

ARTICLE 30-01 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Chapter
30-01-01 Organization of Department

CHAPTER 30-01-01 ORGANIZATION OF DEPARTMENT

Section
30-01-01-01 Organization and Functions of the Game and Fish Department

30-01-01-01. Organization and functions of the game and fish department.

1. Organization of department.

- a. History. The first game and fish laws were established in Dakota Territory in 1861 but it was not until 1893 when the superintendent of irrigation and forestry was designated as game commissioner that a game and fish department was formed. In 1909 the game and fish board of control was established. The board continued to function as the agency controlling fish and game until 1929 when legislation was passed providing for a single commissioner charged with certain duties and powers to administer a game and fish department. The title commissioner was changed to director in 1991.
- b. Divisions. The department consists of the following five divisions:
 - (1) Administrative services.
 - (2) Enforcement.
 - (3) Fisheries.
 - (4) Conservation and communications.
 - (5) Wildlife.
- c. Director. The director is appointed by the governor. The director holds office for four years beginning on the first day of July after the governor's election and until a successor is appointed and qualified.

The director shall appoint a deputy director who may be removed at the director's pleasure. The director may also appoint a chief game warden, district game wardens, biologists, and technicians to enforce the game laws and to perform duties specified by the director.

The director is charged with fourteen statutory duties and has twenty-seven specific powers relating to the department and the resources it must manage. In addition to these specific duties and powers spelled out in North Dakota Century Code sections 20.1-02-04 and 20.1-02-05, the director has additional authority and power given by various sections of North Dakota Century Code title 20.1.

- d. Game and fish advisory board. There is an eight-member game and fish advisory board, each appointed for a four-year term by the governor. The board has the authority to advise the director regarding any policy of hunting, fishing, and trapping regulations, and may make general recommendations regarding the operation of the department and its programs which the director may carry out.

- e. Orders and proclamations of the governor. After investigation and recommendations by the director, the governor may open seasons for hunting, fishing, and trapping. The governor may determine in what manner, the numbers, the places, and at what times game, fish, or fur-bearers may be taken.

2. Functions of department divisions.

- a. Administrative services division. The division of administration is divided into four programs - accounting and basic operations, data processing, licensing, and planning.
 - (1) Accounting and basic operations. The program is responsible for accounting and general office and facility management.
 - (2) Data processing. Coordination and technical support is provided for department personal computers and state mainframe computer activities.
 - (3) Licensing. All fishing, hunting, and boating licensing is handled as part of this program.
 - (4) Planning. The planning program is responsible for establishing goals, objectives, and strategies for the department. It is a cooperative effort with the other divisions and is coordinated by a game and fish planner.
- b. Enforcement division. The law enforcement program enforces game and fish laws and rules and regulations necessary for proper management of fish and game resources. Enforcement officers called district game wardens have districts averaging approximately two thousand six hundred square miles [673396.92 hectares]. In addition to their enforcement activities, they must carry out education programs, and assist other divisions during busy periods of the year. One of their major nonenforcement activities concerns alleviation of wildlife depredations on farmers' crops and feed supplies.
- c. Fisheries division. The fisheries division is divided into three programs - fish management, sport fisheries research, and lake/stream management.
 - (1) Fish production. Fish are provided for North Dakota waters through fish hatcheries and by trapping and moving fish from one area to another.
 - (2) Sport fish research. The program is responsible for all research and survey work connected with sport fishing. It gathers information about the status of lakes and fish populations and carries out management practices on lakes.
 - (3) Lake/stream management. The lake management program provides public use facilities, lake improvement systems, watershed development, lake and pond construction, and other developments on public fishing waters.
- d. Conservation and communications division. This division has three major sections:
 - (1) Conservation section. Many state and federal agencies have programs that affect fish and wildlife habitat. The efforts of this section are directed toward compensation, alleviation of losses, or possibly enhancement of fish and wildlife by working with these agencies. Staff in this division also operate the department's nongame and endangered species programs.
 - (2) Communications section. The section is divided into four programs - public information resource specialists, department webmaster, North Dakota Outdoors magazine, and videography - production of department videos.

- (3) Outreach section. This section includes hunter education, project wild, aquatic education, becoming an outdoor woman, boating education, and public information outreach staff located statewide.
- e. Wildlife division. The wildlife division is divided into three programs - lands and development, game management, private land habitat programs.
 - (1) Lands and development. The lands and development program is responsible for all habitat development, and management and maintenance on wildlife management areas. The program involves tree plantings, herbaceous cover and food plantings, road construction, weed control, signing, water developments, and any other activity that might enhance these areas for wildlife, the hunter, and the outdoors person who enjoys hiking, photography, and nature study.
 - (2) Game management. Staff carry out population surveys that are used to determine annual hunting seasons on various species of game. Research is done with the objective of providing optimum hunting opportunities for the people of the state.
 - (3) Private land habitat program. A private land habitat improvement program is funded from moneys derived from the interest earned on the game and fish fund, habitat stamp sales, and game and fish operating funds. The program involves annual leasing and development of fish and wildlife habitat and hunting access on private land, entering into cost-sharing agreements with landowners to help defray a portion of their share of conservation practices which benefit fish and wildlife. The program also carries out practices which will alleviate big game and predatory animal depredation.
- 3. **Inquiries.** General inquiries regarding the game and fish department may be addressed to the:

North Dakota Game and Fish Department
100 North Bismarck Expressway
Bismarck, North Dakota 58501-5095

Specific inquiries about division functions may be addressed to the chief of the division involved.

- 4. **Personnel roster.** A roster of personnel with the department may be found in the monthly issue of North Dakota Outdoors or on the department's web page.

History: Amended effective February 1, 1982; September 1, 1983; December 1, 1985; January 1, 1992; March 1, 2002.

General Authority: NDCC 20.1-02-04(2)

Law Implemented: NDCC 20.1-02-04(2)