



HB 1017
2021-23 Appropriation Request
North Dakota Game and Fish Department

1. Cite the North Dakota Century Code chapter(s) associated with the agency and list its major statutory responsibilities.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department is largely directed under Title 20.1 and many of those responsibilities reside under 20.1-02-05, which lists the powers of the Director, e.g. Private Lands Open to Sportsmen program. The major statutory responsibilities can be summarized very easily, which is 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.

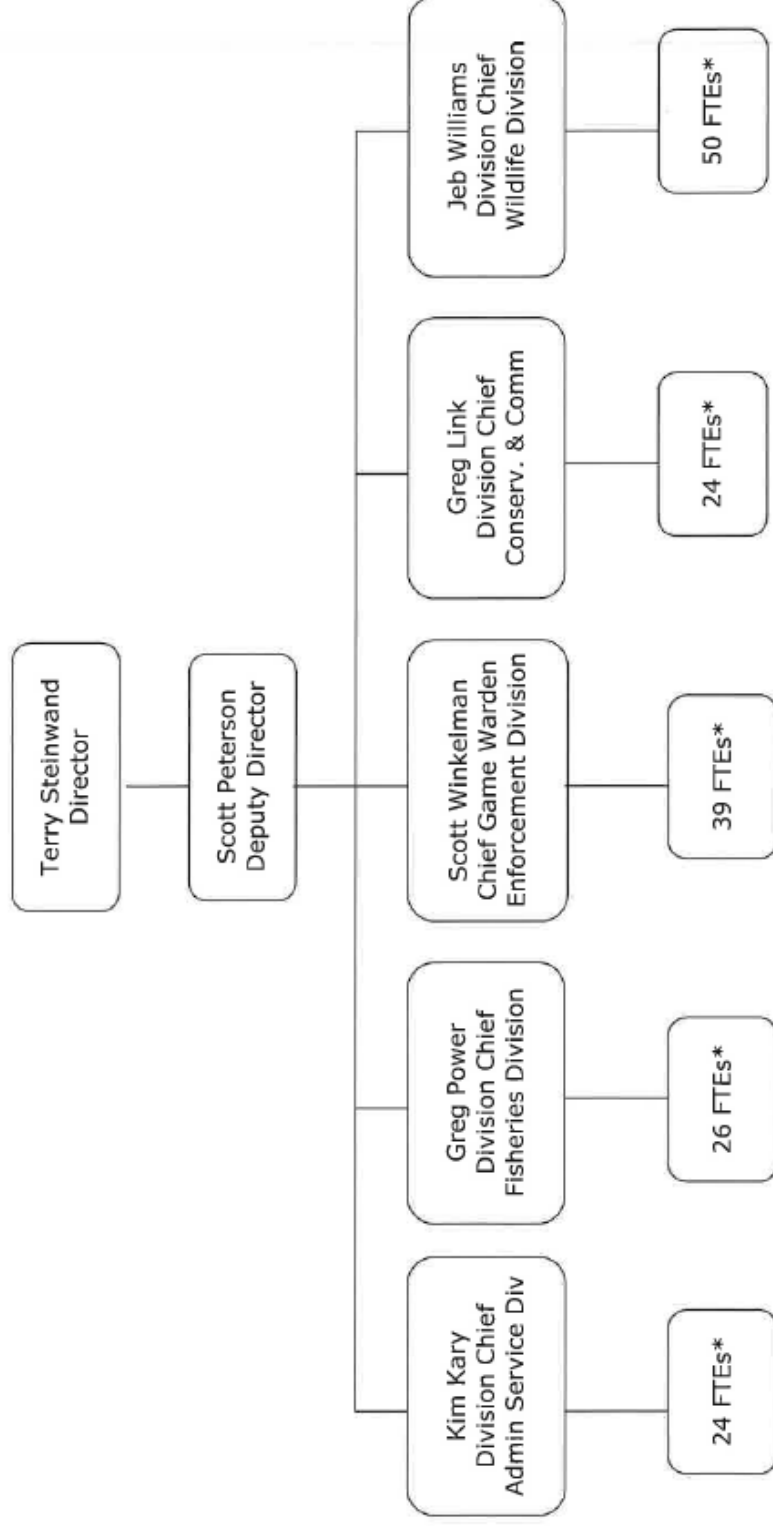


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- 2. Explain the purpose of the agency's various divisions/programs. Attach organizational chart.**

See attached.

North Dakota Game & Fish Department



07/2019 = 165 Total Full Time Equivalents

*Includes Division Chiefs

PROGRAMS

- **Fisheries**
 - Fisheries Management
 - Fisheries Production
 - Fisheries Development
 - Fisheries Habitat (Save our Lakes)
 - Aquatic Nuisance Species
- **Wildlife**
 - Wildlife Resource Management
 - Game Management
 - Private Lands Initiative (PLI)
- **Conservation and Communications**
 - Media/Public Information & Outreach
 - Environmental Review, Coordination & Technical Assistance
- **Administrative Services**
 - Licensing
- **Enforcement**
 - Law Enforcement
 - Boat and Water Safety
- **Conservation of Nongame Species and Species of Conservation Priority**
 - Education



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- 3. Report any financial audit findings included in the most recent audit of your department or institution and action taken to address each finding.**

No findings have been reported.



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4. Discuss current biennium accomplishments and challenges and next biennium goals and plans.

Accomplishments/Challenges

Aside from the necessary surveys (fish, deer, pheasants) that are required to set seasons and limits and maintenance (fencing, weed control, etc.), we continue to deliver great value to the citizens of North Dakota through the online licensing platform. As of 2019, North Dakota Game and Fish was the first state in the nation to offer online licenses, lotteries and watercraft registration.

Beginning of enhanced recruitment, retention and activation (R3) for hunting, fishing and trapping participation.

Increased acreage in the Private Land Open to Sportsmen program to over 800,000 acres.

Thanks to the 2019 Legislature, we were able to begin enhanced education and monitoring of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) across the state. Partnerships were formed with sportsmen's clubs, pet stores, and classrooms to distribute posters and brochures on ANS. Two inspection teams inspected over 2,000 watercraft, and in the process, found four watercraft that were 'fouled' with ANS. About 50 pieces of industrial equipment were inspected, 143 waterbodies were sampled, searched numerous boat docks and lifts and surveyed 14 popular waterfowl hunting areas for ANS. Sadly, one new infestation of zebra mussel was found at Lake LaMoure.

The primary challenge was accomplishing our responsibilities with covid-19 restrictions. While other surrounding states canceled their fish spawning operations, the Fisheries Division took the necessary precautionary steps to collect fish eggs to stock in the waters of North Dakota. A record number of walleye were stocked that will benefit the state for years down the road. And North Dakota was the only state in the central flyway, which reaches from North Dakota to Texas, and consists of 10 states for waterfowl purposes, to conduct the annual spring waterfowl survey which has been conducted for over 70 years.

Goals

1. A consistent goal is to enhance the fish and wildlife populations of North Dakota while keeping it balanced with other interests.
2. Increase quality and quantity of habitat for all species.
3. Contain CWD and ANS to existing areas and reduce the further spread primarily through education and monitoring with regulation as the last option.
 - A number of actions are being applied in the next biennium for ANS, some of which are using eDNA as a method to locate Asian carp 'hotspots' on the James River, evaluate eDNA as a detection tool for a variety of species, place a virtual inspection device at Lake LaMoure and Grahams Island State Park on Devils Lake, purchase a mobile decontamination unit for equipment and watercraft decontamination, place permanent wash stations at select areas across the state, etc.
4. Continue to move toward all licensing/registrations online.
5. Increase in hunter, angler, and trapping license sales and participation through increased emphasis on recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3).



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- 5. Compare the agency's request/recommendation totals, including full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, for the next biennium compared to the current biennium.**

See attached

REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION COMPARISON SUMMARY

720 Game and Fish Department

Biennium: 2021-2023

Description	Expenditures Prev Biennium 2017-2019	Legislative Base 2019-2021	2021-2023 Requested		Requested Budget 2021-2023	2021-2023 Recommended		Executive Recommendation 2021-2023
			Incr(Decr)	% Chg		Incr(Decr)	% Chg	
By Major Program								
Administrative Services	16,684,245	19,004,748	(3,501,683)	(18.4%)	15,503,065	(3,109,283)	(16.4%)	15,895,465
Fisheries	8,914,504	12,390,480	1,634,173	13.2%	14,024,653	1,791,081	14.5%	14,181,561
Enforcement	8,787,432	9,728,357	1,813,005	18.6%	11,541,362	2,076,563	21.3%	11,804,920
Communications and Conservation	8,056,743	9,749,373	1,310,518	13.4%	11,059,891	1,454,285	14.9%	11,203,658
Wildlife	30,100,320	34,430,674	2,017,055	5.9%	36,447,729	4,296,561	12.5%	38,727,235
Total Major Programs	72,543,244	85,303,632	3,273,068	3.8%	88,576,700	6,509,207	7.6%	91,812,839
By Line Item								
Salaries and Wages	28,516,967	31,497,736	1,689,733	5.4%	33,187,469	2,066,064	6.6%	33,563,800
Operating Expenses	12,114,710	15,949,169	145,078	0.9%	16,094,247	735,873	4.6%	16,685,042
Capital Assets	3,490,673	5,917,891	656,879	11.1%	6,574,770	856,879	14.5%	6,774,770
Capital Construction Carryover	743,017	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Grants-Game and Fish	6,943,743	8,547,165	376,178	4.4%	8,923,343	376,178	4.4%	8,923,343
Shooting Sports Grant Program	247,287	250,000	0	0.0%	250,000	0	0.0%	250,000
Land Habitat & Deer Depredation	16,649,786	17,660,009	300,000	1.7%	17,960,009	2,329,368	13.2%	19,989,377
Noxious Weed Control	633,703	725,000	0	0.0%	725,000	0	0.0%	725,000
Missouri River Enforcement	283,857	288,068	7,200	2.5%	295,268	9,709	3.4%	297,777
Grant-Gift-Donation	546,594	533,732	132,000	24.7%	665,732	137,377	25.7%	671,109
Nongame Wildlife Conservation	55,281	100,000	0	0.0%	100,000	0	0.0%	100,000
Aquatic Nuisance Species	57,960	1,500,000	0	0.0%	1,500,000	10,457	0.7%	1,510,457
Lonetree Reservoir	1,759,666	1,834,862	(34,000)	(1.9%)	1,800,862	(12,698)	(0.7%)	1,822,164
Wildlife Services	500,000	500,000	0	0.0%	500,000	0	0.0%	500,000
Total Line Items	72,543,244	85,303,632	3,273,068	3.8%	88,576,700	6,509,207	7.6%	91,812,839
By Funding Source								
General Fund	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Federal Funds	34,378,780	36,873,631	3,273,069	8.9%	40,146,700	4,758,427	12.9%	41,632,058
Special Funds	38,164,464	48,430,001	(1)	0.0%	48,430,000	1,750,780	3.6%	50,180,781
Total Funding Source	72,543,244	85,303,632	3,273,068	3.8%	88,576,700	6,509,207	7.6%	91,812,839
Total FTE	163.00	165.00	0.00	0.0%	165.00	(3.00)	(1.8%)	162.00



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10. Discuss the need for any other sections that are included or are requested/recommended to be included in the agency appropriation bill.

Included in the Executive Budget Recommendation for HB1017:

SECTION 4. LINE ITEM TRANSFER AUTHORITY. Notwithstanding section 54-16-04, the agency may transfer between line items, excluding salaries and wages, within section 1 of this Act up to ten percent of the total appropriation contained in section 1 during the biennium beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2023. The agency shall notify the office of management and budget and the legislative council of any transfer made pursuant to this section.

This limited transfer authority will benefit the department by allowing it to be responsive to changing circumstances and be able to operate in a more efficient and effective manner.

- We have a wide range of expenditures (e.g. construction, building maintenance, boat ramps/docks, food plots, weed spraying, contract pilots, law enforcement, research grants, surveys, shooting ranges, etc.) that can be challenging to project a budget 3 years in advance.
- When maintaining buildings/facilities, things happen and based on the type of repair and the cost, it will determine whether it should be paid from the Operating line or the Capital Asset line.
- It is hard to project new boat ramp/dock projects. We have appropriation in the Grants line but if we are doing boat ramp maintenance on our WMA, it needs to come out of the Capital Asset line. If it is not on our WMA, it can come out of the Grants line.
- There are O&M situations that depending on the circumstances will determine if the cost should be coded to Operating line or Grants line. For example, paying a club or political sub for O&M of fish cleaning stations or docks and boat ramps on our WMA or leased area is a service contract paid from the Operating line. We can give a grant (Grants line) to do the same if the O&M is on their land and not our land. In addition, wet years versus dry years can dictate the types and locations of maintenance required on boat ramps and facilities. The location (our WMA or leased area versus club land) dictates the line from which the funding comes
- It is hard to budget for unplanned situations and try to make the appropriation and accounting rules match. An unplanned situation could arise where a ramp is

compromised or access road is washed out on our WMA and we need to repair but only have budget available in the Grants line.

The Department makes a concerted effort to spend sportsman/angler money wisely. This is demonstrated by the following:

- 1) prior to the license fee increase in April 2014, fees had not been increased since 1983 for deer and 1991 for fishing;
- 2) having a healthy Special fund balance;
- 3) monitoring our revenue and keeping a handle on expenditures accordingly.
- 4) Also, per NDCC 20.1-02-17 - hunting and fishing license fees and application fees may only be used for Departmental programs and administration. No one else can use our Special funds. Noncompliance with this law will result in a diversion of Federal funds.

Having this limited transfer authority would allow the Department to be more responsive to changing circumstances as noted above and have the broader flexibility that the Legislature has already granted to a select few executive branch agencies, as well as the legislative and judicial branches of government.



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- 11. Discuss any other bills being considered by the Legislative Assembly and their potential budgetary impact on the agency.**

None thus far.



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12. Discuss the impact of any budget changes made to meet the Governor's budget guidelines.

Special fund agencies were required to reprioritize 5% of their special fund appropriation to strategically reinvest in high-impact areas.

The Department reprioritized \$2,421,500 towards:

- Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)
- Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS)
- Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation (R3)



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- 13. Provide a one-page itemized listing of the changes your agency is requesting the committee to make to the executive recommendation.**

The Department is not asking for any changes to the executive recommendation.



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14. Provide a comparison of your agency's optional adjustment request to those recommended in the executive budget.

	Department Request	Executive Recommendation	Difference
One Time Optional Adjustments			
State Radio Equipment-Enforcement (General Funds)	\$801,500	\$0	(\$801,500)
Additional Landowner PLOTS Payments (75% Federal)	\$1,485,000	\$1,485,000	\$0
Outdoor Heritage Fund Grants (100% State Game & Fish)	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$0
Additional Adjustments			
IT Unification-Salaries/Fringe (3 FTE)	\$0	(\$572,288)	(\$572,288)
IT Unification-Operating Expenses	\$0	\$572,288	\$572,288
Microsoft 365	\$0	\$18,507	\$18,507
Compensation/Health	\$0	\$2,324,961	\$2,324,961
Additional Extraordinary Repairs Funding	\$0	\$200,000	\$200,000



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- 15. Identify the amount of federal funding available to your agency relating to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the actual amount spent, and for what purposes.**

None.