date, the amount of savings relating to the vacant positions and employee turnover to date compared to the vacant position savings removed from your agency's budget by the 2023 Legislative Assembly, the amount of vacant position saving spent for other purposes, and any amounts transferred or anticipated to be transferred from the OMB pool. (slides 50-51)
7. Explain the funding included in each program/line item either in total or by division depending on the size of the agency as follows: (slides 35-48)
 - a. Amounts included in the base level and their purpose and use; and
 - b. Amounts included in the request/recommendation and justification for the change from the base level. Discuss changes relating to each line item (salaries and wages, operating expenses, etc.) funding source (general fund, special funds, federal funds), and FTE positions.
8. Discuss the purpose and use of any one-time funding items for the current biennium. (slide 21)
9. Identify and justify the need for any one-time funding being requested. (slides 28-29, 31-33)
10. Discuss any fees the agency charges, the appropriateness of the fee amount, fee collections that are deposited in the general fund or a special fund, and any anticipated changes from 2023 legislative session estimates during the 2023-25 biennium and estimated changes for the 2025-27 biennium. (slide 19)
11. Identify any federal state fiscal relief funds remaining to be spent by your agency by December 2026. Provide the amount, the purpose, and a timeline of anticipated expenditures. **\$27,000 Devils Lake Fire Alarm System Upgrade. Expected completion by 6/30/2025.**
12. Discuss the need for any other sections to be added to the appropriation bill. (slide 34)
13. Discuss any other bills being considered by the Legislative Assembly and their potential budgetary impact on your agency.
14. Provide a one-page itemized listing any changes your agency is requesting the committee to make to the executive budget recommendation.
15. Provide additional information as necessary.

House Appropriations Committee

HB 1017

January 17, 2025

Brian Hosek

Administrative Services Division Chief



OUR MISSION

The mission of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department is to protect, conserve and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitat for sustained public consumptive and nonconsumptive use.



HISTORY

Hunting and fishing are deeply ingrained in the North Dakota way of life and are constitutionally protected rights in North Dakota.



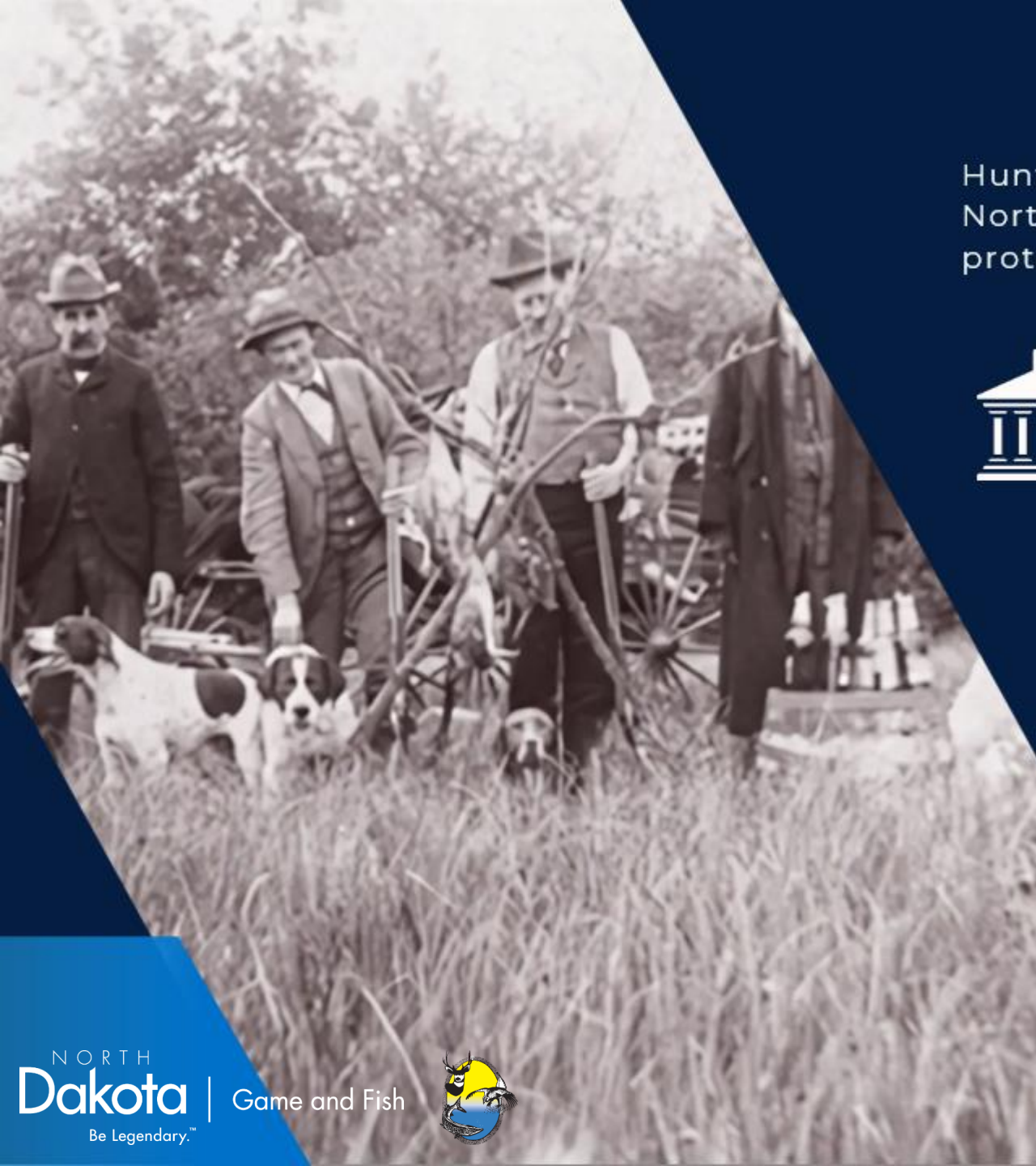
CONSTITUTION OF NORTH DAKOTA

Article I, Section 1 – Declaration of Rights

All individuals are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty; acquiring, possessing and protecting property and reputation; pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness; and to keep and bear arms for the defense of their person, family, property, and the state, and for lawful hunting, recreational, and other lawful purposes, which shall not be infringed.

Article XI, Section 27

Hunting, trapping, and fishing and the taking of game and fish are a valued part of our heritage and will be forever preserved for the people and managed by law and regulation for the public good.



WHO WE SERVE



Hunters

Individuals who harvest animals by firearms and archery.



Anglers

Individuals who participate in fishing, spearing and/or snagging.



Boaters

Individuals who use boats for fishing or pleasure.



Trappers

Individuals who harvest animals with trapping equipment.



Landowners

Individuals who own land and/or make a living off the land.



Recreational Shooters

Individuals who shoot firearms or other weapons for sport or leisure.

HUNTING & FISHING

BY THE NUMBERS



\$ 1.3 BILLION

Economic value of hunting and fishing to North Dakota's economy.

\$ 383 MILLION

in direct expenditures in rural areas by hunters and anglers.



NORTH DAKOTANS

HUNT OR FISH



Per capita North Dakota ranks in the TOP 5 of outdoor participants.

SALES TAX REVENUE



\$ 47 MILLION



FULL-TIME JOBS

6,500

Resident and Nonresident Hunter and Angler Expenditures, Characteristics, and Economic Effects, North Dakota, 2022-23. NDSU Ag. Econ. 2024.



MEET OUR TEAM

MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION CHART



JEB WILLIAMS
Director



SCOTT PETERSON
Deputy Director

LYNN TIMM
Director's Admin Assistant



BRIAN HOSEK
Division Chief
Administrative Services



26 FTE's



GREG POWER
Division Chief Fisheries



27 FTE's



SCOTT WINKELMAN
Division Chief Enforcement



40 FTE's



BRUCE KREFT
Division Chief Conservation
and Communications



23 FTE's



CASEY ANDERSON
Division Chief Wildlife



54 FTE's

170
Total
Full Time
Employees

~70
Temporary/
Seasonal

- Part-time (6)
- 40hrs/week (8)
- On-call (2)

DISTRICT OFFICES



BISMARCK (HQ)



BISMARCK (LAB)



LONETREE



WILLISTON



DICKINSON



JAMESTOWN



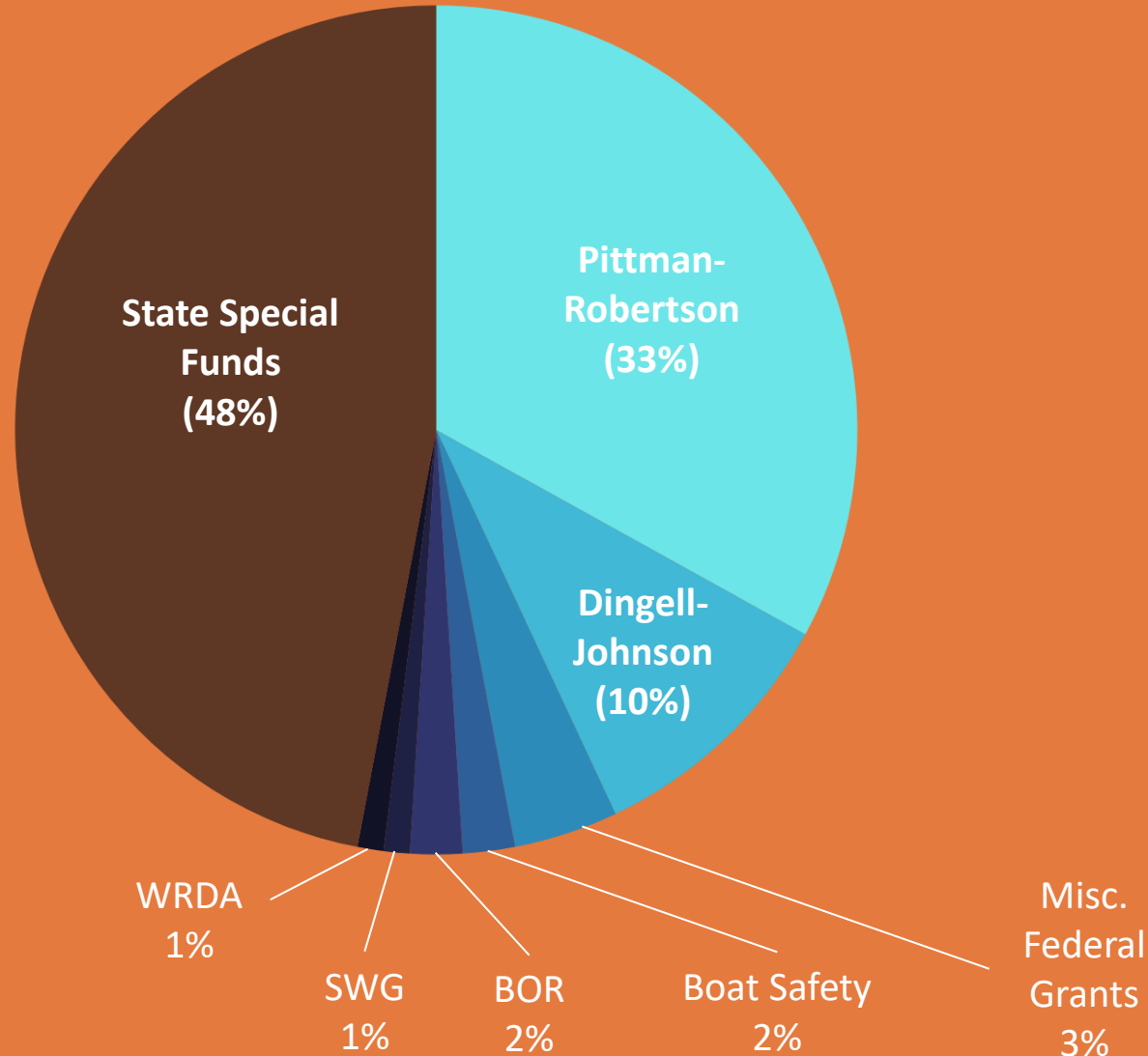
RIVERDALE



DEVILS LAKE

2025-27

REVENUE PROJECTION



Federal
\$55,728,238

Game and Fish
\$52,264,945

Total
\$107,993,183



The Game and Fish Department is a special fund agency receiving revenue from game and fish license sales (hunting, fishing, boat registrations) and federal funding.

We receive no general fund dollars.

Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Acts

Background

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Office of Conservation Investment manages over a billion dollars in grants to recipients across the U.S. annually for species and habitat conservation, recreation, and outdoor education. The Wildlife Restoration grant program and Sport Fish Restoration grant program are the foundation of conservation funding in the U.S.

84% *of our federal funds come from these two grants:*

Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (PR), passed in 1937

- *funds are derived from excise tax on the sale of guns, ammunition, and archery equipment*

Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act (DJ), passed in 1950

- *funds are derived from excise taxes on sport fishing equipment, electric motors, and motorboat fuel tax*

Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Acts

Mandatory Funding (Not dependent on congress)

States may be paid up to 75% Federal funding;
requires 25% non-Federal cost-share.

Formula Based...



Distribution Method

Apportioned formula based on:
50% paid hunting license holders +
50% land/water area



Distribution Method

Apportioned formula based on:
60% paid sport fishing license
holders + 40% land/water area



Special Conditions or Requirements

- Submit annual license certifications
- States must pass and maintain assent legislation

NDCC 20.1-02-17

Hunting and fishing license fees and application fees may only be used for departmental programs and administration. Noncompliance will result in a diversion of all USFWS federal funds.

Any misuse of our special funds will result in what is called a “diversion”. A diversion of federal funds means we become ineligible for future USFWS federal funds until the diversion is resolved. This equates to approximately \$50M.



Revenue Projections

25-27 Revenue Projections:

Federal revenue is projected to be as follows:

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (PR funds)*	\$32,714,702
Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (DJ funds)**	\$10,973,564
Recreational Boating Safety Program	\$ 1,718,859
State Wildlife Grants	\$ 1,354,366
Misc. Federal Grants	\$ 6,291,926
Bureau of Reclamation (Lonetree)	\$ 2,107,818
Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)	\$ 567,003

Total Federal Revenue \$55,728,238

Game & Fish (G&F) Revenue by Fund:

Game and Fish Fund (Licenses + Misc.)	\$41,860,500
Private Land Habitat Fund	\$ 7,600,000
Nongame Wildlife Fund (Donations)	\$ 68,000
Aquatic Nuisance Species Fund	\$ 2,136,445
Fishing Conservation Fund <i>(Continuing Appropriation)</i>	\$ 600,000

Total Game & Fish Revenue \$52,264,945

Total All Revenue \$107,993,183

**Total Revenue
\$107,993,183**

Total Federal Revenue \$55,728,238 52%

Total Game and Fish Revenue \$52,264,945 48%





Federal Revenue Levels

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Sport Fish Restoration Act Funds (DJ)

In 2024, the amount was \$4.4M. We project the funds to remain slightly above the \$4M level annually for 2025-27. The funds require a 25% match and have a 2-year window to be obligated.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Wildlife Restoration Act Funds (PR)

In 2024, the amount was \$14.2M. We project the funds to remain around the \$12M-\$13M level annually for 2025-27. The funds require a 25% match and have a 2-year window to be obligated.

U.S. Coast Guard - Recreational Boating Safety Funds

These are mandatory funds, not dependent on congressional approval. We project the funds to remain approximately the same for 2025-27. The funds require a 50% match and have a 3-year window to be obligated.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - State Wildlife Grant (SWG) Funds

These are discretionary funds, dependent on congressional approval. The funds have remained the same for many years. We project the funds to remain approximately the same for 2025-27. The match for these funds vary.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

These funds have remained the same the last few years and are 100% federal.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) Funds

These are discretionary funds, dependent on congressional approval. We project these funds to remain the same for 2025-27. These funds require a 50% match.

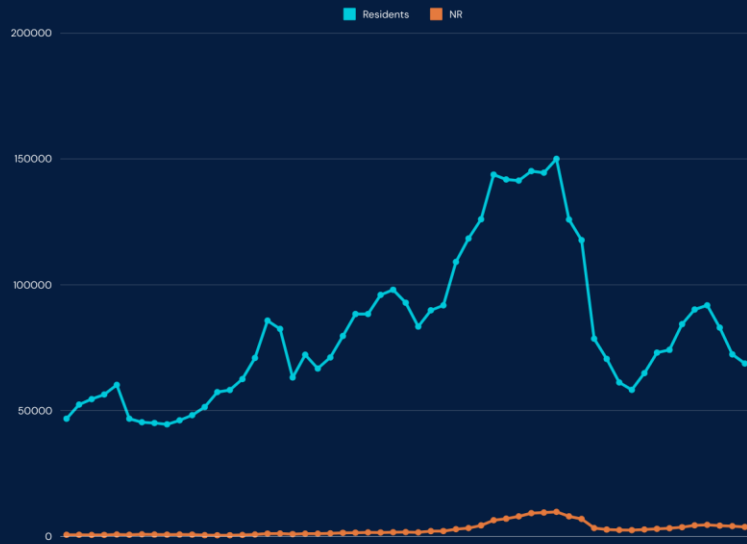
** Unobligated funds will revert to the USFWS to be allocated to other states.*



Licensing and Special Revenue

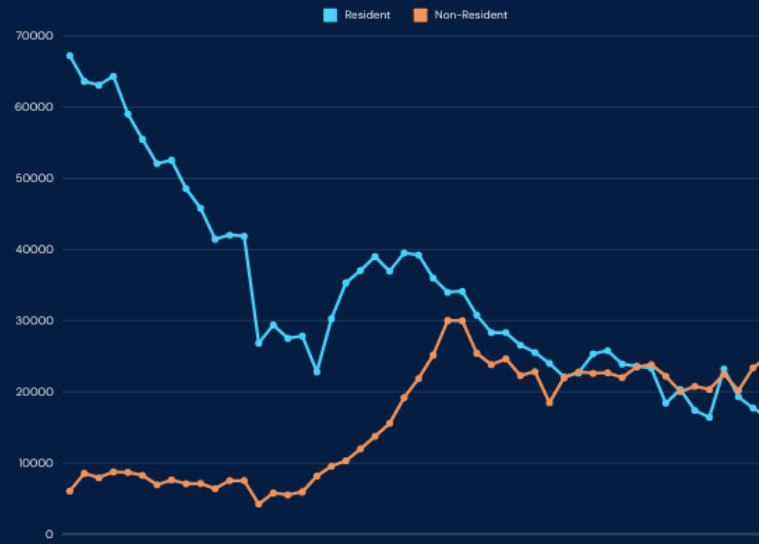
We project our licensing revenue to remain the same for 2025-27. Revenues are largely driven by fishing, waterfowl, small game, and deer license sales. Hunting and fishing participation is derived from the General Game/Habitat and Fishing License sales.

DEER LICENSES

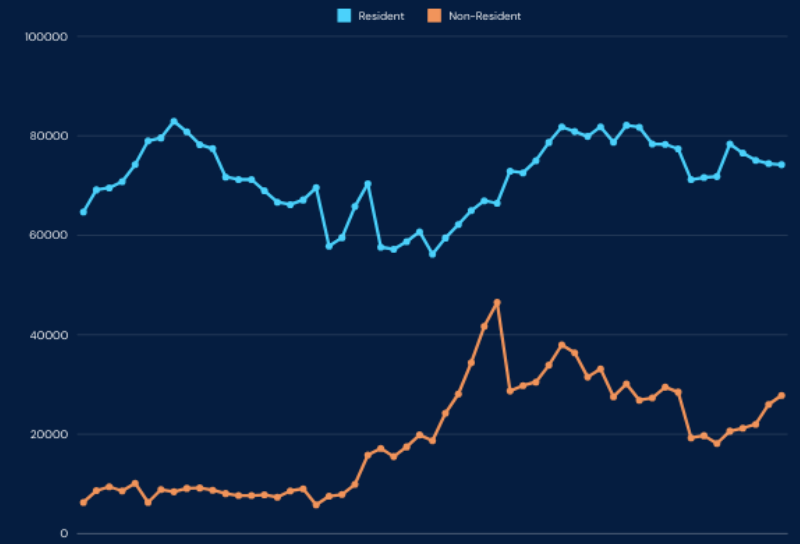


* Deer licenses include deer-gun, deer-bow, and youth deer

WATERFOWL

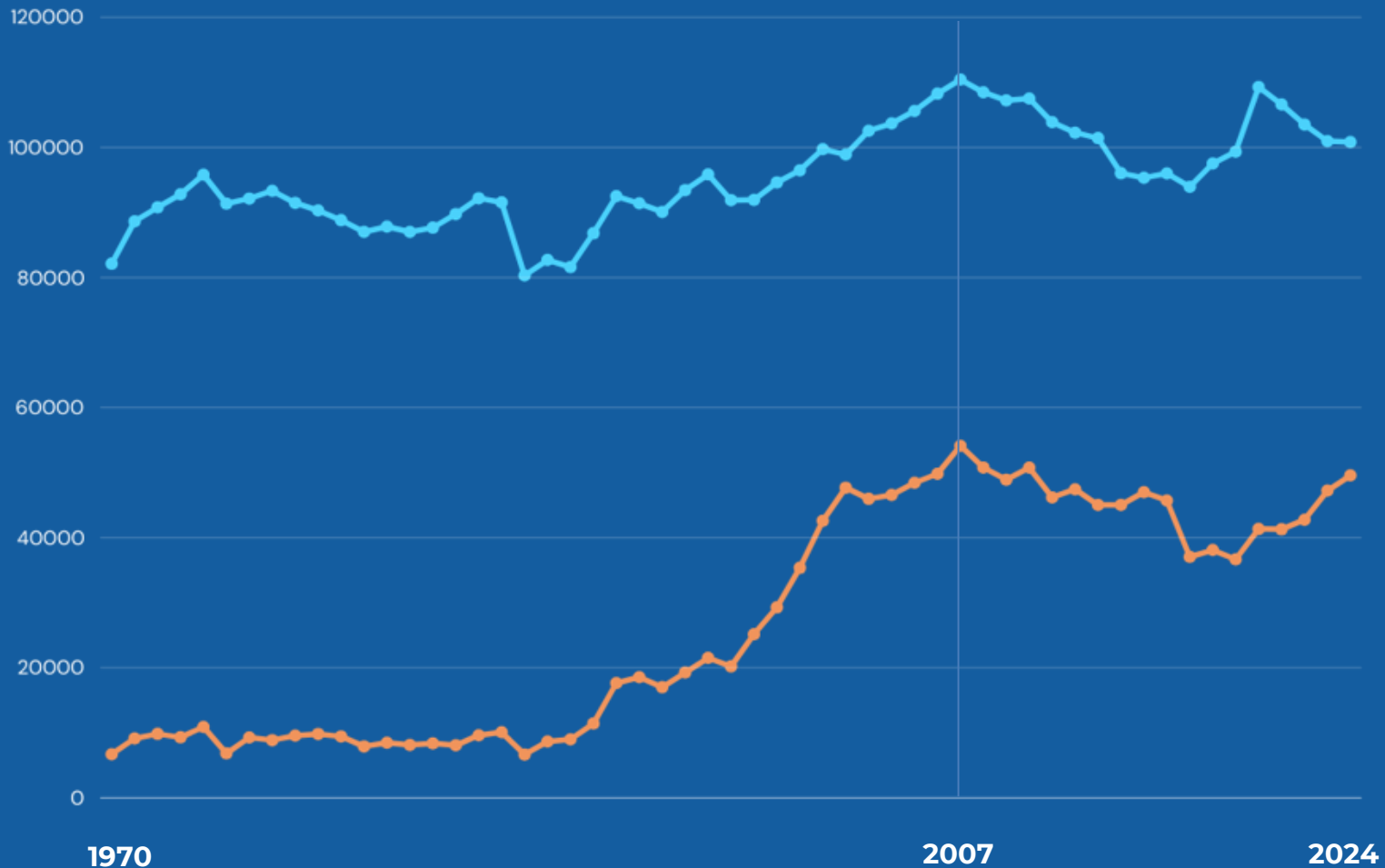


SMALL GAME



GENERAL GAME LICENSE SALES

Resident Non-Resident



2024 General Game Licenses

Resident:

100,832

Non-Resident:

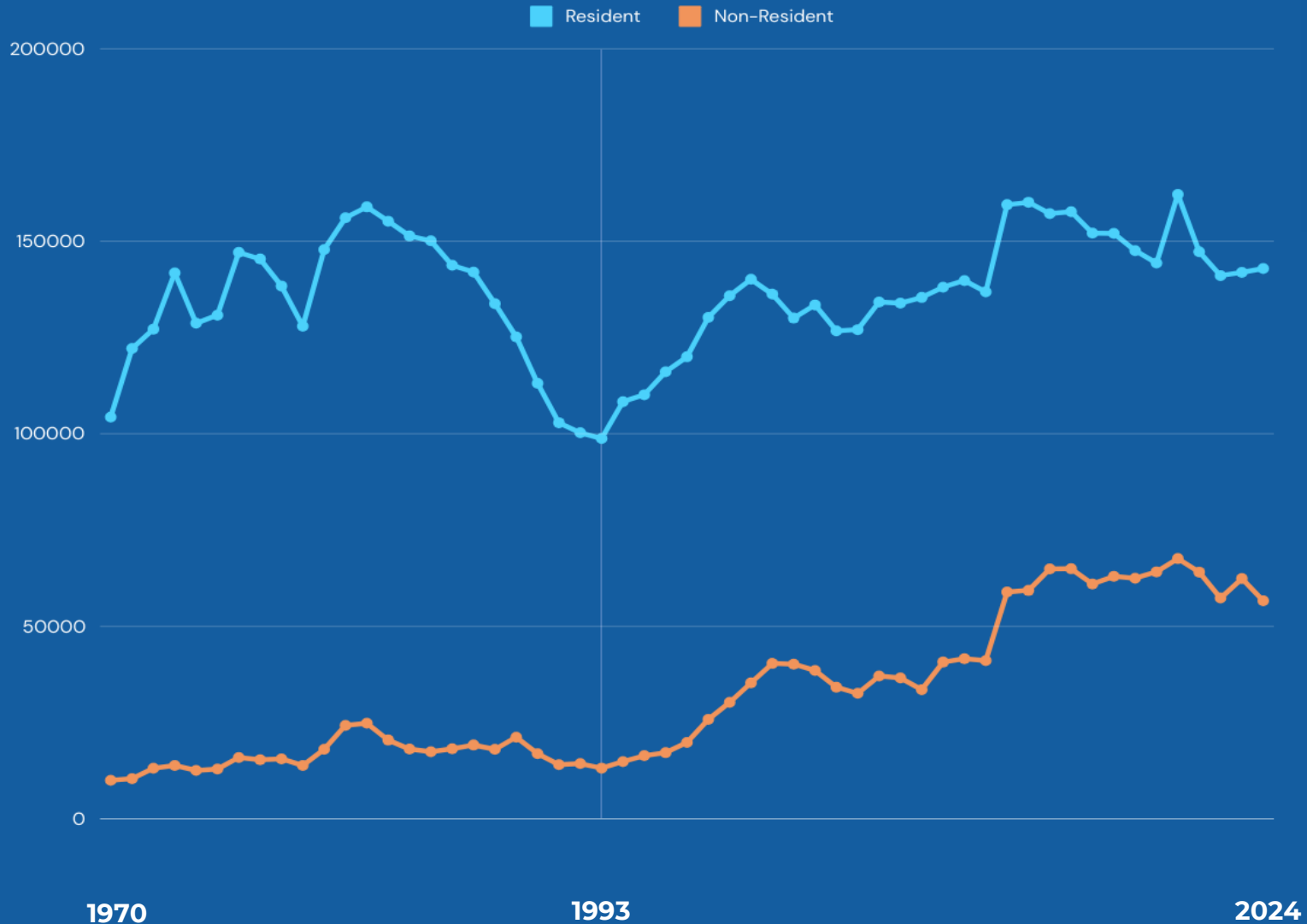
49,567

2024 statistics do not reflect the complete license season.

Annual renewal date: 4/1/2025

The General Game License is a fundamental requirement for most hunting activities in the state.

FISHING LICENSE SALES



2024 Fishing Licenses

Resident:

142,931

Non-Resident:

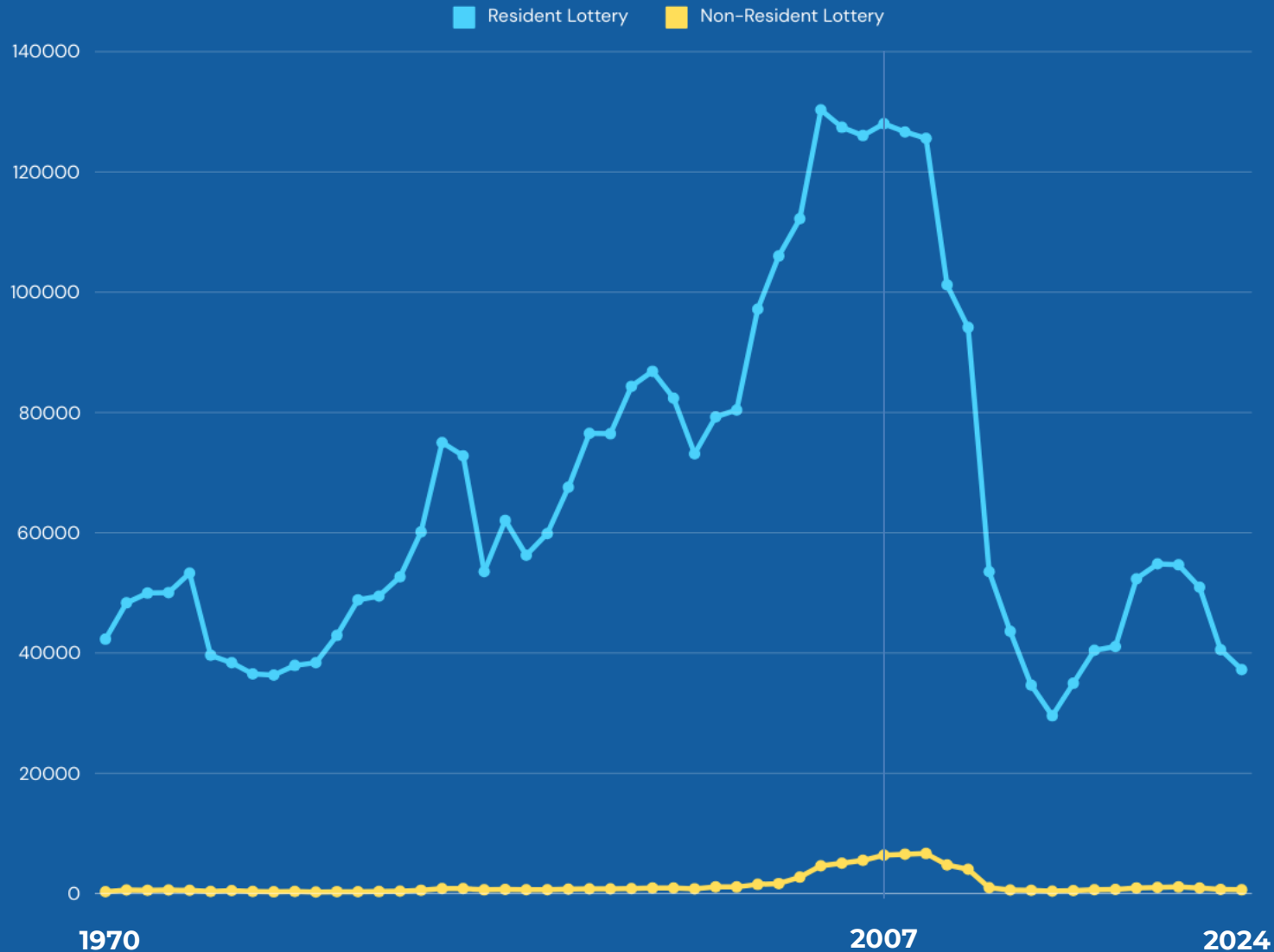
56,631

2024 statistics do not reflect the complete license season.

Annual renewal date: 4/1/2025



DEER GUN LOTTERY



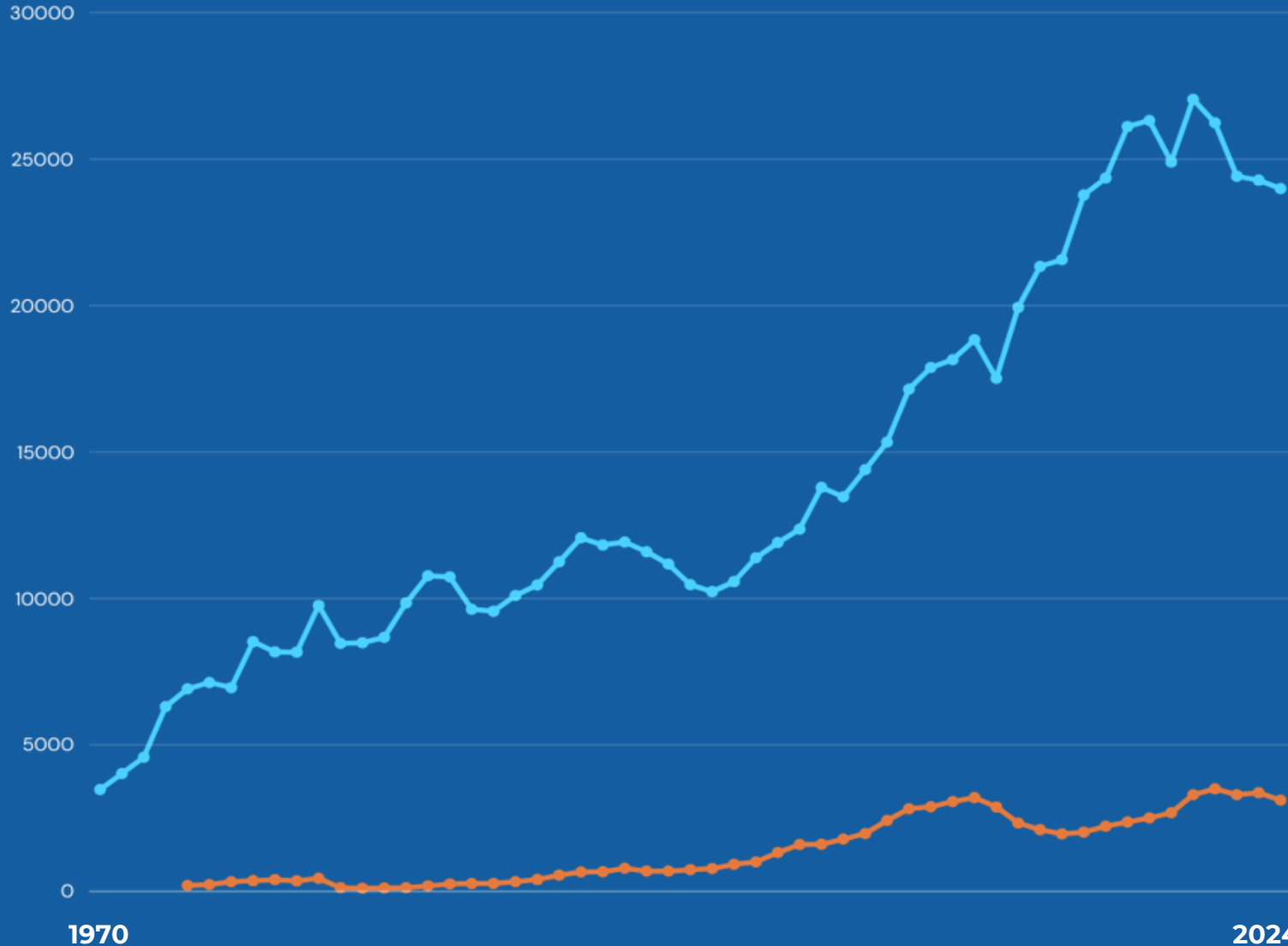
2024
Deer Gun Allocation

50,100



DEER BOW

Resident Non-Resident



2024 Deer Bow

Resident:

23,993

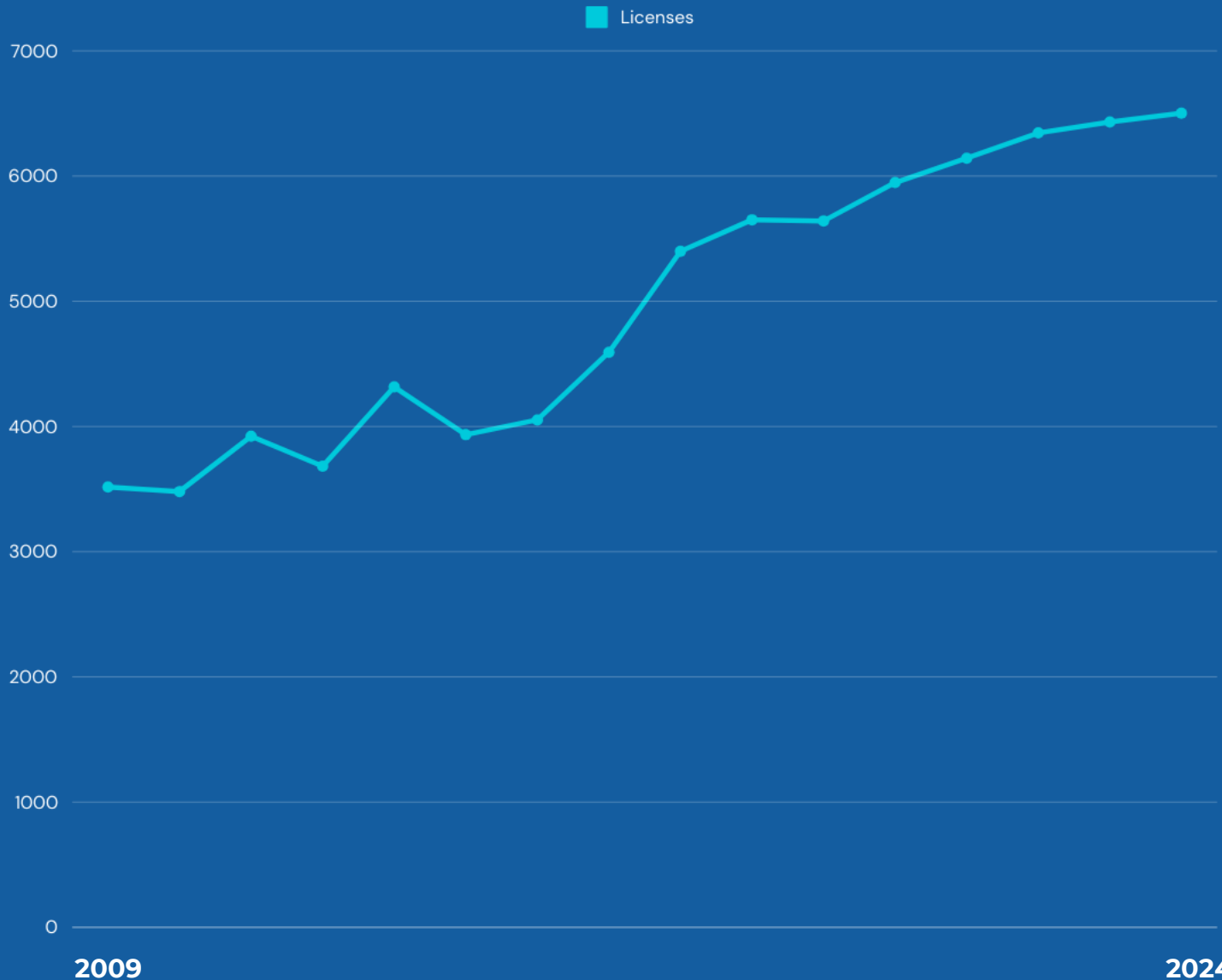
Non-Resident:

3,113

All licenses - resident and non-resident- are for white-tailed deer only.

Only one statewide bow tag is allowed.

YOUTH DEER GUN



2024 Youth Deer Gun

Licenses Issued:

6,503

← **ALL-TIME HIGH**

Additional youth archery licenses issued in 2024:

1,593





Department Fund Balance / Projections

	<u>Actual</u> 6/30/2021	<u>Actual</u> 6/30/2023	<u>Projected</u> 6/30/2025	<u>Projected</u> 6/30/2027	<u>Projected</u> 6/30/2027 <i>with Optional Requests</i>
Game and Fish Fund	\$31,634,292	\$25,627,447	\$17,871,353	\$15,266,525	\$12,919,212
Private Land Habitat Fund	\$2,430,357	\$5,801,360	\$5,281,811	\$5,061,317	\$4,161,317
Non-Game Wildlife Fund	\$131,907	\$145,821	\$113,821	\$81,821	\$81,821
Aquatic Nuisance Species Fund	\$348,328	\$826,733	\$786,766	\$1,273,217	\$1,273,217
Total	\$34,544,884	\$32,401,361	\$24,053,751	\$21,682,880	\$18,435,567

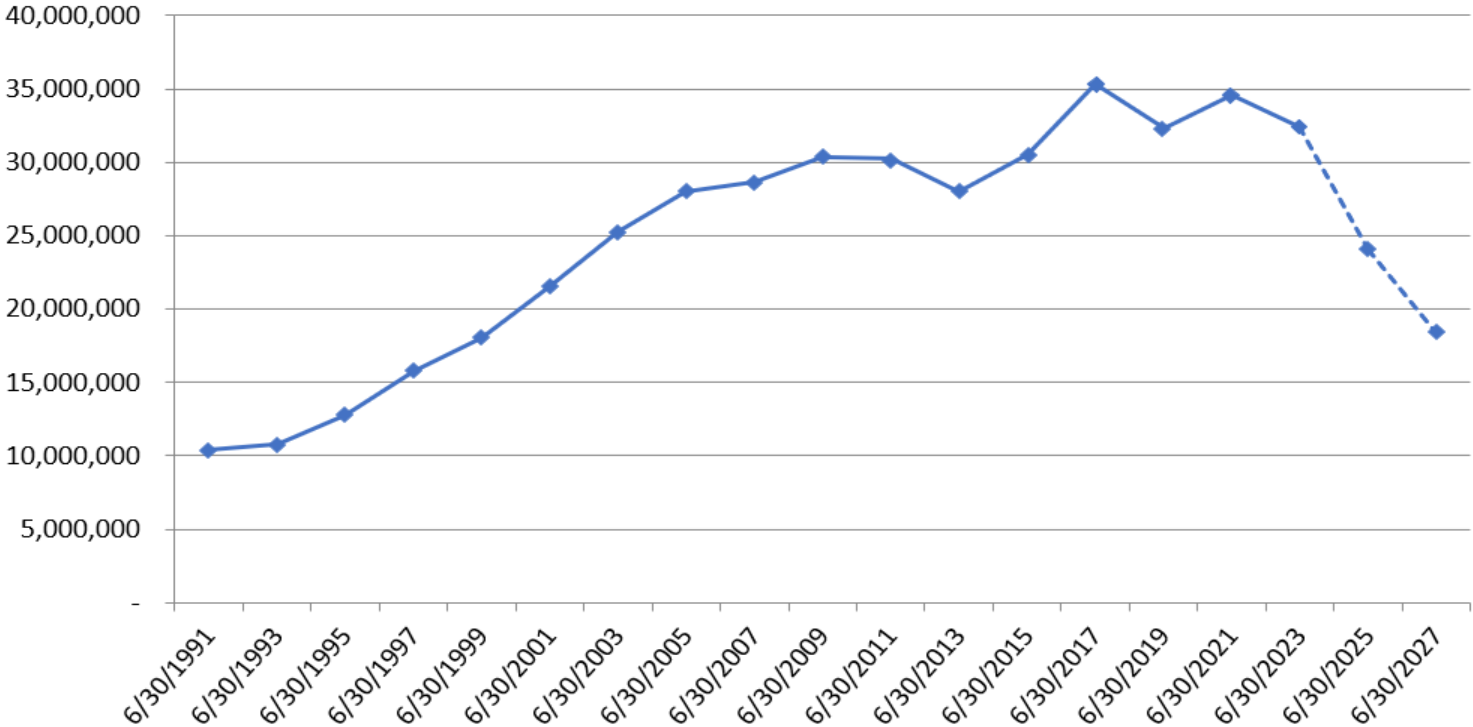
2027 Projection
\$12,919,212

**Budget Section
Approval:**

<\$15,000,000

* Projections represent spend all

Per NDCC 20.1-02-16.1, the fund balance shall not be reduced below \$15M unless authorized by the budget section.





Base and Total Recommended Budget By Line

2025-27 Total Recommended Budget

\$115,602,907

* No additional FTE's



	Code	2025-27 Legislative Base Budget	2025-27 Total Budget Recommended	25-27 Increase (Decrease)
Salaries & Wages	72010	37,008,098	41,671,773	4,663,675
Operating Expenses	72030	17,788,258	19,804,296	2,016,038
Capital Assets	72050	5,400,661	6,963,140	1,562,479
Grants	72060	10,089,976	7,087,979	(3,001,997)
Shooting Sports Grant Program	72062	250,000	250,000	0
Habitat & Deer Depredation	72070	27,183,516	32,340,825	5,157,309
Noxious Weed Control	72071	725,000	725,000	0
Missouri River Enforcement	72073	313,869	330,741	16,872
Grant-Gift-Donation	72074	677,970	709,031	31,061
Nongame Wildlife	72075	100,000	100,000	0
Aquatic Nuisance Species	72076	2,533,452	2,942,047	408,595
Lonetree Reservoir	72077	2,156,714	2,178,075	21,361
Wildlife Services	72078	500,000	500,000	0
Total		104,727,514	115,602,907	10,875,393
FTEs		170	170	0



2023-25 Legislative Appropriation

2023-25 Legislative Appropriation	\$134,761,466
Employer retirement contribution	\$381,164
Target market equity pool	\$158,974
Remove RAWA	(\$27,150,000)
Remove New Emp Expenses	(\$294,090)
Remove ANS Lab	(\$850,000)
Remove Devils Lake Bunkhouse	(\$350,000)
Remove Enforcement Body Cameras	(\$550,000)
Remove Fisheries Dam Repairs	(\$380,000)
Remove Pondliners	(\$1,000,000)



\$104,727,514





2025-27 Legislative Base Budget

2023-25 Legislative Appropriation	\$134,761,466
2025-27 Legislative Base Budget	\$104,727,514
Restore New/Vacant FTE Pool	\$3,420,755
IT Rate Adjustment	\$199,189
3% Budget Reduction	(\$1,671,211)

\$106,676,247





2025-27 Budget Reduction

2025-27 Base Budget after Reduction		\$106,676,247
Budget Changes		
Admin Operating		(\$300,000)
Admin Cap. Assets		\$267,241
Admin Grants		(\$50,000)
Fisheries Operating		(\$101,422)
Fisheries Cap. Assets		(\$149,000)
Fisheries Grants		\$43,304
ANS		\$11,571
Enforcement Operating		\$25,406
Enforcement Grants		(\$10,000)
C&C Operating		(\$50,000)
C&C Cap Assets		\$15,000
C&C Grants		(\$1,450,000)
Wildlife Operating		\$3,000
Wildlife Grants		(\$1,448,693)
PLI		(\$524)

2025-27 Base Budget after Reduction

\$106,676,247

* to meet fed/special limits

(\$3,587,304)

**2025-27 DEPARTMENT
BASE BUDGET REQUEST**

\$103,088,943

2025-27 Department Base
Budget Request

\$103,088,943





2025-27 Total Recommended Budget

2025-27 Department Base Budget Request	\$103,088,943
Compensation Package	\$2,591,540
Optional Budget Changes	\$9,922,424
2025-27 Total Recommended Budget	\$115,602,907





Decision Package Summary

	Total Request	Federal	Special
1) Adjustment to Base - Operating/Capital Improvement	\$1,479,393	\$745,805	\$733,588
2) Adjustment to Base - Motorpool	\$687,331	\$321,000	\$366,231
3) Additional emphasis - Wildlife Habitat and Access on private lands (line 70)	\$5,000,000	\$4,100,000	\$900,000
4) Fisheries - Pondliners & Pump	\$1,800,000	\$1,350,000	\$450,000
5) Adjustment to Base - Temporary Salaries	\$265,500	\$77,756	\$187,744
6) IT Increases	\$380,000	\$0	\$380,000
7) Baukol-Noonan Dam Repair	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000
8) Equipment Requests (above base)	\$160,200	\$80,450	\$79,750
TOTAL	\$9,922,424	\$6,675,111	\$3,247,313
G&F Special Fund 222			\$2,347,313
G&F Special Fund 488			\$900,000
Federal PR		\$4,987,467	
Federal DJ		\$1,631,267	
Federal Coast Guard		\$56,377	

TOTAL
\$9,922,424

Federal:
\$6,675,111

Special:
\$3,247,313





1. Adjustments to Base-Operating/Capital Improvements: \$1,479,393 (~50% federal)

- **\$34,000 for State fire and tornado insurance:**
15% annual premium increase; building values are underinsured and need to be adjusted.
- **\$114,420, 7.5% increase in lieu of taxes** (75% federal funding).
- **\$139,782 Fisheries operating base: 6% increase:**
Increased field costs (boat ramps, parking lots, gravel projects) and expenses for new and maintained fishing waters due to inflation.
- **\$25,691 Enforcement operating base 2% increase:**
Increased fieldwork and operational costs due to inflation.
- **\$585,500 Wildlife Operating:**
\$150k for WMA operating costs; \$75k for CWD testing; \$125k for division-wide costs; \$125k for WMA road, fence, and infrastructure; \$110,500 for northern pintail study.
- **\$125,000 Wildlife Capital Improvements:**
Wildlife Management Areas roads, fence, and infrastructure.
- **\$15,000 Conservation and Communication:**
Additional funds for camera video equipment replacement per the division's cycle.
- **\$640,000 increase in Data Processing and Telecommunications costs:**
\$200,000 OMB IT rate adjustment leaves a \$440,000 gap for essential systems like online services, licensing, mapping, phone services, and data storage.



2. Adjustment to Base-Motorpool: \$687,331 (47% federal)

- Motor pool costs based on Department of Transportation Fleet Services Budget Guideline rates.
- Motor pool costs are integral to the Department's efficient daily operations, enabling us to provide essential services to our customers and manage fish and wildlife resources. These resources support activities such as enforcement, wildlife management, land management, private lands programs, fish production, fisheries development, disease surveillance, nongame/ species of conservation priority research.

	TOTAL	Fed	Spec
Administrative Services	\$44,995	\$0	\$44,995
Fisheries	\$207,012	\$140,768	\$66,244
Enforcement	\$143,048	\$14,305	\$128,743
Conservation & Communications	\$89,109	\$25,842	\$63,267
Wildlife	\$203,167	\$140,185	\$62,982
	\$687,331	\$321,100	\$366,231





3. Additional emphasis on Wildlife Habitat & Access on Private Lands (Line 70):

\$5,000,000 (\$4,100,000 fed PR funds & \$900,000 special funds) [one-time funding]

This request builds on last biennium's focus on habitat restoration on private lands, which was a crucial first step in modernizing the Private Lands Initiative. However, habitat conditions in North Dakota continue to decline. Additional appropriation authority will enable the Department to pursue more grants and funding to expand habitat quickly and efficiently, with many grants covering 75% federal funds or requiring minimal state match. Having authority in advance allows the Department to plan and act swiftly on new opportunities.

Over the past decade, North Dakota has lost over 2.5 million acres of grasslands. Habitat loss has significantly impacted wildlife, with some areas seeing up to an 85% decrease in deer harvest. With over 90% of land in private ownership, the Department must focus on developing critical wildlife habitat on private lands.

- \$2,000,000 additional appropriation authority to increase PLOTS acres and habitat development, aiming to enroll 120,000-160,000 acres and improve 6,000 acres annually (75% Federal: \$1,500,000).
- \$2,000,000 for expanding the Rangeland Legacy Program (30-year agreements, 90% Federal).
- \$1,000,000 for expanding the Habitat Development Program (80% Federal).





4. Fisheries – Pond liners: \$1,800,000 (75% federal) [one-time funding]

- There is a continued need to invest money at the Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery by continuing the pond lining program which eliminates water loss issues with the current ponds as well as increases fish production capacity. Depending on the liner cost, the request should line approximately four 1.5-acre ponds (the cost includes engineering fees).
- There are 40 ponds in the Department owned east rearing unit with 15 of the 40 lined to date.
- There are 75 HP pumps that are used to fill the east unit ponds at Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery. Getting all 40 ponds filled in a timely manner is crucial as we only have fry so long. Since these original pumps are from 1988, they are nearing their life expectancy (and then some) and thus need to be replaced.





5. Adjustments to Base-Temporary Salaries: \$265,500 (29% federal)

Fisheries and Wildlife Divisions:

- Due to workforce challenges, market value, and a dramatic rise in the inflation rate, an increase is needed for our seasonal staff.

Enforcement Division:

- The addition to the baseline is for hiring four seasonal employees, for 3 months each (mid-May to mid-August) for a total of 24 months. These temporary positions would spend approximately half of their time working boating safety which would qualify for U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety funds (50% reimbursement). The positions would provide opportunities for students to learn about employment as a District Game Warden and serve as a recruitment tool for the enforcement division to fill open positions.





6. IT Increases: \$380,000 (100% special funds) [one-time funding]

\$30,000 Video Asset Management System:

- This includes a disaster recovery solution for the Department's Video Asset Management System. These systems house the Department's video assets for webcasts, footage for news, and digital media resources.

\$250,000 Customer Relationship Mgmt. System (CRM):

- We are seeking a CRM solution to manage, track, and support the delivery of conservation, restoration, and habitat programs for landowners. This system will facilitate coordination and communication among state, federal, and private organizations involved in these programs.

\$100,000 NDGF Mobile App:

- The Department expects continued growth with mobile device usage over personal computers for Department services. With the deployment of the Department's mobile app in 2023, the Department is looking to further the functionality and provide enhancements to the function of the NDGF mobile app.





7. Baukol-Noonan Dam Repair: \$150,000 (100% special funds) [one-time funding]

- This work is to repair the failed riser pipe that has rusted through and reinforce the principal spillway to correct its rusting steel pipe.
- The method is to use cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) lining. This is one of several methods used to repair existing pipelines that don't require that you dig up the pipes. CIPP is a jointless, seamless, pipe-within-a-pipe with the capability to repair pipes ranging in diameter from 4–110 inches.





8. Equipment Requests above Base: \$160,200 (50% federal funds) [one-time funding]

Wildlife Division:

- \$70,000 request is for the continued replacement of tractors used on Wildlife Management Areas. These tractors are essential for planting food plots, mowing, seeding, cultivating, operating pumps, and other wildlife management tasks. The Department follows a replacement schedule to maximize trade-in value and minimize maintenance costs.
- \$12,000 request is for an ATV to support Bighorn Sheep surveys in the remote badlands of western North Dakota.

Enforcement Division:

- \$13,200 request is for two Statewide Interoperability Radio Network (SIRN) compatible radios to be installed in law enforcement boats that currently lack them. These radios will ensure effective communication with State Radio and emergency agencies during patrols, search and rescue, and emergency responses.
- \$65,000 request is for a 20-foot fiberglass boat, motor, and trailer to replace a 2014 18-foot boat in the Riverdale/Garrison district. The new boat will be safer and more suitable for rough water conditions, supporting law enforcement and emergency responses. Boats are replaced every ten years to maintain safety and reliability.
- Both requests qualify for 50% US Coast Guard reimbursement, reducing the Department's cost to \$39,100.

Other Sections Included in the Executive Bill Draft for HB1017

SECTION 4. LINE ITEM TRANSFER AUTHORITY. Notwithstanding section 54-16-04, the director of the office of management and budget shall transfer up to \$2,000,000 of appropriation authority between the operating expenses, capital assets, and grants – game and fish line items in section 1 of this Act as requested by the game and fish department during the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2025. The game and fish department shall notify the legislative council of any transfer made pursuant to this section.

The Department currently has this language in its 23-25 appropriation bill, that has a sunset of 6/30/2025.

- Continuing this limited transfer authority allows the department to respond flexibly to changing needs, improving efficiency. With diverse expenditures (construction, maintenance, boat ramps, research, etc.), it's challenging to project budgets three years in advance.
- Maintenance costs depend on the repair type, which may be covered by either the Operating or Capital Asset line.
 - Boat ramp projects on Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), costs come from the Capital Asset line. Other ramps are funded through the Grants line.
 - O&M costs may also be split between the Operating line (e.g., service contracts for fish cleaning stations) and the Grants line (e.g., for O&M on non-WMA land).
- Unplanned events, like ramp damage or access road washouts, can further complicate budgeting, especially when only certain funds are available.





DEPARTMENT BUDGET BY DIVISION

The Department included in its 25-27 budget request the following funds appropriated for grant expenditures to other state agencies:

- \$122,000 to ND Parks & Recreation Department. This is the same amount included as revenue in the Parks and Recreation Department. It is for operation and maintenance of the public boating and fishing facilities located in state parks. The amount is the same as 2023-25. (100% federal funds; Parks & Rec provides the match)
- \$167,720 to Board of Animal Health, Ag Dept. (100% G&F funds)
- \$500,000 to Wildlife Services, Ag Dept. This is the same amount as 2023-25. (100% G&F funds)

DIVISIONAL BUDGETS

The 23-25 Department FTE count is 170. No additional FTE's have been requested.

Following are brief details on the budgets for the Department's five divisions:

- Administrative Services
- Fisheries
- Enforcement
- Conservation and Communications
- Wildlife





1. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION (26 FTE's)

Operating Line Base: \$6,921,500

Includes utility, IT, telecommunications, janitorial, office supplies, insurance, printing, postage, aircraft costs, credit card transaction fees, legal services, Game and Fish Advisory Board, buildings, grounds, vehicle maintenance, etc.

Budget Change:

- \$34,000 increase for State Fire & Tornado Insurance (see slide 26)
- \$440,000 IT Monthly rate increase (see slide 26)
- \$44,995 Adjustments to Base-Motorpool (see slide 27)
- \$100,000 IT Increases (see slide 31)

Total Operating (2025-27): \$7,540,495

Capital Assets Line Base: \$2,275,600

Includes \$750,000 for extraordinary repairs to Department-owned facilities statewide (100% G&F funds). \$1,525,600 for In Lieu of Tax payments for all Department lands WMA's (75% federal funds)

Budget Change:

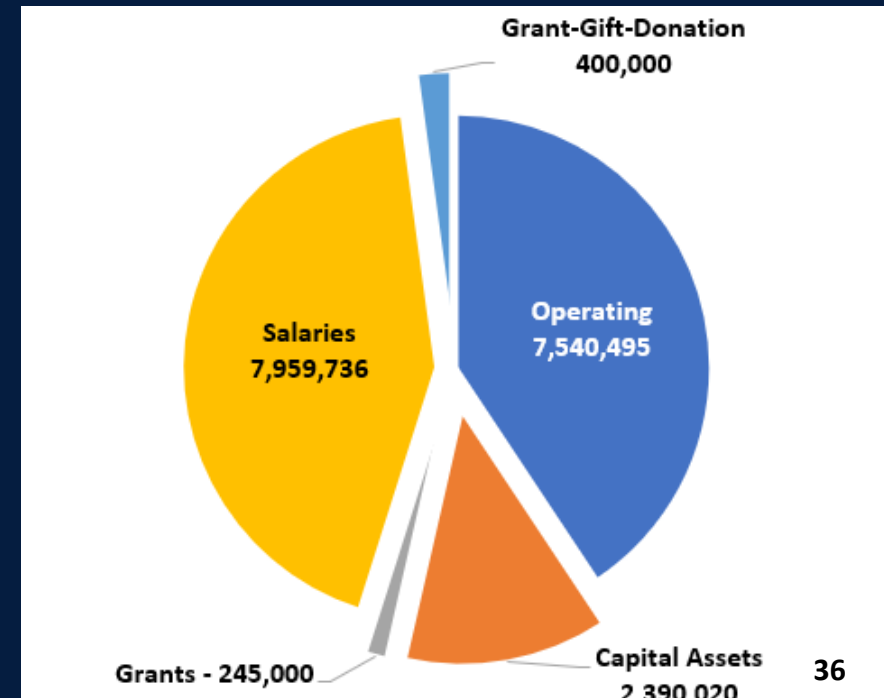
- \$114,420 In Lieu of Tax payments increase (see slide 26)

Total Capital Assets (2025-27): \$2,390,020



ABOUT:

This division budget includes business operations, fiscal, grant management, data science/ information technology, licensing, facilities management, and administrative services for the Department. Most of this division is funded with Game and Fish funds.





1. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION (26 FTE's)

Grants Line Base: \$245,000

Total Grants (2025-27): \$245,000

Includes funds for cooperative grants to local groups and organizations for game and fish-related projects, funding for Tribal access agreements, ND Natural Resources Trust, Director's grants, and sponsorship grants (e.g., ND Landowners Sportsman Council, ND Stockmen's Assoc., etc.). (100% G&F funds)

Grant-Gift-Donation (Special Line) Base: \$694,963

Includes (Admin \$400,000; Wildlife \$294,963) and is used as follows: (100% G&F funds)

- Grants and gifts received for special projects are used as desired by the donor.
- Revenue from surface damage, easements, and reclamation due to mineral exploration on Department owned and managed lands.
- The Department manages federal and state-owned lands along Lake Sakakawea, the Missouri River, and Killdeer Mountain WMA, with significant oil activity. Funds are required to be used for road repairs, fencing, habitat development, and other necessary work in these areas.
- Royalty payments from the Department's 160-acre mineral lease in Killdeer Mountain WMA support a full-time biologist to support these responsibilities.

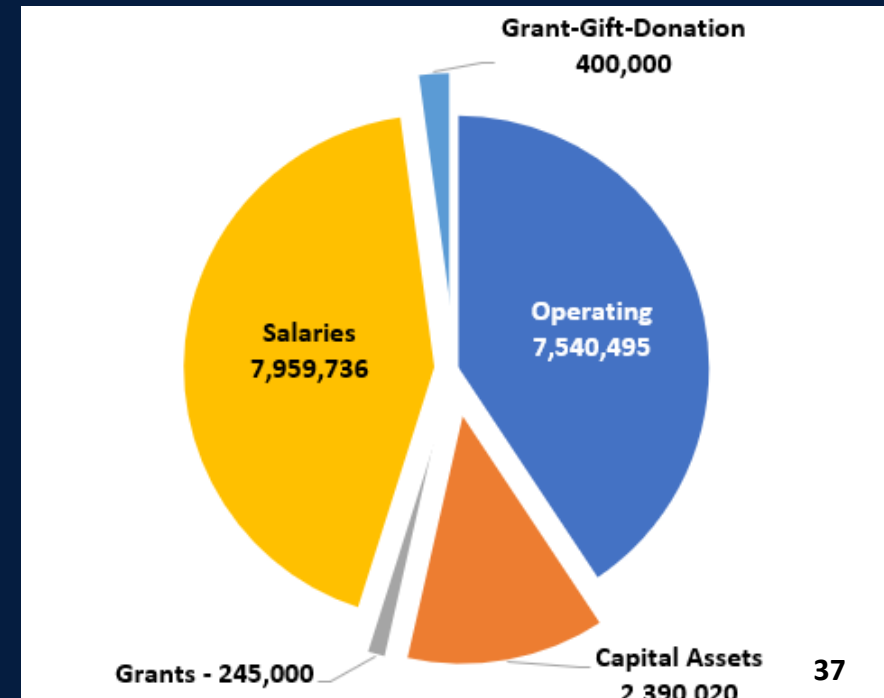
*** Executive Recommended budget for this line includes compensation package amount of \$14,068 for the Wildlife Division.

Total Grant-Gift-Donation (Special Line) (2025-27): \$709,031



ABOUT:

This division budget includes business operations, fiscal, grant management, data science/ information technology, licensing, facilities management, and administrative services for the Department. Most of this division is funded with Game and Fish funds.





2. FISHERIES DIVISION (27 FTE's)

Operating Line Base: \$2,798,000

Budget Change:

- \$139,782 6% increase in Operating due to inflation (see slide 26)
- \$150,000 Baukol-Noonan Dam Repair (see slide 32)
- \$207,012 Adjustments to Base-Motorpool (see slide 27)

Total Operating (2025-27): \$3,294,794

Capital Assets Line Base: \$685,000

Includes \$499,000 in capital repairs which includes dam repairs, fishing and boating facility development work, and repairs such as toilets, fish cleaning stations, boat ramps, etc., on lands owned by the Department (WMAs) or areas we cooperatively manage. High and low water conditions at Devils Lake, Lake Sakakawea, and the Missouri River can provide challenges for the boating access program. (75% is federal funds)

\$186,000 for equipment – boat motor replacements, work boat/motor/trailer, and a development trailer. (75% is federal funds)

Budget Change:

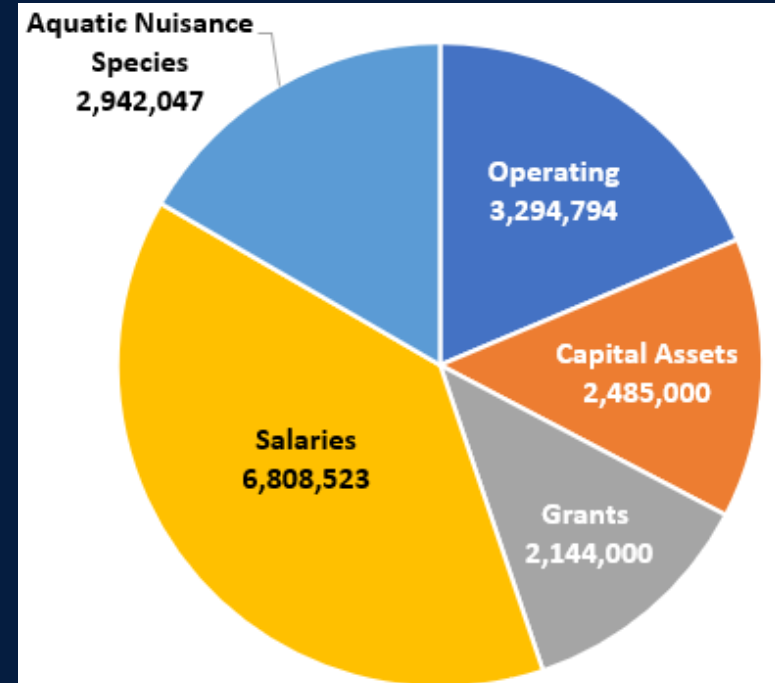
- \$1,800,000 for GDNFH pond liners (see slide 29)

Total Capital Assets (2025-27): \$2,485,000



ABOUT:

This division budget includes fish production and distribution, fish management (research and surveys), fishery development (ramps, docks, piers, facilities, and maintenance), and the Aquatic Nuisance Species program.





2. FISHERIES DIVISION (27 FTE's)

Grants Line Base: \$2,144,000

\$500,000 for boating access and development. These grants are used for cost-sharing with local governments on fishing and boating facilities. The Department receives 75% federal funding for this work. In some cases, the 25% match comes from local partners such as park boards.

\$580,000 in grants is to pay the Department's share of costs for the Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery. (75% federal funds)

\$50,000 base amount in grants used for Aquatic Nuisance Species. (100% G&F funds)

\$89,000 base for fish management

\$122,000 to ND Parks and Recreation Department for boating access-related costs on state parks. (100% federal funds)

\$298,000 for fisheries development non-boating access.

\$140,000 for Valley City State University River/Stream Survey work

\$140,000 for Rock Lake Carp barrier

\$225,000 for ND Fisheries evaluation and allocation

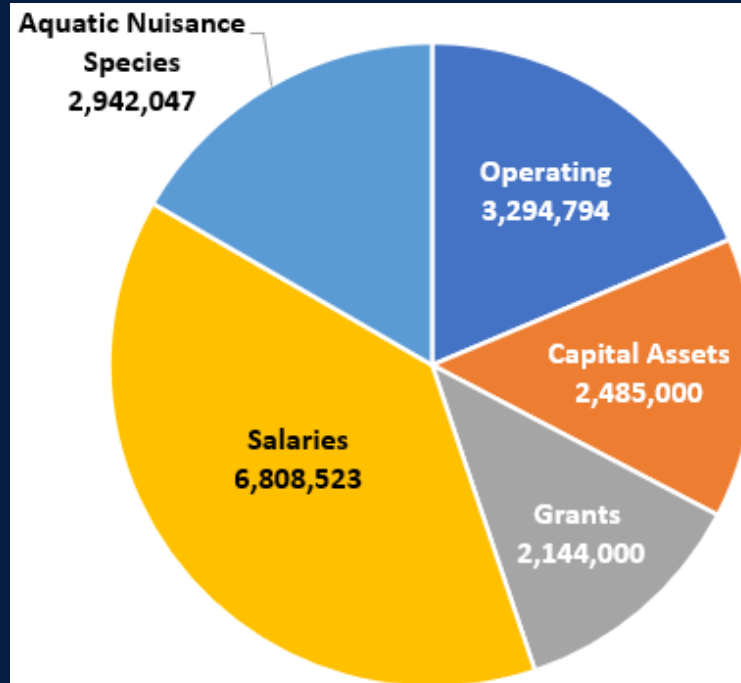
No Budget Change:

Total Grants (2025-27): \$2,144,000



ABOUT:

This division budget includes fish production and distribution, fish management (research and surveys), fishery development (ramps, docks, piers, facilities, and maintenance), and the Aquatic Nuisance Species program.





2. FISHERIES DIVISION (27 FTE's)

Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) – (Special Line) Base

The Department has 3 ANS fisheries biologists, seasonal staff, and funding for operating expenses, grants, and capital projects. These resources support ANS watercraft inspections, enforcement, monitoring, and education programs, funded through fishing and waterfowl license surcharges and motorboat fees.

Salaries and expenses for wardens conducting inspections at boat ramps, cleaning stations, and check stations are also covered. Wardens allocate time for ANS work, with hours totaling 1 FTE.

WRDA funding, added for 2023-25, provides a 50% federal reimbursement for watercraft inspection and decontamination efforts in the Missouri River Basin. The Department is eligible for \$1,134,006 in 2025-27, subject to congressional approval.

WRDA funds will expand the seasonal inspection crew, extend employment into fall, enhance the ANS education campaign, and support the installation of prevention devices like wash stations and I-LIDS to limit ANS spread.

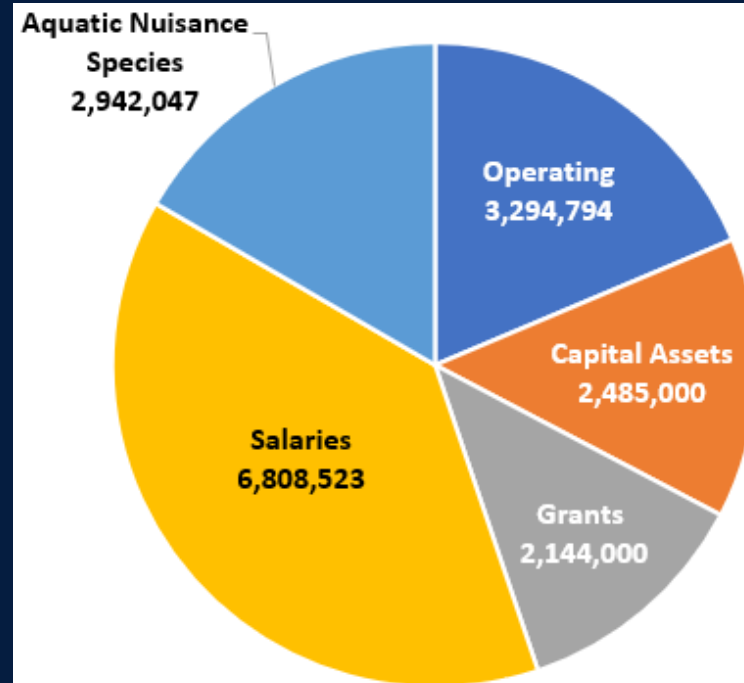
The Legislative base appropriation is \$2,884,000. (WRDA \$1,134,006 50/50)

Executive recommended budget for this line includes compensation package amount of \$58,047.

**Total ANS (Special Line)
(2025-27): \$2,942,047**

ABOUT:

This division budget includes fish production and distribution, fish management (research and surveys), fishery development (ramps, docks, piers, facilities, and maintenance), and the Aquatic Nuisance Species program.





3. ENFORCEMENT DIVISION (40 FTE's)

Operating Line Base: \$2,683,984

Budget Change:

- \$143,048 Adjustments to Base-Motorpool (see slide 27)
- \$25,691 2% increase to Operating due to inflation (see slide 26)

Total Operating (2025-27): \$2,852,723

Capital Assets Line Base: \$190,000

*Includes replacement of equipment. UTV (2), 500cc ATV (6), enclosed trailer (3).
Fiberglass boat/motor/trailer (1)*

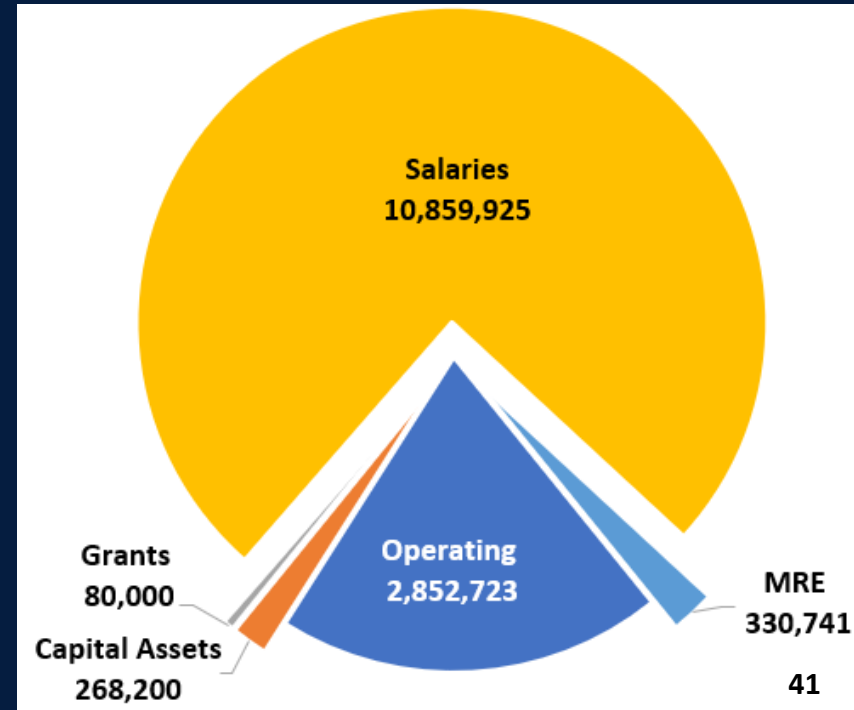
Budget Change:

- \$78,200 – 20' fiberglass boat/motor/trailer and Motorola boat radios. (see slide 33)

Total Capital Assets (2025-27): \$268,200

i ABOUT:

This division budget includes patrol, compliance, investigations, public safety, and Missouri River Enforcement. This division is largely operational expenditures with state fleet and travel costs. Game wardens typically average 2-million state fleet miles per biennium.





3. ENFORCEMENT DIVISION (40 FTE's)

Grants Line Base: \$80,000

Includes Boating Safety Grants to county law enforcement to assist in the promotion and enforcement of boat and water safety on their local recreational waters. (50% federal funds)

Total Grants (2025-27): \$80,000

Missouri River Enforcement (Special Line) Base: \$324,425

Includes salaries, operating, and equipment related to enforcement activities on and along the Missouri River in the Burleigh and Morton County area. Grants are also given to local law enforcement agencies to help with the Missouri River enforcement. This line is funded 50% from federal boat safety funds.

Budget Change:

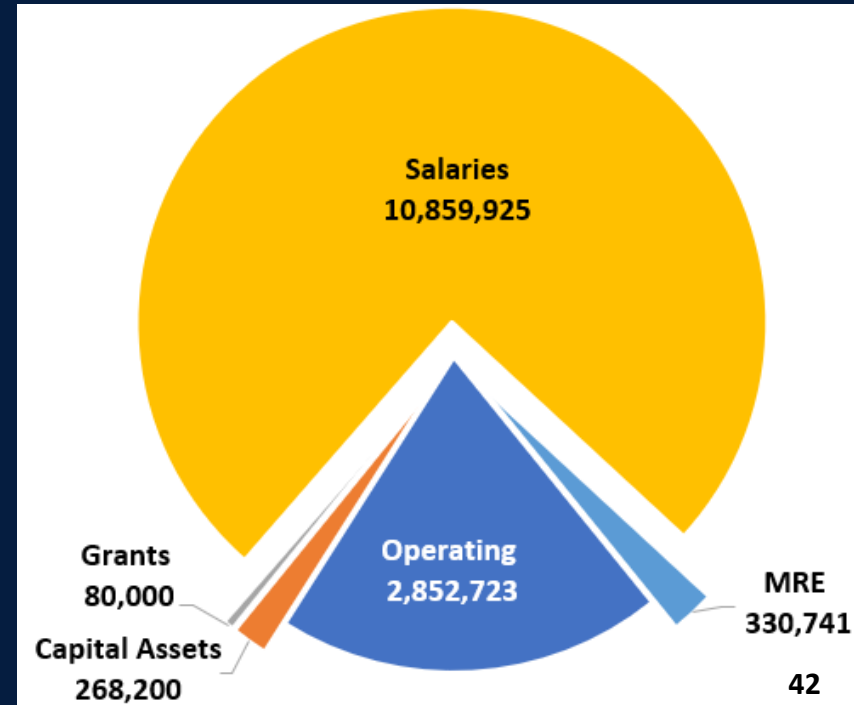
- Executive recommended budget for this line includes compensation package amount of \$6,316.

Total MRE (Special Line) (2025-27): \$330,741



ABOUT:

This division budget includes patrol, compliance, investigations, public safety, and Missouri River Enforcement. This division is largely operational expenditures with state fleet and travel costs. Game wardens typically average 2-million state fleet miles per biennium.





4. CONSERVATION AND COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION (23 FTE's)

Operating Line Base: \$1,941,350

Budget Change:

- \$89,109 Adjustment to base-Motorpool (see slide 27)
- \$30,000 Video Asset Management System (see slide 31)
- \$250,000 CRM (see slide 31)

Total Operating (2025-27): \$2,310,459

Capital Assets Line Base: \$15,000

*Includes \$15,000 in extraordinary repairs for the Department's Conservation and Outdoor Skills Park area located on the State Fairgrounds.
(100% G&F funds)*

Budget Change:

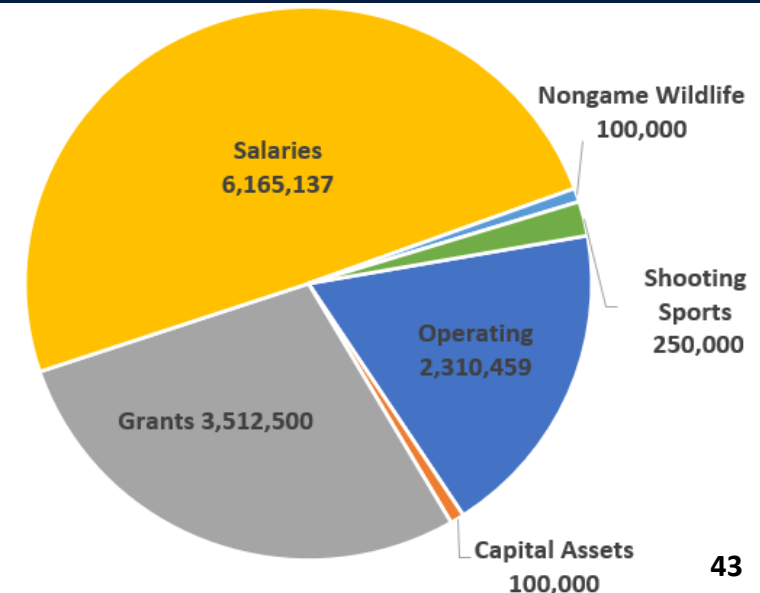
- \$15,000 Camera/Video Equipment updates (see slide 26)

Total Capital Assets (2025-27): \$30,000



ABOUT:

This division budget includes conservation, (nongame, species of concern, NEPA); communications (ND Outdoors, publications, digital/social media, marketing, podcast); education and outreach (hunter/aquatic/fur harvester/ boating education, National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). This largest use of this divisions budget is related to grants.





4. CONSERVATION AND COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION (23 FTE's)

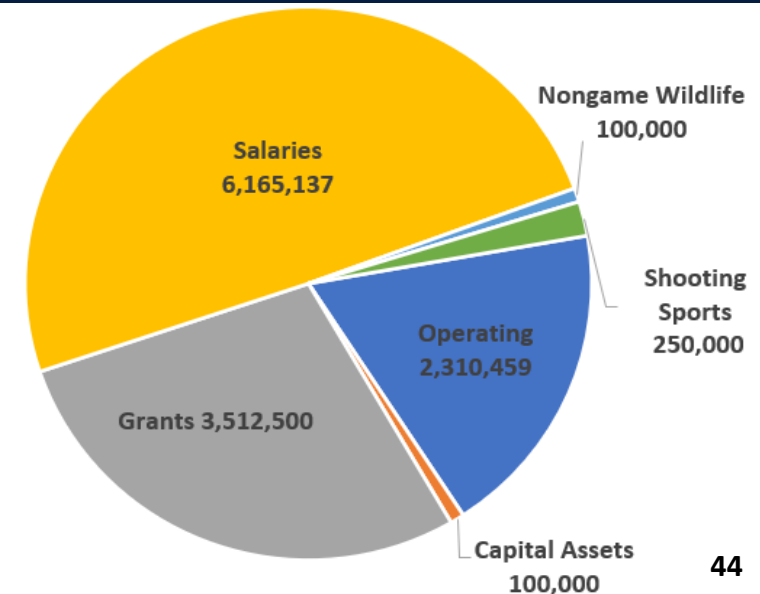
Grants Line Base: \$3,512,500

- \$1.89M for shooting range grants statewide: \$1.24M for statewide shooting range grants, and \$650k for Richland County range. New ranges require 10% match, and existing ranges 25% match.
- \$284K for youth programs: National Archery in the Schools Program, Hooked on Fishing, Encouraging Tomorrow's Hunter, Trout in the Schools, Trapper Education, etc. (32K Federal – Hooked on Fishing)
- \$836,332 for State Wildlife Grants Program: Federally funded, supports nongame species. Matching funds are primarily from the grant recipients.
- \$122,168 for administration/coordination grants.
- \$80K for Innovative R3: Supports strategies to increase participation in hunting, fishing, and related activities, including outreach, events, and partnerships (75% federal funds).
- \$300K for Pollinator Plots Program: Establishes native wildflower and pollinator habitats in urban/public areas. (100% Game & Fish funds).



ABOUT:

This division budget includes conservation, (nongame, species of concern, NEPA); communications (ND Outdoors, publications, digital/social media, marketing, podcast); education and outreach (hunter/aquatic/fur harvester/ boating education, National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). This largest use of this divisions budget is related to grants.



Total Grants (2025-27): \$3,512,500





4. CONSERVATION AND COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION (23 FTE's)

Shooting Sports (Special Line) Base: \$250,000

Includes grants made available to schools, clubs, and organized groups in the state which are used to promote and facilitate increased shooting sports participation in the state. The clubs pay the 25% match for most of these grants. (75% federal funds)

Total Shooting Sports (Special Line) Base (2025-27): \$250,000

Nongame Wildlife (Special Line) Base: \$100,000

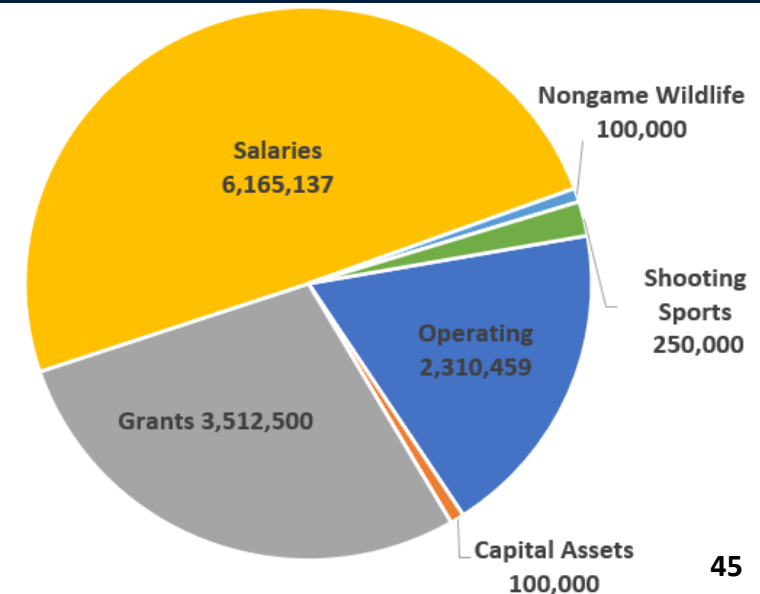
Includes \$100,000 is budgeted for this special line which is supported by the income tax check-off. (100% G&F funds)

Total Nongame Wildlife (Special Line) Base (2025-27): \$100,000



ABOUT:

This division budget includes conservation, (nongame, species of concern, NEPA); communications (ND Outdoors, publications, digital/social media, marketing, podcast); education and outreach (hunter/aquatic/fur harvester/ boating education, National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). This largest use of this divisions budget is related to grants.





5. WILDLIFE DIVISION (54 FTE's)

Operating Line Base: \$3,017,158

Budget Change:

- \$203,167 Adjustment to base-Motorpool (see slide 27)
- \$585,500 Adjustment to base-Operating costs (see slide 26)

Total Operating (2025-27): \$3,805,825

Capital Assets Line Base: \$1,582,920

Includes \$420,920 for extraordinary repairs (e.g. fences, roads, water control structures) and similar work on department wildlife management areas (WMA) statewide. (75% federal funds)

\$362,000 for equipment replacement – tractor (1), skid steer (1), equipment trailers (3), UTV/ATV's (6), grass drill (1). (75% federal funds)

\$800,000 is included for land acquisitions of small tracts near wildlife management areas, possibly in-holding or round-outs that may come up during the biennium. This amount is the same as the 2023-25 biennium. (100% G&F funds)

Budget Change:

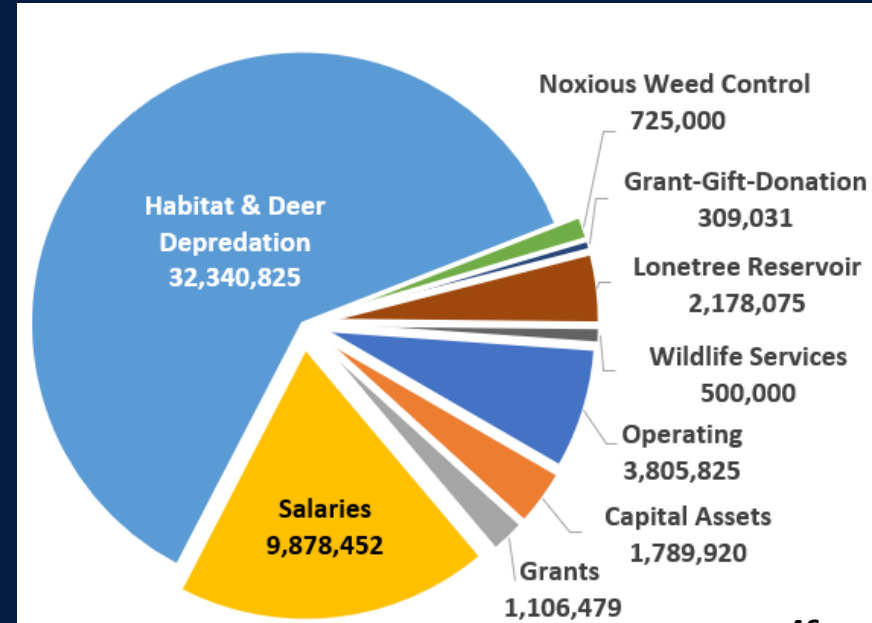
- \$125,000 increase for operating costs on roads, fence, grazing infrastructure development on new and existing WMAs (see slide 26)
- \$82,000 for additional equipment above base (see slide 33)

Total Capital Assets (2025-27): \$1,789,920



ABOUT:

This division budget includes game management (wildlife surveys/research), resource management (owned and managed lands), Private Lands Initiative, deer depredation, noxious weed control. The largest use of this divisions budget is related the Habitat & Deer Depredation Special Line.





5. WILDLIFE DIVISION (54 FTE's)

Grants Line Base: \$1,106,479

\$938,759 for grants and cooperative projects with wildlife groups, universities, and organizations, including work on chronic wasting disease (CWD), wetland conservation, Central Flyway studies, and research on species like elk, pronghorn, sage grouse, deer, moose, and mountain lions (48% federal PR funds).

\$167,720 to reimburse the State Veterinarian for oversight of farmed wildlife and wildlife propagation permit administration, reflecting a potential increase from the previous biennium's \$148,228 (100% G&F funds). *Executive recommended budget for this line includes compensation package amount of \$19,495.*

****Need confirmation with NDDA.*

Noxious Weed Control (Special Line) Base: \$725,000

Includes work on department lands. This line is the same amount as 23-25. (75% federal funds)

Lonetree Reservoir (Special Line) Base: \$2,107,818

Lonetree WMA spans over 32,000 acres managed for wildlife by the Department under the Dakota Waters Resources Act. The budget covers 5 staff, operations, equipment, maintenance, and development, funded by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (100% by federal funds). Executive recommended budget for this line includes compensation package amount of \$70,257

Wildlife Services (Special Line) Base: \$500,000

Supports ND Dept. of Agriculture -Wildlife Service's Program for animal damage control work. (100% G&F funds) This is the same amount as the 2023-25 biennium

**Total Grant Line (2025-27):
\$1,106,479**

**Total Noxious Weed Control
(Special Line) (2025-27): \$725,000**

**Total Lonetree Reservoir
(Special Line) (2025-27): \$2,178,075**

**Total Wildlife Services
(Special Line) (2025-27): \$500,000**



5. WILDLIFE DIVISION (54 FTE's)

Private Land Habitat and Deer Depredation (Special Line): \$27,171,645

The PLOTS Program has a base budget of approximately \$23.4 million, with \$19.4 million for landowner payments and \$4 million for administrative costs. The goal is to reach 1 million acres of public hunting access on private land by 2028. An additional \$2 million is requested for increased payments and habitat development. In 2024, PLOTS included approximately 836,000 acres.

The Rangeland Legacy Program received \$2.7 million in 2023, with plans to secure additional funding, requiring \$2 million in extra appropriation authority. Habitat enhancement projects use \$1.7 million, and an additional \$1 million is requested for expanded cost sharing.

A \$1.1 million budget for depredation management, mandated by SB2227 in 2010, supports wildlife feeding and winter management on lands impacted by big game depredation. Unspent funds (up to \$2 million) may be carried forward for future use.

Budget Change:

- Additional emphasis on Wildlife Habitat & Access on Private Lands (PLI Line 70) \$5,000,000 (see slide 28)
- Executive recommended budget for this line includes compensation package amount of \$169,180

**Total Private Land Habitat & Deer Depredation Line (2025-27):
\$32,340,825**

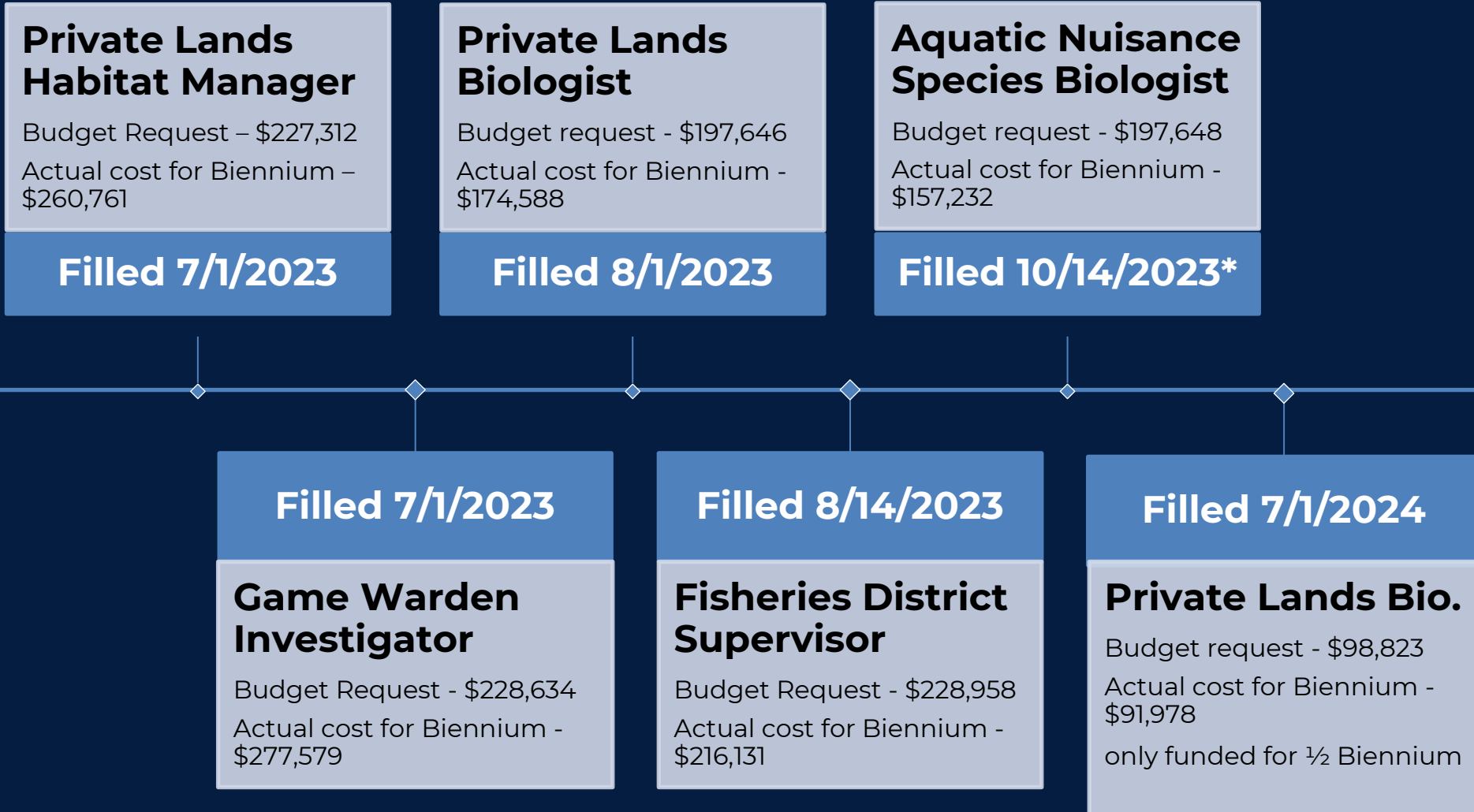
ABOUT:

This line is funded with interest earned on game and fish funds, habitat stamp sales, cash from the regular game and fish fund, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services Pittman Robertson (PR) federal funds.

Overview: This line is commonly called the Private Land Initiative (PLI) line. This line is not just for our Private Land Open to Sportsmen (PLOTS) program in which private landowners enter into agreements for walk-in hunting access, but also includes funds for wildlife habitat management practices, food plots, grass plantings, tree and shrub plantings and other habitat enhancement grants and projects. This line also includes big game depredation and administrative costs.

2023-25 New FTE Summary

6 New FTE Positions – 5 filled within 1.5 months of start; * 1 filled by Mid-October (delayed funding from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)



i ABOUT:

Total Budget request for new FTE's:
\$ 1,179,021

Total actual cost and request from New FTE Pool:
\$1,178,269

Total (90%) in the New FTE Pool:
\$1,061,118

2023-25 Vacant FTE Pool Summary

3 vacant positions as of 7/1/2023 – all filled by 10/1/2023

2 of the 3 vacant positions were vacant because of employees promoted to new positions

Vacant positions this biennium-to-date (includes the 3 above)

- Retirements as of 1/1/2025 – 7 (more than average)
- Vacated positions – 8 (more than average)
- Promotions/Position changes – 6

Estimated Vacancy Savings to date - \$523,174

- Accrued Leave Payouts - \$123,852
- Extra Salary increases - \$43,038
- Reclassifications - \$19,387
- Extra temporary funding - \$13,042
- Extra overtime funding - \$22,080

Overall Vacancy savings to date - **\$301,774**



ABOUT:

- **Removed from Budget in 23-25**
\$2,241,734
- **Total (70%) to the Vacant FTE Pool:**
\$1,569,213



2023-25 FTE Pool Summary

Total requests from pool to date – \$ 1,759,378

No vacancies in special lines - will request March 2025 to make special lines whole - \$ 135,294

Request the remaining amount left in the pool to add to salaries and wages line 10 – \$ 735,661

Pool amount	\$ 2,630,332.70
Draw for new FTE's	\$ 1,178,269.00
	\$ 1,452,063.70
Draw for vacant FTE's	\$ 581,109.00
	\$ 870,954.70
Request March 2025 - special lines whole	\$ 135,294.00
	\$ 735,660.70
Estimated Final request to make payroll end of biennium*	\$ 735,660.70
Total left in pool	\$ 0.00



ABOUT:

- Removed from Budget in 23-25 \$2,241,734
- Total (70%) to the Vacant FTE Pool: \$1,569,213

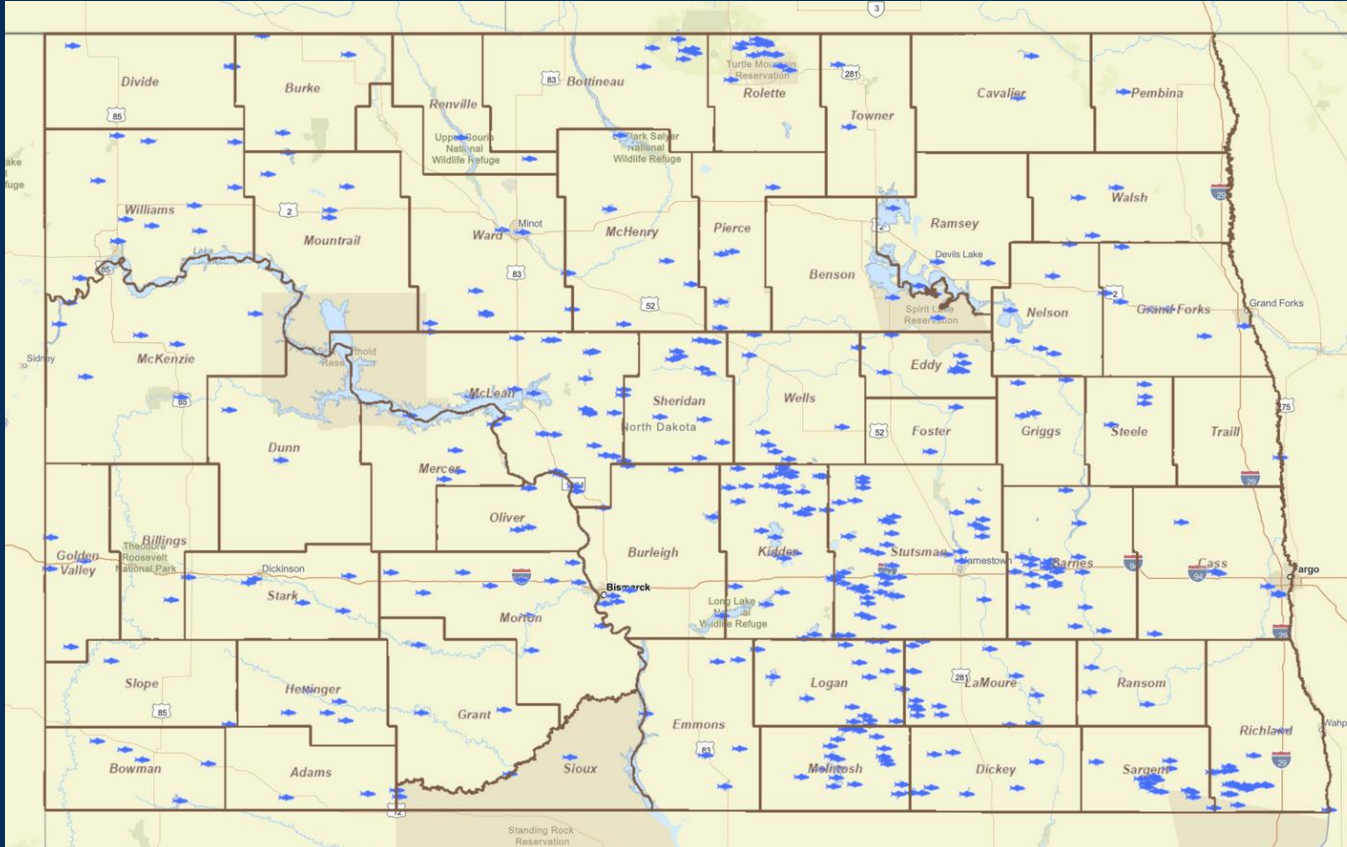


68TH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

HIGHLIGHTS



FISHING WATER BODIES



439 WATERS
851,462 ACRES

North Dakota
70,704 sq. miles

Land - 68,900 sq. miles
Water - 1,804 sq. miles

FISHABLE WATER
1,330 SQ. MILES

2024



14 + MILLION
FISH STOCKED

← **2nd HIGHEST ON RECORD**



37 **COMMUNITY**
FISHING PONDS

FISHING TOURNAMENTS

2024 Open Water Fishing Tourney Summary



84
Total Permitted
Contests

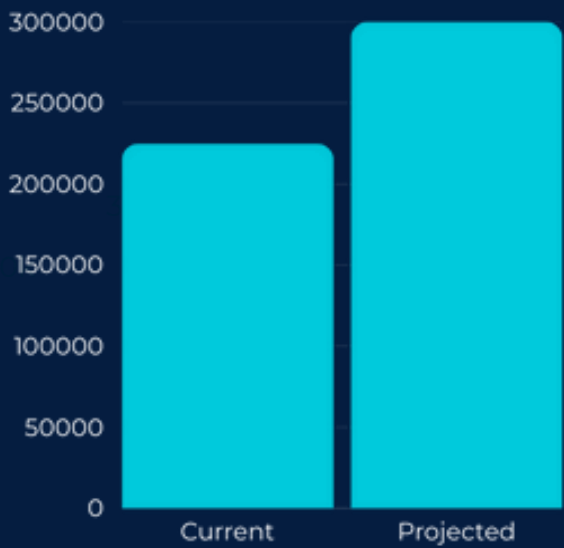
7,719
Participants
(total not unique)

≈ \$25k
Conservation
Fees

≈ \$2.2M
Entry Fees

↳ **41 Non-Profit Tournaments**
no conservation fee required

Nonresident Conservation Fees

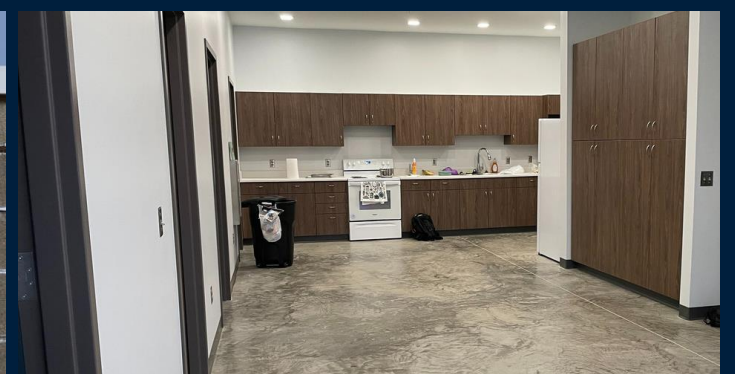


monies →

-  Fishing Piers
-  Fish Cleaning Stations

JAMESTOWN

- Bunkhouse
- ANS Office space
- Laboratory space
- Storage



DEVILS LAKE

- Bunkhouse
- Building Repairs
- Water Drainage

ELK DEPREDATION LICENSES

Cow Elk Tag



59

Licenses
Purchased

\$30 License

39

Additional
Eligible

Did not purchase

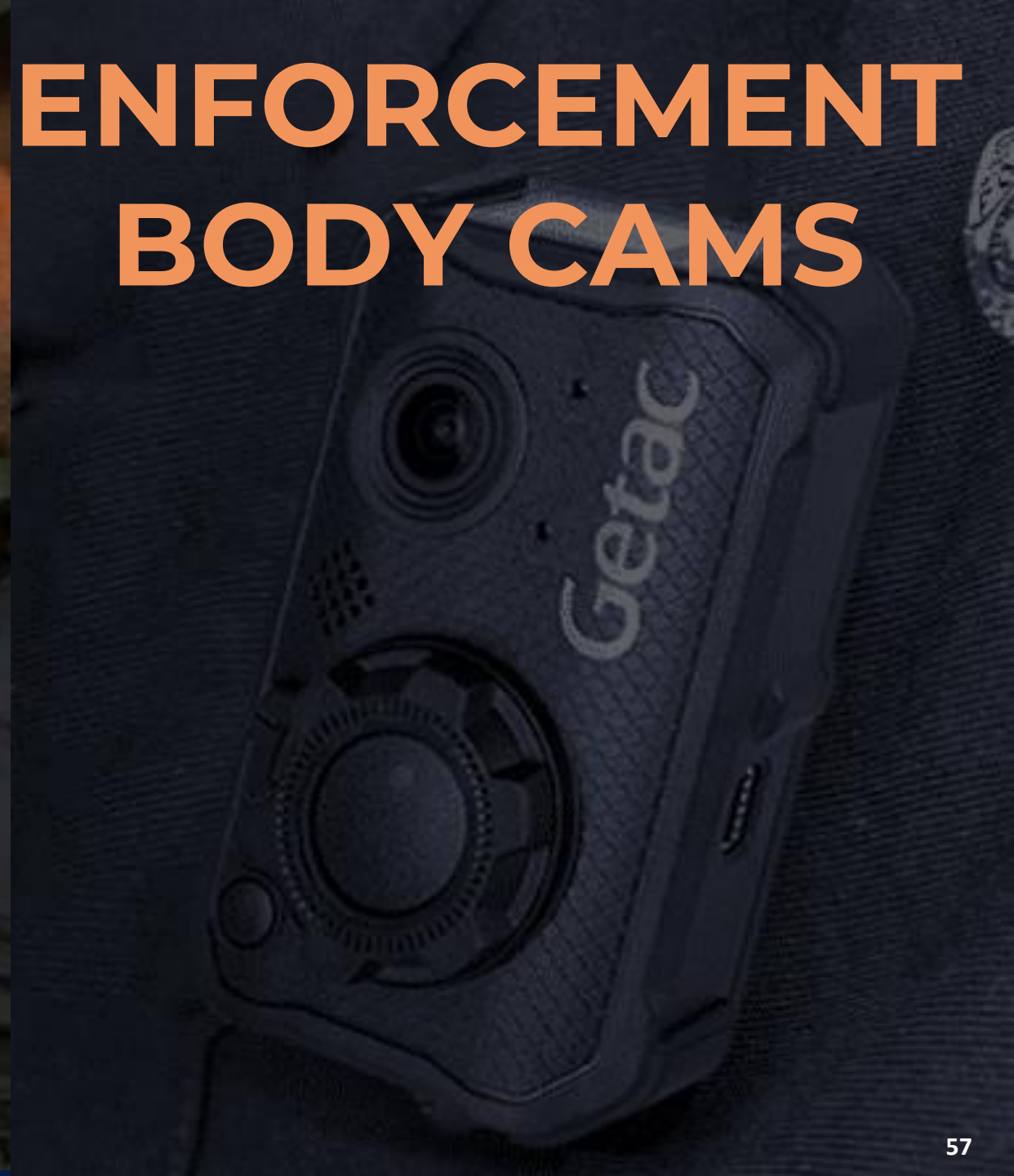
Landowners provided access to 5
different hunters.



Access for once-in-a-lifetime elk
license holders.

Total: 181 elk hunters

ENFORCEMENT BODY CAMS



ACCESS ACRES PROVIDED by:



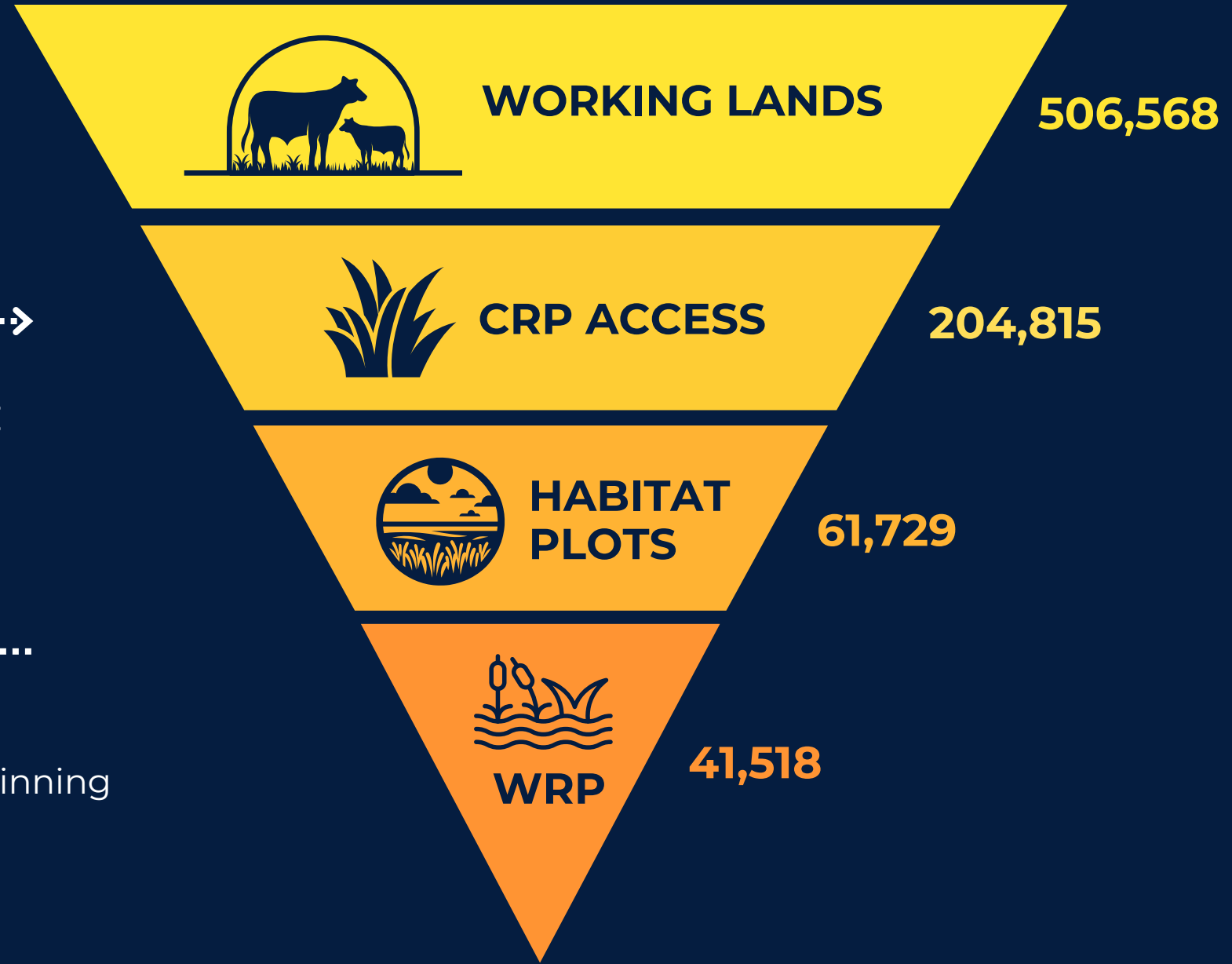
Current acres enrolled:



836,000



Other programs include:
Coverlocks, CREP II, Private Forest, Beginning Farmer and Food Plots



NDGF OFFICIAL APP



Launched Feb 2023

IT'S IN THE APP

- view licenses
- buy and apply
- notifications
- sunrise / sunset times
- current weather
- regulations
- maps
- harvest reporting
- and more!



Install

58,549
DOWNLOADS



QUESTIONS?

