



Game and Fish Department
Department No. 720
2025 House Bill No. 1017

EXECUTIVE BUDGET RECOMMENDATION
2025-27 BIENNIUM

Budget Summary

	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
Executive budget recommendation	170.00	\$0	\$113,957,679	\$113,957,679
Base level	170.00	0	104,727,514	104,727,514
Increase (decrease)	0.00	\$0	\$9,230,165	\$9,230,165
Percentage increase (decrease)	0.0%	N/A	8.8%	8.8%

NOTE:

More detailed information on the executive budget recommendation is attached as Appendix A.

A copy of the draft appropriations bill reflecting the executive budget recommendation is attached as Appendix B.

Selected Highlights

- Adds \$1,943,307, of which \$735,347 is from the federal funds and \$1,207,960 is from special funds, for salary increases of up to 4 percent effective July 1, 2025, and 3 percent effective July 1, 2026
- Adds \$1,002,881, of which \$396,260 is from the federal funds and \$606,621 is from special funds, for a health insurance premium increase of \$250 per month (15.2 percent), from \$1,643 to \$1,893, per employee
- Adds \$3,420,755, of which \$1,489,600 is from federal funds and \$1,931,155 is from special funds, to replace the 2023-25 biennium new FTE pool (\$1,179,021) and 2023-25 biennium vacant FTE pool (\$2,241,734)
- Reduces ongoing funding of \$3,001,997, of which \$2,951,038 is from federal funds and \$150,059 is from the Game and Fish Department operating fund, for game and fish grants, including a reduction of \$1,650,000 for shooting ranges grants, resulting in \$1,650,000 remaining for shooting ranges grants
- Adds \$380,000 of **one-time funding** from the Game and Fish Department operating fund for information technology projects
- Adds \$150,000 of **one-time funding** from the Game and Fish Department operating fund to repair the Baukol-Noonan dam
- Adds \$160,200 of **one-time funding**, of which \$80,450 is from federal funds and \$79,750 is from the Game and Fish Department operating fund, for equipment
- Adds \$1,500,000 of **one-time funding**, of which \$1,125,000 is from federal funds and \$375,000 is from the Game and Fish Department operating fund, for pondliners at the Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery
- Adds \$300,000 of **one-time funding**, of which \$225,000 is from federal funds and \$75,000 is from the Game and Fish Department operating fund, for high-pressure pumps at the Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery
- Adds \$3,000,000 of **one-time funding**, of which \$2,460,000 is from federal funds and \$540,000 is from the habitat and depredation fund, for land habitat and deer depredation programs, including the habitat improvement program (\$600,000), private land open to sportsmen (PLOTS) payments (\$1,200,000), and the rangeland legacy program (\$1,200,000)

Deficiency Appropriations

There are no deficiency appropriations recommended in the executive budget for this agency.

Significant Audit Findings

The operational audit of the Game and Fish Department conducted by the State Auditor's office for the period ending June 30, 2022, did not identify any significant audit findings.

Agency Fees

As reported to the Legislative Management, pursuant to North Dakota Century Code Section 54-35-27, this agency has 227 fees. The agency did not recommend any changes to the fees but stated the agency is reviewing all license fees for recommended adjustments and removal of obsolete licenses.

Major Related Legislation

As of the date of this report, there is no major related legislation for this agency.

NOTE:

Please see the Fiscal Impact Report for additional information regarding bills under consideration which contain either a state revenue impact, an appropriation, or a state fiscal impact.



Game and Fish Department - Budget No. 720
Agency Worksheet - House Bill No. 1017

	Executive Budget			
	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
2025-27 Biennium Base Level	170.00	\$0	\$104,727,514	\$104,727,514
2025-27 Ongoing Funding Changes				
Base payroll changes			(\$838,661)	(\$838,661)
Salary increase			1,943,307	1,943,307
Health insurance increase			1,002,881	1,002,881
Adds funding to replace the 2023-25 new FTE pool			1,179,021	1,179,021
Adds funding to replace the 2023-25 vacant FTE pool			2,241,734	2,241,734
Adds funding from special funds for accrued leave payouts for retirements			109,291	109,291
Adds funding for temporary salaries			265,500	265,500
Adds funding for increasing motorpool costs			687,331	687,331
Adds funding for information technology costs			639,189	639,189
Adjusts base level funding for operating expenses and capital assets			(550,203)	(550,203)
Reduces federal funding for shooting ranges grants			(1,650,000)	(1,650,000)
Reduces funding for other game and fish grants			(1,351,997)	(1,351,997)
Adds funding for land habitat and deer depredation			26,000	26,000
Adjusts funding for the aquatic nuisance species program			36,572	36,572
Total ongoing funding changes	0.00	\$0	\$3,739,965	\$3,739,965
One-Time Funding Items				
Adds funding from special funds information technology projects			\$380,000	\$380,000
Adds funding from special funds to repair the Baukol-Noonan dam			150,000	150,000
Adds funding for equipment			160,200	160,200
Adds funding for pondliners at the Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery			1,500,000	1,500,000
Adds funding for high-pressure pumps at the Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery			300,000	300,000
Adds funding for wildlife habitat and access on private lands			3,000,000	3,000,000
Total one-time funding changes	0.00	\$0	\$5,490,200	\$5,490,200
Total Changes to Base Level Funding	0.00	\$0	\$9,230,165	\$9,230,165
2025-27 Total Funding	170.00	\$0	\$113,957,679	\$113,957,679

Federal funds included in other funds

\$55,219,844

Total ongoing changes - Percentage of base level

0.0%

N/A

3.6%

3.6%

Total changes - Percentage of base level

0.0%

N/A

8.8%

8.8%

Other Sections in Game and Fish Department - Budget No. 720

Section Description	Executive Budget
Grants, gifts, and donations	Section 3 would identify \$100,000 appropriated in the grants, gifts, and donations line item in Section 1 is for surface damage, easements, or reclamation of department-owned or department-managed properties from oil or mining activities.

Other Sections in Game and Fish Department - Budget No. 720

Section Description	Executive Budget
Line item transfer authority	Section 4 would require the Office of Management and Budget to transfer up to \$2 million of appropriation authority between the operating expenses, capital assets, and grants - game and fish line items during the 2025-27 biennium. The department must report any transfers to the Legislative Council.
FTE position adjustments	Section 5 would allow the Game and Fish Department to increase or decrease authorized FTE positions as needed, subject to the availability of funds.

Sixty-ninth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

HOUSE BILL NO. 1017
(Governor's Recommendation)

Introduced by

Appropriations Committee

(At the request of the Governor)

A bill for an act to provide an appropriation for defraying the expenses of the game and fish department and to provide for a transfer and to provide an exemption.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. APPROPRIATION. The funds provided in this section, or so much of the funds as may be necessary, are appropriated out of any moneys in the game and fish fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, and from special funds derived from federal funds and other income, to the game and fish department for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the game and fish department, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2027, as follows:

	<u>Base Level</u>	<u>Adjustments or Enhancements</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
Salaries and Wages	\$37,008,098	\$4,977,841	\$41,985,939
Operating Expenses	17,788,258	2,016,038	19,804,296
Capital Assets	5,400,661	1,562,479	6,963,140
Grants – Game and Fish	10,089,976	(3,001,997)	7,087,979
Shooting Sports Grant Program	250,000	0	250,000
Land Habitat and Deer Depredation	27,183,516	3,179,001	30,362,517
Noxious Weed Control	725,000	0	725,000
Missouri River Enforcement	313,869	17,850	331,719
Grants-Gift-Donation	677,970	32,862	710,832
Nongame Wildlife Conservation	100,000	0	100,000
Aquatic Nuisance Species	2,533,52	415,752	2,949,204
Lonetree Reservoir	2,156,714	30,339	2,187,053
Wildlife Services	<u>500,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>500,000</u>
Total Special Funds	\$104,727,514	\$9,230,165	\$113,957,679
Full-time Equivalent Positions	170.00	0.00	170.00

SECTION 2. ONE-TIME FUNDING - EFFECT ON BASE BUDGET - REPORT TO SEVENTIETH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. The following amounts reflect the one-time funding items approved by the sixty-eighth legislative assembly for the 2023-25 biennium and the 2025-27 biennium one-time funding items included in the appropriation in section 1 of the Act:

<u>One-Time Funding Description</u>	<u>2023-25</u>	<u>2025-27</u>
Aquatic Nuisance lab and storage facility	850,000	0
Devils Lake bunkhouse improvements	350,000	0
In-car video system and body cameras	550,000	0
Fisheries dam repairs	380,000	150,000
Fisheries pondliners and pumps	1,000,000	1,800,000
Wash stations and other equipment	205,000	0
Uniforms and supplies for new FTE	89,090	0
Information technology equipment	0	380,000
Other equipment	0	160,200
Additional PLOTS payments	<u>0</u>	<u>3,000,000</u>
Total special funds	\$3,424,090	\$5,490,200

The 2025-27 biennium one-time funding amounts are not a part of the entity's base budget for the 2027-29 biennium. The game and fish department shall report to the appropriations committees of the seventieth legislative assembly on the use of this one-time funding for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2027.

SECTION 3. GRANTS, GIFTS, AND DONATIONS LINE. The grants, gifts, and donations line item in section 1 of this Act includes up to \$100,000 received by the game and fish department for surface damage, easements, or reclamation on department owned or managed properties as a result of mineral exploration and extraction activities.

SECTION 4. LINE ITEM TRANSFER AUTHORITY. Notwithstanding section 54-16-04, the director of the office of management and budget shall transfer up to \$2,000,000 of appropriation authority between the operating expenses, capital assets, and grants -game and fish line items in section 1 of this Act as requested by the game and fish department during the biennium beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2027. The game and fish department shall notify the legislative council of any transfers made pursuant to this section.

SECTION 5. EXEMPTION - FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITION ADJUSTMENTS. Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the game and fish department may increase or decrease authorized full-time equivalent positions as needed, subject to availability of funds, during the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027. The game and fish department shall report to the office of management and budget and legislative council any adjustments made pursuant to this section.