

**Game and Fish Department
Budget No. 720
House Bill Nos. 1017, 1024, and 1419; Senate Bill No. 2021**

	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
2017-19 legislative appropriation	163.00	\$0	\$83,976,222	\$83,976,222
2015-17 legislative appropriation	<u>163.00</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>77,231,739</u>	<u>77,231,739</u>
2017-19 appropriation increase (decrease) to 2015-17 appropriation	0.00	\$0	\$6,744,483	\$6,744,483

Item Description

Funding for Wildlife Services programs - The Legislative Assembly appropriated \$614,430 from the game and fish fund to be transferred to the Agriculture Commissioner for the Wildlife Services program.

Funding for Parks and Recreation Department - The Legislative Assembly appropriated \$122,000 from the game and fish fund for a grant to the Parks and Recreation Department for state park boat ramp maintenance and improvements.

Capital assets, payments, and projects - The Legislative Assembly appropriated \$7,425,960 from other funds for the following capital assets, payments, and projects for the 2017-19 biennium:

Project	Other Funds
Extraordinary repairs	\$1,215,790
Wildlife management area improvements	653,170
Fishing area projects	1,387,000
Shooting range improvements	1,030,000
Lonetree Wildlife Management Area improvements	50,000
Land acquisition	800,000
Payment in lieu of taxes	1,363,000
Enforcement Division equipment	245,000
Fisheries equipment	170,000
Lonetree Wildlife Management Area equipment	30,000
Wildlife Division equipment	232,000
Airplane replacement	250,000
Total	\$7,425,960

Status/Result

The Game and Fish Department will transfer funds at the end of each fiscal year.

The Game and Fish Department transferred \$63,242 of game and fish operating funds for the period July 1, 2017, through May 31, 2018, to the Parks and Recreation Department. The Game and Fish Department anticipates providing the remainder of grant funding by the end of the 2017-19 biennium.

The Game and Fish Department anticipates spending the capital assets, payments, and projects funding by the end of the 2017-19 biennium.

Private land open to sportsman (PLOTS) program - The Legislative Assembly appropriated \$13.8 million from the game and fish fund for land habitat and deer depredation funding for the 2017-19 biennium, of which \$11.9 million is estimated to be used for landowner payments.

The following table summarizes the total annual PLOTS acreage available for public access:

Year	Acres
2003	374,245
2004	745,979
2005	853,954
2006	978,735
2007	1,027,088
2008	1,041,611
2009	1,010,384
2010	1,007,999
2011	969,834
2012	838,548
2013	759,383
2014	734,700
2015	716,535
2016	726,580
2017	737,640

Electronic payment processing system - Senate Bill No. 2021 (2017) provides total special funds appropriations of \$75,000 to the Game and Fish Department. Section 10 of the bill authorizes the Game and Fish Department to obtain a \$36,000 loan from the Bank of North Dakota to be used to pay the Information Technology Department to implement an electronic payment processing system for credit card fees. Section 11 of the bill includes an appropriation of \$39,000 from special funds derived from additional revenue received as a result of the new system to repay the loan.

The Information Technology Department reported that all six state agencies identified in Senate Bill No. 2021 have declined implementation of the electronic payment processing system and will not obtain loans from the Bank of North Dakota. The Game and Fish Department believes it currently has sufficient funding and as a result, does not believe it is necessary to charge additional fees for licenses.

Governor's proclamation - The Legislative Assembly in 2017 House Bill No. 1025, amended North Dakota Century Code Section 20.1-04-07 and created a new section to Chapter 20.1-05.1 relating to Governor's proclamations and the authority to authorize special allocation of hunting licenses. The bill eliminated Governor's proclamations for hunting licenses provided for raffles and authorized the Director of the Game and Fish Department to issue annual special allocation hunting licenses.

Administrative rules for the special allocation of hunting licenses were adopted and the Game and Fish Department began issuing the special hunting licenses in 2018.

House Bill No. 1024 - In Section 2 of 2017 House Bill No. 1024, the Legislative Assembly appropriated \$423,724 from other funds received from the Adjutant General for reimbursement of costs relating to unlawful activity associated with the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline during the 2015-17 biennium.

The Game and Fish Department has spent a total of \$354,592 related to unlawful activity associated with the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. The department does not plan to spend the remaining \$69,132.

Hunting license preference points - The Legislative Assembly, in 2017 House Bill No. 1150, created a new section to Chapter 20.1-03 relating to bonus or preference points awarded for lotteries. The bill authorized individuals to apply for a hunting license, but to be excluded from the drawing in order to obtain the preference points for that hunting season.

As of April 2017 572 individuals have applied for a hunting license and opted to be excluded from the drawings, resulting in \$16,750 of hunting license revenue.

Abandoned property - The Legislative Assembly, in 2017 House Bill No. 1207, created Section 20.1-11-14 relating to property abandoned on state game refuges, leased or managed real property, and state game or fish management areas. The new section authorizes the Game and Fish Department to seize tangible property presumed to be abandoned on state game refuges, real property leased or managed by the Game and Fish Department, and state game or fish management areas, and authorizes the Director to transfer the property to the Report All Poachers program for the disposal of the seized property after 90 days. The proceeds from the sale of seized property are to be deposited in the North Dakota wildlife federation Report All Poachers fund.

Shooting sports grant program - The Legislative Assembly in 2017 House Bill No. 1419, Appropriated \$250,000 from Pittman-Robertson federal funds deposited in the game and fish fund to the Game and Fish Department for establishing and administering a shooting sports grant program during the 2017-19 biennium.

In May 2017 the Game and Fish Department turned over 88 pieces of abandoned property to the Report All Poachers program for auction.

As of May 25, 2018, the Game and Fish Department has committed \$246,000 to six shooting facilities from Pittman-Robertson federal funds. The majority of the funding is to be used to improve or add infrastructure to enhance shooting opportunities in order to make sites available for shooting sports. The grants require 25 percent local matching funds. The remaining \$4,000 will be provided to assist new shooting clubs.