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BISMARCK, N.D. – Gov. Doug Burgum and Lt. Gov. Brent Sanford this week marked the completion of their sixth year in office, reflecting on a year of addressing workforce challenges and other priorities, making progress on diversifying the economy and adding value to farm commodities, and supporting key developments in the state's energy industry.

"This past year has proven yet again that North Dakotans are resilient in the face of challenges, from weather to workforce, and continue to believe and invest in the unlimited potential of our great state," Burgum said. "As our administration strives to empower people, improve lives and inspire success, we are inspired by the hard work and innovative spirit of North Dakota citizens."

Burgum will deliver his 2023 State of the State Address at 1 p.m. Jan. 3 in the House chamber of the Capitol.

Addressing workforce

North Dakota's workforce shortage – the state's No. 1 barrier to economic growth – was a top focus throughout the year.

- In his State of the State Address in February, Burgum outlined \$250 million in workforce investment approved during the November 2021 special legislative session – including \$88 million for career centers – and pledged increased efforts to address child care as a barrier to employment. Those efforts, which included several months of meetings with child care providers, parents, business leaders and other stakeholders, culminated with Burgum and Sanford joining over a dozen state lawmakers to announce the framework for what is now a \$76 million [child care proposal](#) to the legislature to support working families by addressing child care availability, affordability and quality.

- Workforce was the focus of the successful Main Street ND Summit in October attended by nearly 1,000 people from across North Dakota, dozens of states and several countries. During the summit, Burgum and Sanford joined members of the state's Workforce Development Council to announce the ND Works Investment Plan, a package of proposals totaling over \$50 million. The proposals include \$20 million for grants through the competitive Regional Workforce Impact Program (RWIP) and nearly \$25 million for a strategic marketing and recruitment campaign. In 2022, RWIP will award \$13 million for 60 projects that provide additional access to job training and workforce support.
- Burgum also kicked off the Main Street Summit by announcing the Energizing Our Communities plan, a package of proposed investments in community development, such as housing and parks and recreation, to help cities attract and retain workforce.
- The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) also supported the state's workforce this past year by investing in child care infrastructure, including providing \$37 million to child care programs to promote stabilization and help address health and safety, technology and inclusion, as well as start-up and quality improvement needs, and increasing the qualifying income level of the Child Care Assistance Program in February 2022, with the number of participating families growing by 24%.
- To make North Dakota an even more attractive and affordable place to live and work, Burgum and Sanford joined with State Tax Commissioner Brian Kroshus and legislators in August to propose historic income tax reforms that would save North Dakota taxpayers an estimated \$250 million annually and establish North Dakota as the lowest flat-tax state in the nation. The proposal expands upon the income tax relief package – proposed in the Burgum-Sanford Accelerate ND plan – that state lawmakers approved and Burgum signed into law last November. That package was estimated to provide \$211 million in relief for North Dakotans in the 2021 and 2022 tax years.

Diversifying the economy

The administration continued working to diversify the economy and add value to the state's raw agricultural commodities that historically have been shipped out of state for processing.

- Burgum participated in groundbreakings for two soybean processing plants last summer and helped announce a third processing facility this month, further cementing North Dakota's status as a soybean powerhouse and creating new market opportunities for farmers. Upon completion of ADM's \$350 million Green Bison Soy Processing plant in Spiritwood, the North Dakota Soybean Processors' \$400 million plant near Casselton and the \$400 million Epitome Energy LLC plant in Grand Forks announced just last week, North Dakota will have gone from having no soybean processing plants to three soybean crushing plants with the capacity to process nearly 75% of the state's annual soybean production.
- Throughout 2022, North Dakota built upon its status as the place to invest in data centers, with total committed investment of roughly \$2 billion in the state. Projects include the Atlas Power Data Center in Williston, Applied Blockchain's 100-megawatt hosting facility in Jamestown, Core Scientific's expansion in Grand Forks and Bitzero's selection of North Dakota as its North American headquarters, which led to

the company's decision to acquire and redevelop the historic Stanley R. Mickelsen Safeguard Complex in Nekoma into a highly secure data center for high-performance computing and data processing.

- In October, Burgum led a delegation of North Dakota officials and business representatives on a weeklong trade and investment mission to Japan, highlighting the state's many trade, investment and business opportunities in a presentation to the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and promoting the state during a reception with Japanese businesses at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Tokyo. On the last day of the mission, Burgum and Sumitomo Corp.'s president and CEO celebrated the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the state and Sumitomo Corporation of Americas (SCOA), creating a partnership to evaluate and develop businesses within the energy transition market to accelerate decarbonization in North Dakota and beyond.
- The North Dakota Department of Commerce in February selected the Grand Farm Education and Research Initiative for a \$10 million matching grant to advance autonomous agriculture technology in North Dakota. In October, Burgum participated in the Grand Farm Innovation Facility groundbreaking near Casselton, highlighting how autonomous technology commercialized at the facility will improve productivity for farmers and help address the state's workforce challenge through automation.
- Commerce's "Find the Good Life in North Dakota" workforce attraction campaign also was refreshed and expanded to support a comprehensive workforce initiative. The marketing drives interested relocators into a pipeline which connects job seekers with community champions. In less than six months, the marketing campaign has delivered 7.8 million impressions and driven 43,000 visitors to the website resulting in 3,582 potential residents. Workforce staff and community champions are working with over 1,000 leads in the pipeline; 77% of those individuals have not been to North Dakota, with 65% looking to relocate in the next six months.

Supporting energy

Burgum and Sanford also continued to support energy development and carbon capture, storage and utilization (CCUS) as part of a long-term path forward to preserve baseload coal power and the state's oil and gas industry and achieve the goal of making North Dakota a carbon-neutral state by 2030 through innovation and no new regulations or mandates.

- In May, Burgum and Sanford joined officials and workers at Coal Creek Station near Underwood to celebrate the finalized sale of the coal-fired power plant and a related high-voltage transmission line, highlighting the benefits of reliable, affordable baseload coal power and innovative technologies such as carbon capture. Minnesota-based Great River Energy (GRE) sold the 1,151-megawatt power plant – North Dakota's largest – to Rainbow Energy Center LLC, and sold the transmission system that runs from central North Dakota to Minnesota to Nexus Line LLC. Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line are both affiliates of Bismarck-based Rainbow Energy Marketing Corp.

Leading up to the sale, the Burgum-Sanford administration worked with the Legislature to approve several bills in 2021 to support the lignite industry and created the Clean Sustainable Energy Authority and Fund to support clean energy projects and help provide a long-term, viable path forward for the state's critical energy industry. The Authority provided a \$3 million grant to Midwest Ag Energy for a carbon capture project at the Blue Flint Ethanol plant next to Coal Creek and \$7 million to the Energy & Environmental Research Center in Grand Forks for front-end engineering and design of Coal Creek's carbon capture project.

The Coal Creek project also received a \$150 million loan from the Bank of North Dakota's Match Program, which provides low-interest rates to encourage and attract financially strong companies and is funded through the Legacy Fund per the passage of House Bill 1425 last year.

- In July, Burgum and Sanford applauded the start of the first carbon storage project in North Dakota at the Red Trail Energy LLC ethanol plant near Richardton, which was made possible by North Dakota being the first state in the nation to obtain regulatory authority from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency over Class VI underground storage wells in 2018.
- They also continued to advocate for increased American energy production in order to reduce prices at the pump and strengthen U.S. energy security, with Burgum joining 24 fellow governors in March to call on the White House to unleash U.S. oil and gas production.
- North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana and Wisconsin began working together to develop a regional clean hydrogen hub to help meet the nation's clean energy, transportation and agricultural needs. Under the memorandum of understanding (MOU), the four states agree to develop a proposal for a Heartland Hydrogen Hub, with the goal of obtaining federal funding from the U.S. Department of Energy's \$7 billion program to create regional clean hydrogen (H2Hubs) across the country.

Weather and emergency response

- An unprecedented severe winter weather event gripped the state in April, knocking out power to tens of thousands of residents and dropping up to 40 inches of snow in some areas making it the state's fifth-largest disaster on record and the largest since 2011 flooding. The severe weather caused damage to infrastructure including roads, bridges and railways and threatened the stability of flood control structures including the Bourbanis Dam near Cavalier, where North Dakota National Guard Black Hawk helicopters placed 213 one-ton sandbags to stabilize areas of concern around the dam. North Dakota Guard members also assisted in placing two 5-ton water pumps provided by a Minnesota National Guard Chinook helicopter.

Burgum declared a statewide emergency resulting in an estimated \$97 million in federal assistance after President Biden granted Burgum's request for a presidential major disaster declaration.

State agencies worked together to coordinate efforts in a whole-of-government response. This included:

- The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) dispatching 355 snowplow operators to clear over 8,500 miles of roadway;
- The North Dakota Highway Patrol coordinating with the Parks and Recreation Department to pre-position snowmobiles and other snow equipment around the state;
- NDDOT and Highway Patrol partnering on over 25 emergency runs for ambulances or stranded motorists;
- State Radio handling double the call volume;
- The Department of Emergency Services (DES) assisting local and tribal jurisdictions in identifying needs and coordinating resources;
- The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) establishing the Northwest North Dakota Emergency Housing Stability Program for qualified homeowners and renters impacted by power outages.

The team was recognized with a Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service Roaming Bison team award in September.

- As parts of the state experienced drought conditions, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) provided \$1.2 million in reimbursements for 340 drought resiliency projects for agricultural producers through the Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Assistance Program.
- DES and North Dakota Information Technology (NDIT) brought together representatives from multiple state agencies in collaboration with rural electric cooperatives, internet providers, hospital facilities and others during a tabletop exercise in June. The event was hosted to share plans and identify interdependencies that might exist during a response to a cyber incident. The participants talked through potential cascading effects that might occur after a scenario in which a cyberattack disables the electrical grid for an extended period during cold weather conditions.

Reducing red tape, filling roles

- In August, Burgum issued an [executive order](#) creating a Red Tape Reduction Working Group to bolster ongoing efforts to identify antiquated, unnecessary and burdensome regulations, rules and policies that could be changed or eliminated to reduce burdens and lower costs for North Dakota citizens and the private sector and make state government more efficient, effective and nimble. The Red Tape Reduction Working Group received about 500 ideas from the public, agencies and team members. The Working Group acted on nearly 400 submissions that resulted in draft bills to be acted on during the upcoming legislative session and through administrative rule changes and process improvement.
- Burgum made several key appointments to fill vacancies in statewide offices. Public Service Commissioner Brian Kroshus was appointed state tax commissioner effective Jan. 4. Former U.S. attorney and lieutenant governor Drew Wrigley was appointed in February to serve as North Dakota attorney general after the passing of longtime Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem on Jan. 28. And the governor appointed Capital Electric Cooperative Inc. board chairwoman Sheri Haugen-Hoffart in February to fill

the Public Service Commission seat vacated by Kroshus. Haugen-Hoffart, Kroshus and Wrigley all were elected to four-year terms in November. Burgum also appointed Minot entrepreneur Kevin Black and reappointed business consultant Danite Bye of Stanley to the state Board of Higher Education in June. University of North Dakota student Sadie Hanson was appointed as the board's student member.

Tribal engagement

- At the fourth Strengthening Government to Government Partnerships and Relationships Conference in June, organized by the state Indian Affairs Commission, Burgum highlighted progress made through collaboration between the state and tribal nations, including that the North Dakota Highway Patrol entered agreements with the Spirit Lake Nation and MHA Nation to enhance emergency response on the Fort Berthold Reservation. The agreements allow the closest available peace officer to respond to an emergency call for service until the agency with primary jurisdiction arrives and assumes the lead. The North Dakota National Guard also finished signing memorandums of agreement with all five tribal colleges in North Dakota to make the State Tuition Assistance program available to qualified student service members attending college.
- Earlier this month, Burgum and the chairpersons of the five tribal nations with whom North Dakota shares geography completed the signing of new tribal-state gaming compacts, which are now under review by the U.S. Department of the Interior for final approval.
- DHHS partnered with the Great Plains Tribal Leaders Health Board (GPTLHB) to implement the Cappa Health 360 platform, which provides individualized and culturally adapted chronic disease management and prevention programming for all GPTLHB partner tribes. This platform includes the first diabetes prevention curriculum in the country to be adapted for American Indians, co-developed with Cappa Health and the Great Plains Tribal Leaders Health Board – which is now available in 18 tribal communities in the four-state region of North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Iowa, which covers more than 160,000 enrolled members.
- A population of bighorn sheep transplanted to the Three Affiliated Tribes grew from 30 in 2020 to 75 in 2022, bringing the state's total bighorn sheep to 335. The state will get three licenses in alternating years starting in 2026. An MOU with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe continues to foster a successful elk management program for both state and tribal citizens.
- Hoefer RV in Dunseith invested over \$4 million to open a 100,000-square-foot U.S. production site that led to a new CTE Center in Dunseith, including a dedicated RV tech shop, plus additional modules for the RV tech program which will run in other classrooms in the center. In April, Hoefer RV was awarded \$2.25 million from the North Dakota Development Fund for a revolving line for inventory financing. This is the first major workforce step to revitalizing Dunseith as Hoefer RV is committed to hiring high school and adult program grads.
- The North Dakota Native Tourism Alliance continued to evolve with dedicated funding and staff from Commerce. Growth in tribal tourism offerings, product development and cultural experiences is of great

interest for visitors, especially those from international target markets.

- A memorandum of understanding was signed between NDIT and the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara (MHA) Nation to provide managed security services for the purpose of protecting the confidentiality, availability and integrity of tribal information systems and data. The partnership was made possible by House Bill 1417, which was approved last year by the Legislature and signed into law by Burgum. The new law allows NDIT to enter into agreements with tribes and other governmental entities to assist with cybersecurity strategy, prevention and response.
- Parks and Recreation continued to increase tribal engagement, including providing a Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant to the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa for a splash pad.

National security and border security/access

- Burgum signed a memorandum of understanding in April with 25 fellow governors to create the American Governors' Border Strike Force to better address the humanitarian crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border and the negative effects of increased illegal immigration on public safety and crime in states including North Dakota. The strike force aims to disrupt and dismantle transnational criminal organizations and combat human trafficking and drug smuggling activities.

The North Dakota Highway Patrol, state Bureau of Criminal Investigation and State & Local Intelligence Center participated in a joint Border Strike Force enforcement detail in North Dakota on Aug. 22-28, seizing more than 50 pounds of illegal drugs, including enough fentanyl to kill every North Dakotan more than twice over.

- Last December, Gov. Burgum and the North Dakota National Guard's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Al Dohrmann, visited 125 soldiers from the Bismarck-based 957th Engineer Company who served a yearlong mission along the U.S.-Mexico border in Texas in support of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). During the deployment, two Guardsmen rescued migrants from drowning while crossing the Rio Grande on March 22. The company arrived home last month.
- Burgum also pushed the CPB and U.S. Homeland Security to restore pre-pandemic hours of operation at several ports of entry on the U.S.-Canada border where hours were reduced in April 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CBP agreed in September to temporarily expand operating hours at three ports of entry and to continue evaluating northern border hours of operation.
- The North Dakota National Guard saw about 270 soldiers and airmen deploy and about 420 return from deployment, including deployments to the National Capital Region, U.S. Central Command and the southwest border.
- North Dakota National Guard members in March completed their largest and longest mobilization ever with the conclusion of their COVID-19 support mission. The mission totaled 736 days and over 133,000 personnel days, with Guard members assisting in administering 467,000 tests and administering more than 100,000 vaccine doses.

- The North Dakota Air National Guard's 119th Wing, known as the Happy Hooligans, earned their 23rd Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, the most among Air National Guard units. The Happy Hooligans also earned the 2021 Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies' General Atomics Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) award, presented annually for outstanding performance by RPA squadrons in achieving intelligence, surveillance, persistent attack and reconnaissance over the preceding year.
- Burgum authorized a North Dakota National Guard Black Hawk helicopter with a water bucket to provide fire suppression between Minot and Des Lacs where more than a dozen train cars carrying paper products and frozen foods derailed and caught fire.

Supporting health and well-being

- The Department of Health and Department of Human Services successfully integrated to become the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on Sept. 1, 2022. As one HHS, the team will work to help North Dakota become the healthiest state in the nation by focusing on the three foundations of well-being: physical, economic, and behavioral health.
- In August, DHHS launched a new Children in Need of Services Team to divert children and youth from the juvenile justice system and foster care and instead connect children and families to support services in their communities. Through Dec. 1, this specialized team of human service zone child welfare professionals had received 917 referrals and assisted 784 children and their families.
- DHHS also launched new dashboards and communications channels – the State Health Assessment dashboard, State Alzheimer's dashboard and Knowtify blog – to provide information and data so North Dakotans can make more informed health care decisions.
- The governor and First Lady Kathryn Burgum hosted the sixth Recovery Reinvented on Nov. 3, a daylong in-person and online event focused on reinventing recovery through eliminating the stigma of the disease of addiction. They were joined by national and state addiction recovery experts and more than 700 in-person attendees at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks as well as over 900 online viewers who spanned the state and nation, with some international audience members in Indonesia, Portugal and South Africa. They highlighted the state's progress in addressing the disease of addiction over the past six years, including the training of nearly 800 peer support specialists and the success of the Free Through Recovery program.
- A mental health program directory to help North Dakotans better locate and access mental health resources was launched by DHHS. To date, there are 172 approved organizations registered in the directory representing 215 locations. DHHS also launched the new national 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline to supplement the state's behavioral health crisis support for North Dakotans. 988 provides 24/7 access to a trained crisis counselor who can help North Dakotans.
- DHHS launched workforce incentive grants in March 2022 for agency and individual direct care professionals to expand access to in-home and community care services for people with disabilities. A total of 53 agencies in the Development Disabilities and Aging categories received retention incentives,

36 agencies received recruitment incentives and 200 Qualified Service Providers (QSPs) and 300 self-directed support employees received incentives.

- DHHS also launched the Help for Homeowners program to support financial stability of homeowners who are struggling to pay their mortgage and other related housing costs. The department has approved \$7.6 million and helped 566 homeowners since July 2022.
- Together with Money Follows the Person partners, DHHS helped over 100 North Dakotans with disabilities move from institutions to homes in the community with support, exceeding the two-year transition benchmark required in a settlement agreement with the Department of Justice.
- DHHS also worked to expand Medicaid health care coverage from 60 days to 12 months for new moms after pregnancy starting Jan. 1, 2023. Coverage includes checkups after birth, behavioral health services, dental care and other services.

Strengthening Main Street and community development

- The Main Street Initiative team administered four grant programs throughout 2022 which resulted in more than \$680,000 of grant funds being awarded in communities throughout North Dakota. The programs address the four Main Street Initiative pillars: healthy, vibrant communities; 21st century workforce; smart, efficient infrastructure; and economic diversification.
- The Main Street Tourism Outdoor Recreation grant program awarded \$100,000 to six projects in 2022. A mix of seasonal projects received grants, including the Citizens Alley Pocket Park Ice Rink in Minot offering unique winter experiences. These experiences help to build healthy, vibrant communities and attract workforce.
- The first Tribal Main Street visit was hosted by the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians in Belcourt on Sept. 16 with the governor, first lady and Commerce team members. This resulted in the formation of a youth council to provide insight on attracting a 21st century workforce to their communities.

Transforming education

- At the sixth annual Governor's Summit on Innovative Education in June, Burgum and other speakers emphasized the importance of equipping students with the essential skills for life and learning and ensuring that graduates are choice-ready for college, career or the military. The governor welcomed nearly 300 educators, students, administrators and community leaders to the daylong summit at Dickinson Middle School – the first time the summit has been held west of Bismarck. Legislation approved in 2021 gave school districts new opportunities to implement personalized, competency-based education and capitalize on innovation to drive student results, Burgum noted.
- DHHS continued to support quality early learning experiences and school readiness by funding multiple rounds of "Best in Class" grants to programs serving children the year before kindergarten.

- Parks and Recreation and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (DPI) announced a partnership designed to expand, enhance and support outdoor learning opportunities for all North Dakota public, private and homeschooled students through September 2024. The partnership provides funding and support for 24 outdoor educational field days for students at the sixth-grade level (10-12 years of age); individualized student field-trip experiences for all grade levels; and funding assistance for program fees and transportation to state parks.
- Gov. Burgum and National Foundation for Governors' Fitness Councils (NFGFC) Chairman Jake "Body by Jake" Steinfeld announced the three North Dakota schools that were selected to each receive a state-of-the-art \$100,000 DON'T QUIT! Fitness Center. The multimillion-dollar DON'T QUIT! Campaign named Jim Hill Middle School in Minot, Rolla School in Rolla and Solen School in Solen as the state's most outstanding schools for demonstrating leadership in getting and keeping their students fit.
- Burgum in July announced the late Dr. Merton Utgaard, award-winning musician, educator, and founder and long-time director of the International Music Camp, as the 47th recipient of the North Dakota Theodore Roosevelt Rough Rider Award, the state's highest commendation for its citizens. The official portrait of Utgaard was unveiled at the Capitol on Nov. 18.

Improving infrastructure

The state continued to make major investments and improvements in critical infrastructure to better serve citizens.

- The NDDOT has aggressively pursued federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) discretionary funding to advance transportation infrastructure projects in North Dakota. To date, \$135 million has been successfully awarded by federal funding sources available through IIJA and application has been made for an additional \$320 million.
- In 2022, over 200 construction projects took place across North Dakota resulting in a \$564 million investment to improve the state's transportation infrastructure.
- The Department of Water Resources (DWR) continued to make progress on the Northwest Area Water Supply (NAWS) project that is planned to one day serve up to 81,000 water users in North Dakota. Progress included completion of the Lansford Reservoir and Pump Station, service to the City of Bottineau, and continued advancements at the Biota Water Treatment Plant, Minot Water Treatment Plant, and other project elements.
- DWR provided \$105 million in State Water Commission project approvals through its Cost-Share Program, including \$96 million to support water supply efforts in 21 cities and 17 rural/regional systems and \$9 million for 60 different flood protection, water conveyance and general water projects benefitting citizens across the state. The agency also completed a year-long effort with public input to update the Commission's cost-share policy and modernize the program.
- The Office of Management and Budget completed several Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) updates around the Capitol to make the 88-year-old complex more accessible for all citizens, as well as a facilities management and optimization study.

Reinventing government

Cabinet agencies continued to make progress in becoming more effective and efficient in serving citizens and meeting their needs:

- In 2022, Vision Zero continued growing a program called ND Sober Ride. ND Sober Ride is aimed at reducing the number of impaired drivers on North Dakota roads through ride-hailing vouchers. In 2022, the program successfully provided 366 sober rides statewide with another campaign planned Dec. 19 to Jan. 1.
- In the last year, 7,600 driver license knowledge tests have been completed using a new online system. Tests are conveniently done online at dot.nd.gov and are available 24/7 immediately from anywhere with internet access. The NDDOT's Driver License and Motor Vehicle divisions were awarded the Reinventing the Customer Experience award from the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators for their work to expand customer service and convenience.
- The North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department launched a new [state snowmobile trail app](#) that gives users a new way to enjoy North Dakota's 13 state snowmobile trails totaling just over 2,800 miles. Snowmobile enthusiasts can download the Snowmobile North Dakota app to track trips, track current location on a trail using GPS, get updates on trail conditions, locate nearby amenities, and save and load itineraries.
- DWR continued to greatly improve North Dakota's ability to monitor the state's water resources through innovation, including management of 368 PRESENS (Pushing REmote SENSors) units across the state. PRESENS was developed in-house by DWR to collect environmental data such as water levels, precipitation, soil moisture, soil temperature, barometric pressure and air temperature – at a fraction of the cost of more traditional means.
- DWR operated the Devils Lake outlets to provide ongoing flood relief for areas surrounding the greater Devils Lake system. The outlets removed over 60,000 acre-feet of floodwater during the 2022 operating season. Since outlet operations began in 2007, almost 1.4 million acre-feet of floodwater have been removed from the big lake.
- OMB managed the distribution of over \$25 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act funding to cities in North Dakota and assisted cities in meeting their reporting obligations.
- OMB launched an interagency mentorship program and led a statewide change management initiative, training over 728 team members in 2022; completed implementation of new state budget development and tracking solution to improve the state budgeting process; and launched two new ways to [experience a tour of the Capitol](#): self-guided kiosks and virtual Capitol tour enhancements.
- To further provide students with valuable experience and education from the perspective of working in a 9-1-1 communications center, State Radio rejuvenated its internship program in spring 2022 with local area colleges and universities. Students pursuing careers in the criminal justice field can now intern under the supervision of an emergency communications specialist to integrate classroom theory with real-life practices.

- The Cyber Madness team was recognized for developing and delivering a first-of-its-kind high school state championship for cybersecurity and creating valuable opportunities for students and future workforce to explore the cybersecurity industry. Cyber Madness is a joint effort of NDIT, North Dakota Career and Technical Education, the Department of Public Instruction and EduTech.
- NDIT announced an expanded partnership with the Cisco Networking Academy skills-to-job program called Skills for All that will be available to all residents in North Dakota. North Dakota is the first state in the nation to provide these courses statewide at no cost to all residents. The Cisco Networking Academy Skills for All program provides free, quality, mobile, self-paced, online learning aligned to industry jobs, providing a pathway to a career in technology.
- WSI engaged in two multi-year projects: an internal system replacement project, Claims and Policy System (CAPS), and development of an online portal, myWSI. The goal is to improve internal and external customer experiences through automation of manual tasks and online accessibility. These releases started in June 2021 and involved staff from WSI, NDIT and vendor ServiceLogix.
- The Department of Environmental Quality adopted revised regulations to improve air quality in national parks and wilderness areas in August. North Dakota continues to be one of the few states that meet or exceed all federal air quality standards.
- The Department of Financial Institutions provided guidance to assist those who are considering providing digital asset and virtual currency services. The department encourages any bank that is intending to engage in, or is currently engaged in, activities involving or related to digital assets to consult their legal counsel and federal regulators.
- As part of a pilot program with NDIT, the websites for both Job Service North Dakota and the Department of Health and Human Services were made accessible in 16 languages, offering easier accessibility to New Americans. Internet viewers can select their preferred language from a dropdown at the top of any page. The initial offerings are English, Arabic, Basque, Bosnian, Chinese, French, Hindi, Hmong, Kurdish, Nepali, Pashto, Punjabi, Somali, Spanish, Swahili and Vietnamese. More languages and other state agency websites are expected to be added.
- Job Service North Dakota partnered with North Dakota-based virtual reality studio Be More Colorful to help career seekers explore different career paths. Be More Colorful's career exploration product, CareerViewXR, (CVXR), was made available to Job Service clients starting in July. The 12-month pilot project will bring immersive media and virtual reality content into the Bismarck Workforce Center.
- Parks and Recreation also completed an update of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for 2022-2027 and recorded record participation in the 12-for-12 Hiking Challenge, with 1,947 people participating and over 13,000 hikes logged as of November. After a slow start to the camping season due to record snowstorms in April and significant flooding in May, Parks and Recreation's system still recorded its third-highest overnight visitation on record.
- With the Environmental Quality Restoration Fund, the Department of Environmental Quality can now help local communities pay for environmental cleanup when other funds are unavailable. This is especially important when the risk to human or environmental health is high. Environmental Quality will

work with local communities for input on solutions. The first project to use money from the fund is in Napoleon, where the goal is to remove gasoline contamination from groundwater.

- The Securities Department is on track for record revenues for the year and for the 2021-23 biennium, at \$12 million and \$23 million respectively, and has recovered over \$5.4 million for investors who have been harmed by securities fraud and misconduct.

Enhancing safety and corrections

- The newly created Highway Patrol Interdiction Team, consisting of four troopers and a sergeant, have been successful in preventing deadly narcotics from reaching North Dakota communities. In July, an Interdiction Team trooper conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for a traffic violation and found 2,629 grams of methamphetamine, 926 grams of counterfeit Fentanyl pills, and weapons.
- The Highway Patrol hosted roundtable discussions in four cities across the state to reignite the conversation about opioids and related overdoses. Discussion were held in Bismarck, Minot, Grand Forks and Fargo with 94 total public and private entities in attendance.
- The Highway Patrol planned and hosted the inaugural Midwest Summit for Women in Law Enforcement in May in Fargo. The summit was attended by over 160 individuals from 35 law enforcement agencies from North Dakota and surrounding states.
- At the North Dakota State Penitentiary, the state Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) established the Restoring Promise Unit in collaboration with the VERA Institute of Justice. The Restoring Promise Unit focuses on peer mentoring and restorative practices, including pairing elder mentors with young adults 18 to 24.
- At the Missouri River Correctional Center, there has been renewed focus to reconnect and enhance DOCR's relationship with community partners. MRCC participated in the United Way Day of Caring this year after a pause due to COVID. The involvement of Runners Against Destructive Decisions (RADD), a running group formed to help those recovering from addiction and other destructive decisions, also has increased and expanded at MRCC, with RADD volunteers coming into the facility twice a month now, instead of only once.
- The education department at the DOCR had three students graduate at the Youth Correctional Center with the newly approved Option 2 high school diplomas. Option 2 is a pathway where students can take up to two GED tests to count as core content credit toward a high school diploma – an opportunity to reduce dropouts in North Dakota.
- The NDIT Cybersecurity Team has worked tirelessly to protect and defend the state from adversaries. So far in 2022, the cybersecurity team has prevented or detected 822 million network threats; defended against more than 4 million malware, phishing and spam messages; investigated over 2 million security alerts; and resolved over 51,000 security incidents.
- NDIT improved cybersecurity collaboration with other states by growing membership of the Joint-Cyber Security Operations Center (J-CSOC) to 11 states across the nation.

- In fiscal year 2022, Workforce Safety & Insurance (WSI) issued nearly \$22 million in safety premium discounts to employers for successful participation in safety programs. Injury rates have been reduced by over 30% over the last decade, with a rate of 4.46 claims filed per 100 covered workers in FY 2022.

Serving hunters and anglers

- The North Dakota Game and Fish Department created a chronic wasting disease task force and developed a management and surveillance plan to guide the agency's efforts moving forward. The agency also transitioned to online harvest surveys and online mandatory harvest reporting for quota harvest furbearer species.
- No new infestations of aquatic nuisance species were found in North Dakota in 2022. Game and Fish personnel conducted 5,292 general aquatic nuisance species watercraft inspections and 400+ tournament angler inspections. In addition, maintained and supported a dozen public ANS prevention devices including Internet Landing Installed Device Sensors (ILIDS); waterless decontamination devices for Clean, Drain, Dry (CD3), and wash stations.
- Approximately 4,000 landowners used an electronic database to post 7 million acres of private land in 2022, with 56% providing some form of contact information.
- Game and Fish shipped a record 12.5 million walleye to 176 waters across the state, including partnering with Wyoming which provided over 3,000 pounds of catchable trout to community fisheries.
- District game wardens made 43,300 field contacts in 2022, with the smallest number of game wardens per land mass in the nation.

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