



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.

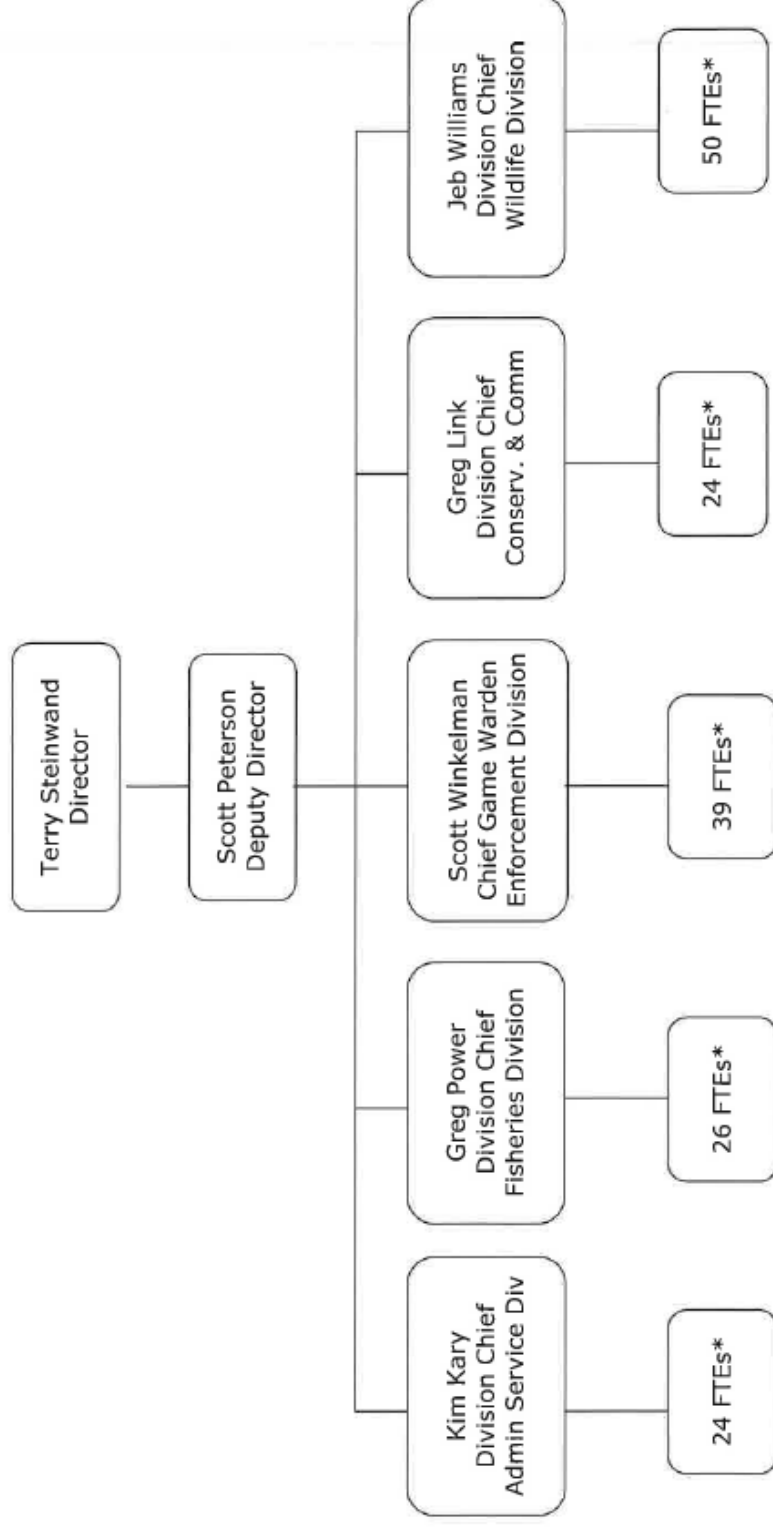


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- 2. Explain the purpose of the agency's various divisions/programs. Attach organizational chart.**

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 ramps 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 routine 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 boat ramps on our WMA or areas we cooperatively manage 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 and 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 of the Game and Fish bills that have passed nor any of the remaining bills being considered have a fiscal impact on the department.

There are two bills, SB2036 & SB2144, that relate to electronic posting. They do not have budgetary impact to Game and Fish.



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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 |

*The department is willing to use Special Funds for this project.

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.