



NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

Connecting You to Life Outdoors

MANAGING FOR
THE FUTURE



BIENNIAL REPORT

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2021

Pursuant to RSA 206:9-a • Submitted October 1, 2021

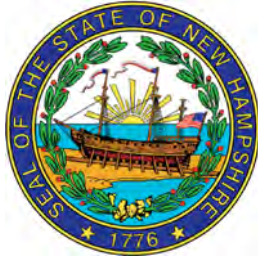


New Hampshire Fish and Game Department
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New Hampshire Fish and Game Department
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CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

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June 30, 2021

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
And the Honorable Council
State House, 25 Capital Street
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Sununu and Honorable Members of the Council:

In accordance with RSA 206:9-a, I am pleased to submit the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department's Biennial Report for July 1, 2019–June 30, 2021.

The Department takes the lead role in conserving fish, wildlife, marine resources, and their habitats—keeping the state's wildlife and fish populations in a healthy balance while conserving our wild places. These natural resources enrich our quality of life and support New Hampshire's economy, generating more than half a billion dollars each year in economic activity related to hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching.

While the work of the Fish and Game Department benefits all of New Hampshire's citizens and visitors, our core functions are still being primarily funded by people buying hunting and fishing licenses. Responsibilities of the agency continue to increase, and the cost of doing business goes up, but our revenue does not. The State Legislature in recent years has provided some supplemental General Funds, allowing us to fulfill our obligations. In the most recent budget planning cycle, those monies were drastically reduced. We did have an increase in license sales due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but all expectations are those numbers will fall back down as the pandemic ends. All parties agree that a revised, long-term, and sustainable funding solution is needed.

We continue to be committed to and passionate about our mission of conserving and protecting New Hampshire's fish, wildlife, and marine resources for all residents and visitors to use and enjoy. There are new and increasing pressures on these resources, however, including disease, climate change, and development. We look forward to working with the Governor, the Legislature, and the public to ensure the sustainability of the NH Fish and Game Department and its essential work and the wildlife species that call the Granite State home.

We thank the Governor and Legislature for their support in working through these challenging times. Our dedicated staff will continue to work tirelessly to connect the public to the great outdoors.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott R. Mason
Executive Director

FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE AND SPORT FISH RESTORATION PROGRAM



Together, the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs have transformed the landscape and immeasurably improved the conditions and prospects for New Hampshire's wildlife.

KEEPING OUR WILDLIFE — AND OUR TRADITIONS — HEALTHY

Purchases of fishing tackle, firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, and motorboat fuels, along with license sales, help fund sport fish and wildlife restoration in New Hampshire. This provides opportunities for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-associated recreation.

NOT SO LONG AGO...

In the middle of the 19th century in New Hampshire, numbers of many wildlife species were dwindling or gone altogether because of unregulated hunting and loss of habitat. Conservation efforts of the time were few—and frequently misguided or scientifically questionable—but leadership was beginning to understand that investing in wildlife and habitat pays great dividends.

A UNIQUE SOLUTION

The Pittman–Robertson Act, or Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, was passed in 1937. It was designed to counteract the wildlife crisis by providing local funding for wildlife management research, the selection, restoration, rehabilitation, and improvement of wildlife habitat, and public use and benefit related to the same.

In 1950, the Dingle–Johnson Act, or Sport Fish Restoration Act, was created to provide similar management, conservation, and restoration improvements for fisheries. Together, the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs (WSFR) have transformed the landscape and immeasurably improved the conditions and prospects for New Hampshire's wildlife. In short, both acts encourage a scientific approach toward managing—and restoring—fish and wildlife.

USER-PAY, USER-BENEFIT

“Every time an American hunter buys a gun or ammunition, he chips in to improve his sport,” said the author of a 10-year report on federal wildlife restoration released in 1949. It's just as true today; WSFR programs are funded by revenues collected from the manufacturers of sporting arms, handguns, ammunition, archery equipment, fishing rods, reels, lures, and other fishing gear. Motorboat and small engine fuel taxes also help fund the system. The money is paid back to New Hampshire Fish and Game—and wildlife agencies in the other U.S. states and territories—to be used on specific wildlife restoration projects.

MEETING THE PUBLIC'S WILDLIFE NEEDS

With the support of WSFR, deer, bear, wild turkeys, and countless other species are now prospering. New Hampshire Fish and Game's scientific research and management give species a solid chance to re-establish healthy populations, while at the same time improving habitats for all to enjoy. Along the way, WSFR helps Fish and Game meet the public's need for wildlife resources by improving boating access, providing aquatic education and outreach, maintaining a quality Hunter Education program, and funding myriad related projects.

New Hampshire's hunters, anglers, and wildlife watchers—including visitors—can thank WSFR's creators for starting a system that has protected our wildlife and our outdoor traditions through the years.

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FISH AND GAME REVENUE CHART	BACK COVER

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ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department was established on June 30, 1865, as the Fisheries Commission. It was organized in its current format in 1935 in accordance with R.L. 240:1 (RSA 206:1), which states that, "There shall be a Fish and Game Department under a Commission to be known as the Fish and Game Commission."

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

Commission members are appointed by the Governor and Executive Council. There are 11 members, one from each county in the state, plus one representing the seacoast area. No more than six commissioners can be members of the same political party. Commission members must be well informed on the subject of fish and wildlife. Their duty is to represent the citizens of New Hampshire and be the stewards of the fish, wildlife, and marine resources of the State of New Hampshire and to set general policy for: conservation of wildlife; development, funding, and implementation of a strategic plan for the operation of the Department; acquisition and development of public access to lands and waters for recreational use consistent with New Hampshire law; conservation education and building support for Department programs; and establishment of positions on proposed legislation that affects the department and fish, wildlife, and marine resources.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director has the responsibility of supervision of employees and all activities and functions of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department and enforces all provisions of state laws relating to fish, wildlife, and marine resources. The Executive Director is nominated by the Commission and appointed by the Governor and Executive Council. Each candidate must be a competent administrator and have knowledge of, and experience in, the requirements for the protection, conservation, and restoration of the fish and wildlife resources of the state. The Executive Director serves a term of four years.

The Office of the Executive Director oversees budget development and oversight and coordination of federal aid, rules and legislation, environmental review, and personnel administration. The Environmental Review Coordinator serves in the Executive Director's Office and provides technical guidance to individuals, environmental consultants, federal and state agencies, municipalities, and non-governmental organizations to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts to fish and wildlife resources and their habitats from proposed development projects. The types of projects reviewed include, but are not limited to: hydropower development and compliance, most Department of Transportation development projects, solar and wind energy projects, surface and ground water withdrawals, dam removals to facilitate fish passage, water quality and contaminant impacts, wetland impacts, aquatic herbicide treatments, large coastal dredge projects, and review of environmental regulations that affect fish and wildlife resources and their habitats. The Environmental Review Coordinator is the liaison with many statewide policy bodies, including the State Wetlands Council, Water Council, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation's Natural Resources Committee, the Dredge Management Task



*Scott R. Mason,
Executive Director*

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION

Force, the Pesticide Board, and the New Hampshire Department of Natural and Cultural Resources' Open Project Selection Process Advisory Board.

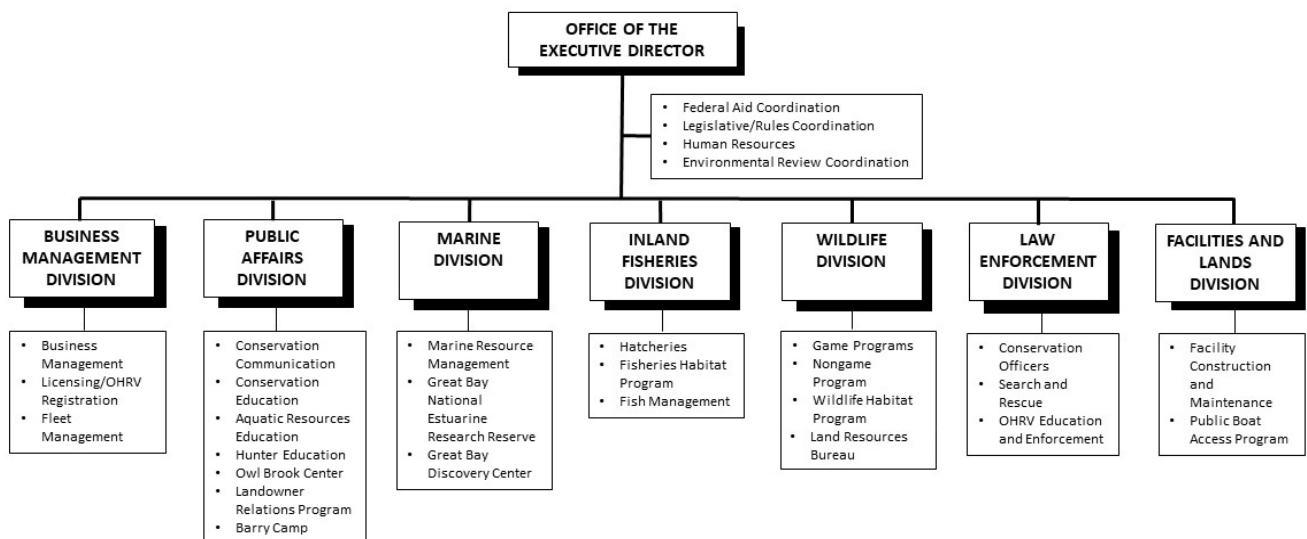
The Executive Director's Office also coordinates the Department's participation in various federal assistance programs. Activities include pre-award coordination and proposal review, application submission, post-award grant management and compliance, as well as supporting the Business Division with certain aspects of fiscal management, budgeting, and federal assistance audits. Federal revenue received as reimbursement for approved grant costs accounted for approximately one quarter of total Department revenue. Federal funds received through these programs are critical to accomplishing the Department's mission and help support a wide range of activities and accomplishments in all divisions of the Department.

The Department's Human Resources (HR) Unit, which is comprised of the Human Resources Administrator, Human Resources Coordinator, and Payroll Officer, administers all aspects of human resources and payroll operations for the Department. These functions include, but are not limited to: recruitment, onboarding, benefits and payroll, training and development, performance management, employee relations, regulatory compliance, position management, and human resources analytics. The bi-weekly payroll process involves approximately 193 full-time and 88 part-time and seasonal employees. All leave administration, including Worker's Compensation and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), is managed by the HR Unit, as well as the drug and alcohol screenings of the Department's Commercial Driver's License (CDL) holders, as required by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. In addition to managing all of the human resources operations for the Department, the HR Unit also assists members of the public with all human resources-related inquiries.

Our Mission:

As the guardian of the state's fish, wildlife and marine resources, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department works in partnership with the public to:

- *Conserve, manage and protect these resources and their habitats;*
- *Inform and educate the public about these resources; and*
- *Provide the public with opportunities to use and appreciate these resources.*



ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION

MAJOR DIVISIONS

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department carries out its mission through the work of seven divisions: Business, Facilities and Lands, Inland Fisheries, Law Enforcement, Marine Fisheries, Public Affairs, and Wildlife.

The **Business Division** facilitates all business functions for the Department, including preparation and submission of the biennial budget. It is responsible for issuing and collecting the revenue from the sale of fishing and hunting licenses and associated permits, as well as the processing of all accounts payable, accounts receivable, cash management, federal and other grants, financial management, and inventory control. Division staff supervise the purchase of all equipment, materials, and supplies and coordinate all contracts. The Business Division also oversees fleet management and manages the Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV) Registration Program. Division staff interact daily with other state agencies and provide all shipping and receiving functions, mail, and courier duties for the Department.

The **Facilities and Lands Division** is responsible for the management and maintenance of all Fish and Game properties statewide, including over 160 buildings, 143 boat ramps, 130 dams, and 7 fish ladders. The Division also provides the design and construction of boating access facilities and fabrication of information kiosks and portable sanitary facilities.

The **Inland Fisheries Division** is responsible for all freshwater fish within both state and interstate waters. Fisheries biologists and fish culturists work to protect and restore fish resources and aquatic habitat and to provide New Hampshire anglers with diverse fishing opportunities. This Division is comprised of six major program areas: Coldwater Fisheries, Warmwater Fisheries, Large Lakes Fisheries, Fish Conservation, Fisheries Habitat, and Fish Culture.

The **Law Enforcement Division** is responsible for enforcement of all laws and rules pertaining to fish, wildlife, and marine resources. The Division is responsible for marine species enforcement, not just along the New Hampshire coast line but also in federal jurisdictional waters. Conservation Officers also have the authority to enforce motor vehicle and criminal laws. These officers prosecute all of their own cases in our District Court System. The Law Enforcement Division has a statutory mandate to coordinate all search and rescue operations occurring in the woodlands and inland waterways of the state. They are the lead agency for search and rescue in New Hampshire's Emergency Operations Plan under New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management. The Law Enforcement Division is responsible for the enforcement of all snowmobile and off-highway recreational vehicles (OHRVs) as well as coordinating all OHRV/snowmobile safety education and training programs.

The **Marine Fisheries Division** is responsible for managing and protecting the rich natural resources of the state's coast, harbors, and estuaries. The Division manages and develops monitoring programs for recreational and commercial marine species and protects their habitats. It also oversees



New Hampton Hatchery

the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (GBNERR). The Marine Division licenses and monitors aquaculture in partnership with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and the Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Public Health. The research program at GBNERR focuses on understanding the structure and function of the Great Bay ecosystem and the effects of natural and human-induced changes.

The Reserve's research and monitoring efforts focus on four themes: water quality, land use change, biological communities, and climate change. The Great Bay Discovery Center hosts a variety of educational programs throughout the year which are designed to teach visitors about the unique natural and cultural resources of the Great Bay Estuary.



New Hampshire Fish and Game Headquarters in Concord

The **Public Affairs Division** informs and educates, building public support for conservation and the Department's mission and encouraging participation in hunting, angling, and other outdoor activities. The Division provides information through its website and a wide variety of publications, including the *New Hampshire Wildlife Journal* magazine and law digests, as well as television and radio programs, videos, social media, advertising, exhibits, media relations, shows/events, merchandising, and marketing. Its educational programs include: hunter, bow-hunter and trapper education; Let's Go Fishing and watershed education; wildlife education and teacher training; and a variety of workshops for the public, such as hunting and fishing talks, hands-on workshops for hunters and anglers, and the New Hampshire Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) Program.

The Department also manages the Owl Brook Hunter Education Center, which provides educational programming, and the Barry Conservation Camp, which teaches children about conservation at its summer sessions every year.

Within the Public Affairs Division, the Landowner Relations Program works in partnership with hunters, anglers, and landowners to maintain access to private lands for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation. This program identifies issues and concerns that landowners face in keeping their properties open, and works proactively to address them. The Public Affairs Division also serves as the liaison to the nonprofit Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire.

The **Wildlife Division** manages, maintains, protects, and conserves the state's game and nongame wildlife resources and their habitats. Game populations are managed at healthy, sustainable levels consistent with available habitat and diverse public interests. Nongame species are managed to keep common species common and to secure the sustained presence and/or recovery of threatened and endangered species.

Habitat programs are designed to conserve, protect, restore, and manage diverse wildlife habitats, including critical habitats for game and nongame species, and habitat biologists provide technical guidance to municipalities, industrial forest owners, and private landowners for conservation purposes.

Wildlife biologists conduct surveys and analyze data to assess and monitor populations and conduct research to better inform conservation and management decisions. Biologists promulgate harvest regulations for game and furbearer species to satisfy diverse public interests and to maintain healthy wildlife populations. Biologists also provide technical assistance to local, regional, and statewide interests to protect and enhance wildlife populations and habitats and to minimize development impacts on wildlife species at risk. Biologists work in partnership with U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services staff to prevent or mitigate wildlife damage to agricultural lands and private property and to ensure public safety. Biologists also respond to animal emergencies, monitor diseases, and manage state lands for the purpose of enhancing wildlife values and facilitating public use.

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION

PERSONNEL DATA

<u>Current Number of Employees</u>	<u>6/30/20</u>	<u>6/30/21</u>
Unclassified	1	1
Classified	190	190
Temporary*	<u>91</u>	<u>91</u>
Total	282	282

*Permanent employees are those occupying positions permanently established by the Legislature, whereas temporary employees are those whose service is authorized for a limited or intermittent period (full-time temporary, part-time, and seasonal).

PHYSICAL PLANT AND PROPERTY APPRAISAL

	<u>6/30/20</u>	<u>6/30/21</u>
Equipment	11,567,240	12,052,553
Physical Plant	116,957,812	118,762,469
Farm	0	0
Highway	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	\$128,525,052	\$130,815,022
RECEIPTS		
General Funds	1,576,019	1,739,275
Federal Funds	7,547,404	8,569,538
Agency Income	9,177,888	12,207,211
Fish And Game Funds	<u>12,816,020</u>	<u>12,188,936</u>
TOTAL	\$30,202,110	\$33,778,577
EXPENDITURES		
Permanent Personnel	11,003,223	10,855,368
Current Expenses	2,213,482	2,490,355
Heat, Electricity & Water	342,830	335,272
Transfers to OIT	864,604	759,976
Equipment New/Replacement	535,170	762,176
Land Acquisition	177,059	1,646,567
Transfers To Other Agencies	5,009,919	7,152,544
Other Personnel Services (Seas & Pt)	443,210	403,612
Benefits	6,087,383	5,875,695
Retirement, Pension & Health Insurance	801,211	710,409
In-State & Out-of State Travel	349,070	278,748
Grants-Federal & Non Federal	112,258	156,791
Contracts for Services	143,620	180,421
Interagency Payments	1,347,324	1,455,988
Research and Habitat Management	<u>771,747</u>	<u>714,655</u>
TOTAL	\$30,202,110	\$33,778,577

STATEMENT OF SALES OR EXCHANGES

Promotional expenditures related to licenses:

- During the biennium, 12 nonresident honorary licenses were issued in 2019, and 11 were issued in 2020.

The Last Biennium and COVID

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw a large increase in people returning to traditional outdoor recreation. This meant that license sales increased to a level we have not seen in years, off-highway recreational vehicle (OHRV) registrations jumped to new highs, and Hike Safe card sales also hit new records. At the same time, the Governor initiated a hiring freeze, most out of state travel stopped, and some of our staff worked from home. This resulted in the Department spending less money.

Consequently, Fish and Game has seen a large increase this biennium in the Fish and Game Fund. Although we currently have a very healthy balance, we cannot count on these large sales and low expenses in the future. We need to continue to seek support from outdoor enthusiasts who benefit from the work that Fish and Game does but who do not currently pay into the system. But asking for mandatory fees is not usually the best way to make friends. We work with a wide variety of user groups that are very willing to help defray the costs of running the agency.

The Nongame Program has been very successful in generating donations from supporters. However, their Alteration of Terrain (AOT) review program has grown due to an increase in development in the state. In order to continue to protect the states endangered and threatened species, the Governor and Council and the Fiscal Committee have approved a Federal ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) grant to Fish and Game. This will allow us to hire four new temporary people to improve our efficiency in providing the AOT reviews for the NH Department of Environmental Services.

Hike Safe cards continue to grow in popularity, but we are still having to subsidize the cost of search and rescue efforts with hunting and fishing license sales proceeds. We have been partnering with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service and the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), and both groups have offered to work with us to get the message out to more hikers about the benefits of Hike Safe cards to try and close this gap.

We also need to continue to seek General Fund support for our Department. Quite often, we are asked to perform duties just slightly outside of our mission statement. Usually it is because we have the skills or special equipment to get the job done. Being frugal is certainly a native trait for New Hampshire, but these small missions add up and we need to receive sufficient General Fund dollars to cover these expenses.

Looking Forward to the Next Biennium

The most recent budget-setting process coincided with the height of the pandemic. At that time, no one knew what the future would hold. The Governor set some fairly conservative parameters for the different state agency budgets, and we proposed a Fish and Game budget that met his priorities. We significantly reduced our General Fund request from what it was in the prior biennium and kept a healthy balance in the Fish and Game Fund. We are already struggling with this budget and may have to go back and ask for permission to spend more from the Fish and Game Fund this biennium to meet our obligations. We will continue to be fiscally responsible while searching out new revenue streams.

We have begun a study of our hatchery system and have already received \$4.6 million in capital funding to start rebuilding one of our facilities. This will just begin to meet our needs at just one of our six hatcheries. We have issued an RQF (request for quote) for an engineering firm to help us develop a new system to reduce phosphorus emissions. We are continuing to look for more monies to invest into the hatchery system while maintaining the level of fish production the angling public expects.

We may be a small agency in terms of employees, but the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department is responsible for a wide array of services for the citizens and visitors of the Granite State. Our mission is to help people appreciate and experience the natural beauty and sporting traditions we are privileged to enjoy as well as manage and conserve these valuable resources. We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature, the Governor's Office, our partners, and the general public to continue to achieve this mandate.

FINANCIAL STATUS OF FISH AND GAME

COMPARISON OF INDIVIDUALS HOLDING PAID LICENSES TO HUNT AND FISH

(From Data Collected For USFWS License Certifications)

HUNTING						
YEAR	RESIDENT HUNTING	NUMBER CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE	NON-RES. HUNTING	NUMBER CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE
2006	49,415	250	0.5%	11,661	89	0.8%
2007	48,786	(629)	-1.3%	10,982	(679)	-5.8%
2008	48,553	(233)	-0.5%	10,601	(381)	-3.5%
2009	48,947	394	0.8%	10,473	(128)	-1.2%
2010	48,486	(461)	-0.9%	10,815	342	3.3%
2011	46,506	(1,980)	-4.1%	9,905	(910)	-8.4%
2012	48,506	2,000	4.3%	10,562	657	6.6%
2013	50,294	1,788	3.7%	11,262	700	6.6%
2014	48,789	(1,505)	-3.0%	10,529	(733)	-6.5%
2015	47,599	(1,190)	-2.4%	10,500	(29)	-0.3%
2016	47,073	(526)	-1.1%	10,599	99	0.9%
2017	45,893	(1,180)	-2.5%	10,108	(491)	-4.6%
2018	45,590	(303)	-0.7%	9,972	(136)	-1.3%
2019	45,664	74	0.2%	10,631	659	6.6%
2020	49,742	4,078	8.9%	10,887	256	2.4%

FISHING						
YEAR	RESIDENT FISHING	NUMBER CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE	NON-RES. FISHING	NUMBER CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE
2006	96,854	931	1.0%	43,970	(702)	-1.6%
2007	99,878	3,024	3.1%	46,631	2,661	6.1%
2008	99,833	(45)	0.0%	45,160	(1,471)	-3.2%
2009	103,657	3,824	3.8%	46,313	1,153	2.6%
2010	100,941	(2,716)	-2.6%	45,502	(811)	-1.8%
2011	105,055	4,114	4.1%	46,086	584	1.3%
2012	107,843	2,788	2.7%	47,331	1,245	2.7%
2013	109,444	1,601	1.5%	47,234	(97)	-0.2%
2014	111,871	2,427	2.2%	48,661	1,427	3.0%
2015	111,013	(858)	-0.8%	49,566	905	1.9%
2016	106,910	(4,103)	-3.7%	49,657	91	0.2%
2017	105,872	(1,038)	-1.0%	50,128	471	0.9%
2018	106,242	370	0.3%	50,239	111	0.2%
2019	108,060	1,818	1.7%	51,639	1,400	2.8%
2020	135,521	27,461	25.4%	55,513	3,874	7.5%

Business Division

- From March 2020 through June 2021, while so many New Hampshire businesses were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fish and Game Business Division was open every day with normal hours of operation. All staff reported to work every day ensuring the continuation of providing outstanding customer service and support both internal and external.
- The Department saw record numbers of both license and OHRV registration sales in both fiscal years 2020 and 2021 as more and more people are getting outdoors. This trickle-down effect increased the workload of staff significantly from the front sales office to the customer service of answering the telephones.
- Continue to improve and expand the online licensing system to include Game Check and Law Mobile Applications.

Federal Assistance Grant

- During the biennium, Fish and Game administered 56 separate federal assistance grants and cooperative agreements totaling over \$15 million in federal assistance to the Department. The primary sources of federal dollars to the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department are the US Department of the Interior through the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Department of Commerce through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Funds were awarded under 10 different funding programs of these agencies. Mandatory, formula-based apportionments from the US Fish and Wildlife Service under the Wildlife Restoration and Sport Fish Restoration Acts provided about three-quarters of all federal revenue received by the Department.
- Federal funds received during the biennium helped NH Fish and Game accomplish a wide range of program functions, such as fish and wildlife inventories, marine and coastal programs, fish hatchery operation, construction and maintenance of boat access facilities, hunter and aquatic education programs, wildlife disease monitoring, habitat improvement and management, land acquisition and protection, and certain qualifying law enforcement activities.

Human Resources Unit

- Successful management of COVID-19 throughout the agency by providing continuous and consistent guidance to the Department regarding protocols, ensuring maintenance of low numbers of positive cases and/or exposures.
- Maintained full support to the Department, as well as the public, in the office, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Continuous process improvement to streamline procedures for efficiency to assist leadership, supervisors, employees, as well as the HR Unit.
- Updated forms and created new forms for ease of use and process flow.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FACILITIES AND LANDS DIVISION

Facilities and Lands Division

The Facilities and Lands Division has three distinct missions: boat access construction and maintenance, building improvements and maintenance, and energy use management and conservation.



Workers installing the seasonal floating dock at the Newfound Lake boat access area in Bristol, NH.



Abrams three-bay pole barn in Conway, NH, prior to painting.

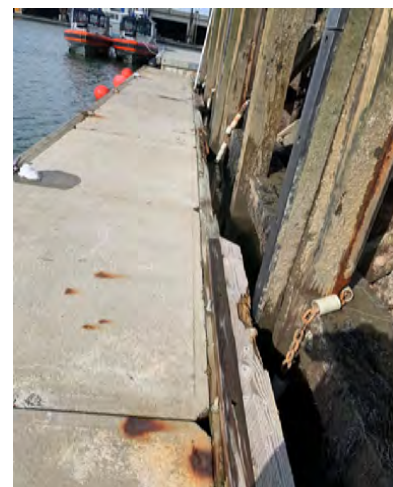
- During this biennium, the agency began implementing improvements to security and safety systems while continuing to focus on energy-saving measures.
- COVID has had a major impact on the duties and issues the Department has been faced with. A hiring freeze delayed the ability to hire 9 seasonal employees to maintain and clean up at the boat access sites. Coupled with this, use by the public of all of our lands increased and the season expanded. To cover this work, full-time staff were pulled away from their typical duties to support the Department's mission to supply clean and safe sites to the public.
- Four buildings at two different locations in Greenland and Durham joined a performance contract with the New Hampshire Department of Administrative Services to implement energy-saving measures at 27 facilities. Some of these measures include: energy-efficient pumps for the touch tank at the Great Bay Discovery Center; new LED lighting; sealing around penetrations including doors, windows, and pipes; and smart-temperature controls. The project overall should result in a reduction of utility costs of \$212,240 annually through an up-front capital investment of \$2.86 million.
- The Department teamed up with the Energy Division of the NH Office of Strategic Initiatives and the NH Fish and Game Fisheries Division to implement fire marshal and energy-saving measures at the Twin Mountain Hatchery, Milford Hatchery, and Warren Hatchery.
- The Department also teamed up with the Energy Division to upgrade lighting and install a new HVAC system at the Karner Blue Butterfly Lab in Concord.
- The carpentry crew replaced three exterior doors and started the installation of vinyl siding on the worn exterior of the office located at 17 Hazen Drive in Concord.
- The carpentry crew built steps for the Wildlife Division at their New Hampton storage barn.
- The Department reorganized positions under the Wildlife Division to better manage the thousands of acres of Wildlife Management Areas. This change has removed the staff from the Facilities and Lands Division along with the responsibility to manage these lands.
- With the support from the engineering firm Collins Engineering out of Portsmouth, the Department completed final design and bid and have been issued a notice to proceed to complete phase 2 of the Downing's Landing boat access project in Alton.
- During this biennium, the Department supported the Glenn's Cove property in Greenland. The property recently came to the Department through a life

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FACILITIES AND LANDS DIVISION

estate donation. The site is historically known for access to the Great Bay smelt fishery. Work has included winterizing buildings, installing a new water line, clean up of the property inside and out, and starting conceptual design and permit applications to obtain grants from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to invest in the property.

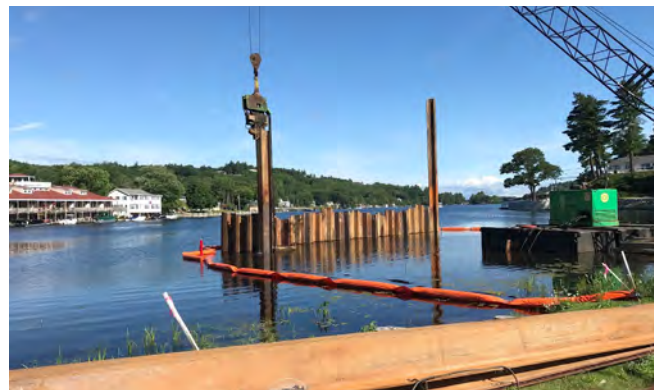
- Replaced an existing asphalt roof with a steel roof at the Abrams Garage in Conway. Work also included prepping and painting a pole barn on site.
- Completed electrical fire code upgrades at the Owl Brook Hunter Education Center in Holderness.
- Constructed a double-lane boat ramp and improved parking and drainage systems at Downing's Landing in Alton.
- Through the use of contractors and staff, investment has been put into the Region 3 Office in Durham, the Region 2 Office in New Hampton, and the Region 4 Office in Keene including exterior repairs and painting, interior painting, and flooring replacement.
- The Agency has implemented a key card system at our Concord campus to improve safety and security.
- The Department manages multiple contracts, and a contract was initiated for preventive freezer maintenance for the Department's six walk-in coolers at the regional offices, two hatcheries, and Barry Conservation Camp.



Emergency repairs were done on the floating Law Enforcement dock in New Castle, NH.



Repairs were made to the dam on the Lamprey River in Newmarket including dam boards, grout holes, and a new shutoff valve.



Coffer dam being installed at the Downing's Landing boat launch in Alton, NH.



A fisheries settling pond prior to excavation.



The pump house at the Berlin Hatchery being worked on.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

INLAND FISHERIES DIVISION



A black crappie netted during spring sampling conducted by Department fisheries biologists.



The Department assisted with design and installation a “fish ramp” to improve fish passage at this culvert on Bartlett Brook in Warner.

Inland Fisheries Division

The Inland Fisheries Division is responsible for all freshwater fish within both state and interstate waters. Fisheries biologists work to protect and restore fish resources and aquatic habitat and to provide New Hampshire anglers with diverse fishing opportunities. Fish culturists are responsible for operating Fish and Game’s six fish hatcheries, which during the biennium produced nearly one million fish each year to meet a variety of the Division’s management program needs.

COLDWATER FISHERIES PROGRAM

- As a partner in a 15-state effort to implement the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture’s conservation action plan, 86 stream sites were surveyed in New Hampshire, spanning 28 different sub-watersheds; 67 of these sites were found to have self-sustaining populations of brook trout (78%).
- Stream crossing assessments have occurred throughout the state using a watershed approach. During the biennium, crossings were assessed primarily in the Androscoggin and Saco River watersheds. The NH Stream Crossing Initiative has developed subcommittees to review protocols and data analysis to ensure data collection and model outputs are accurate and reflective of what’s occurring on the landscape. These data continue to be used to identify restoration effort needs and prioritization throughout the state. Stream crossing assessments continue to be conducted by the Department.
- Research efforts using Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) and Radio Telemetry transmitters have proven invaluable in determining migration and seasonal habitat preferences of brook trout. The information learned continues to be used for habitat restoration projects.
- A database linking modeled habitat conditions with stocking locations and quantities was created in 2021. In an effort to increase wild brook trout production, stocking locations were removed in headwater habitats (stream order 1 and 2) and in streams that received less than 200 brook trout. Trout were reallocated to the remaining locations. This tool was used to help draft the first ever NH Trout Management Plan.
- Aerially stocked brook trout fingerlings into nearly 50 remote ponds annually.
- Fisheries staff assessed the trout population in Boundary Pond in Pittsburg during the fall of 2019 and 2020.

WARMWATER PROGRAM

- Assessments of warmwater fish populations include determining species abundance, size and condition statistics, and age and growth parameters. Sampling is conducted using an electrofishing boat. During the biennium, warmwater fish population assessments were completed for Naticook Lake (Merrimack) and Otter Lake (Greenfield).

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

INLAND FISHERIES DIVISION

- Spring black crappie fyke net surveys were conducted on Halfmoon Pond (Washington) and Bolster Pond (Sullivan).
- Surveys to evaluate young-of-the-year black bass were completed on the Connecticut River (Hinsdale and Claremont), Big Squam Lake, Forest Lake (Whitefield), Spofford Lake (Chesterfield), and Lake Winnepesaukee.
- The black bass tournament database and warmwater fish database were updated and verified.

LARGE LAKES PROGRAM

- Conducted annual fall trap-netting surveys to monitor landlocked salmon size and age-class characteristics at Big Squam, Sunapee, and Winnepesaukee Lakes.
- Conducted annual hydro-acoustic and trawl-netting surveys to monitor pelagic forage fish (primarily rainbow smelt) size characteristics, spatial distribution, and density at Big Squam, Little Squam, Merrymeeting, Newfound, Sunapee, Winnepesaukee, and Winnisquam Lakes.
- Significantly increased landlocked salmon angling opportunities in selected lakes, including Big Squam and Sunapee, through experimental fall stocking of larger yearling landlocked salmon.
- Reimplemented salmon spring stocking with improved quality yearlings, with assistance from Nashua National Fish Hatchery.

FISH CONSERVATION PROGRAM

- Collected data from sites throughout New Hampshire in an effort to monitor the status of American eel populations throughout the state.
- Drafted and implemented the Bridle Shiner Species Recovery Plan.
- Stocked over 70,000 river herring into suitable spawning habitat in the Merrimack River watershed as part of the Merrimack River Herring Restoration Plan.
- Assisted with a radio-telemetry study to monitor upstream and downstream fish passage for American shad and river herring in the Merrimack River.
- Participated in dam relicensing negotiations to improve instream flows and fish passage on the Connecticut River.

FISHERIES HABITAT PROGRAM

- Provided technical assistance to four state agencies, two federal agencies, and at least fifteen municipalities and non-governmental organizations on fish habitat restoration and conservation.
- Served on six technical and planning committees focused on issues related to aquatic habitat, water quality and quantity, and flooding.
- Continued the Nash Stream research on wild brook trout habitat use and effects from our large-scale habitat restoration efforts.



An old dam being removed on the South Branch of the Gale River in Bethlehem to improve habitat for wild brook trout.



Rainbow smelt captured during trawl netting activities at night on Lake Winnepesaukee.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

INLAND FISHERIES DIVISION

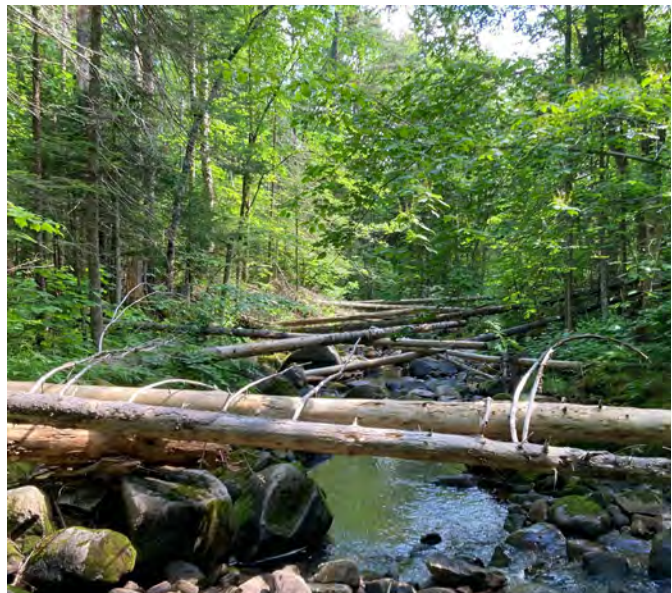
- Continued wild brook trout habitat restoration and research with our multiple partners including the design, construction, and assessment of the state's first "fish ramp" to reconnect wild brook trout populations in the Warner River watershed.

FISH CULTURE

- The six Fish and Game hatchery facilities produced and distributed fish for trout and salmon stocking programs throughout the state to meet a variety of the Division's management needs. The hatcheries distributed 383,236 pounds of fish in FY20 (figures for FY21 were not available at press time).



The Department's "shad truck" is vital to restoring American shad and river herring to our waters.



Habitat restoration work done at Nash Stream Forest.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Law Enforcement Division

- During the biennium, Conservation Officers coordinated over 300 search and rescue missions involving hikers, climbers, snowmobilers, children, and elderly people. This total includes the recovery of victims who died while recreating on New Hampshire's trails and within the state's wilderness areas and waters.
- The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department Dive Team conducted a total of 26 drowning recoveries and evidence search missions during the past biennium. This team continues to be a resource for New Hampshire State Police and municipal agencies.
- Law Enforcement has three certified Conservation Officer K-9 Teams capable of assisting with search and rescue operations, evidence recovery for criminal investigations, and tracking suspects or lost victims. The Division also has one team in training; CO St. Pierre and K9 Winni were brought on as the newest team in September 2020. They will attend the six-week tracking school in August 2021 at the Vermont Police Academy where they will work to achieve certifications in scent discriminate tracking, gun powder detection, evidence article detection, and fish and wildlife detection. In 2019, CO Fluette and K9 Moxie were recognized as the Tracking Team of the Year through the Vermont Police Canine Association and CO James Benvenuti and K9 Cora, for the second year in a row, received the Evidence Detection Team Award. CO Mancini and K9 Ruger were recognized as the Evidence Detection Team of the Year through the Vermont Police Canine Association for their work in 2020.
- The benefits of the Division's Airboat Team continue to be seen across the state. Undoubtedly, this team's contribution to search and rescue efforts is where it stands out as most valuable. In some instances, the deployment of the airboat and its trained operators has been critical to the success of search and rescue missions, especially in swift-water and thin-ice conditions. This was evident most recently during recovery operations where the airboat was used not only to transport Dive Team and Underwater Search Team personnel across unsafe ice conditions, but also to provide them with a safe platform to work from in such conditions. Over the last couple of years, the Airboat Team has also proven to be an excellent resource to deploy for fish stocking. The airboat's ability to navigate shallow, swift water has allowed for Conservation Officers, Fisheries Biologists, and Hatchery Personnel to jointly stock fish throughout sections of the Connecticut River and Androscoggin River in Coos County. This effort to stock trout thoroughly across miles of these rivers has been very well received by the fishing public, specifically because it provides ample opportunities in these areas for both shore and drift anglers alike.
- The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department Side Scan Sonar and Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Team utilizes the most advanced underwater search technology available today to carry out search missions. This technology is operated by four highly trained officers and utilizes sonar and video to search water bodies, thereby reducing the use of divers and minimizing the risk to human life. Over the past two years, this search



Conservation Officers and NH Air National Guard on a Search and Rescue mission in NH's White Mountains.



Lt. Mancini and K-9 Ruger



MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION



Conservation Officers on snowmobile patrol.



Fish and Game's Law Enforcement Division Dive Team provides drowning recoveries and evidence search missions throughout New Hampshire.



The Dive Team conducts joint training on thin-ice missions with the Airboat Team.

capability has been key in the recovery of numerous drowning victims, the recovery of evidence, and the closure of several cases. Through close collaboration with other agencies, this technology has been a huge asset in assisting them to fulfill their missions as well, including the New Hampshire State Police, County Sheriff's Departments, and local police and fire departments.

- The Division's Operation Game Thief Program (OGT) continues to experience significant growth including new public relations and outreach initiatives to increase awareness and encourage citizens to report wildlife crimes. A grant from the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire funded the purchase of a trailer to be used as an interactive display at shows and events to promote OGT.
- The *North Woods Law: New Hampshire* television series continues to feature the work of Conservation Officers and biologists in the course of their daily duties enforcing wildlife, fisheries, and coastal marine laws and conservation. The program continues to grow in popularity and social media followers. We consistently receive enthusiastic support from political leaders and the public from all over the country and around the world.
- OHRV (wheeled vehicle) registration numbers continue to climb each year. In the biennium, the state continued to see an historic high of over 35,000 registered vehicles. Conservation Officers responded to 162 OHRV accidents during the biennium.
- Snowmobile registrations, which typically reflect our winter severity, have been consistent during the biennium with over 43,000 snowmobiles registered in FY20. Conservation Officers responded to 209 snowmobile accidents in the biennium.
- Conservation Officers continued to support the New Hampshire Snowmobile Association and Easter Seals's "Camp Sno-Mo" fundraising efforts, which help to ensure summer camp opportunities for children with a variety of life challenges.
- The number of students in our OHRV and Snowmobile Safety training courses continue to increase each year. Over 2,000 students received safety training in FY20 alone.
- During the biennium, Conservation Officers issued over 2,600 summonses and warnings for OHRV violations and over 1,600 summonses and warnings for snowmobile violations. Conservation Officers utilize ATVs, trail bikes, UTVs, and snowmobiles while on patrol. Over the biennium, officers operated these machines over 62,000 miles while enforcing OHRV and snowmobile regulations.
- During the biennium, Conservation Officers responded to over 9,800 calls for service for law enforcement-related complaints. Officers issued over 3,300 summonses and warnings for wildlife and fisheries violations. These included but were not limited to illegal night hunting, overlimits of fish/wildlife, fishing/hunting without a license, illegal possession of exotic wildlife, taking wildlife during the closed season, and commercial fishing violations. In addition to enforcement work, Conservation Officers responded to over 13,500 calls to service for nuisance wildlife.

Marine Fisheries Division

- Worked with federal and state partners via the New England Fishery Management Council and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to manage 62 marine species. This included participation in stock assessments and the creation and modifications to fisheries management plans for species such as striped bass, American lobster, American eel, Atlantic herring, groundfish, Atlantic menhaden, and their habitats.
- Operated and monitored fish ladders on six coastal rivers and American eel fish passage ramps on two coastal rivers to provide access to fresh-water spawning habitat for more than 335,000 diadromous fish over the biennium.
- Partnered with state and federal agencies and dam owners to remove the upper Sawyer Mill Dam on the Bellamy River in winter of 2019/2020 to provide passage for diadromous fish such as river herring and American eels. Monitoring the site for migratory anadromous fish in the spring of 2020, biologists observed some fish navigating through the newly formed riverbed. However, due to minor adjustments to the restored riverbed in the summer of 2020, anadromous fish were observed migrating through the site in greater numbers in 2021.
- Conducted research on changes in American lobster migratory patterns, growth, and stressors due to warming coastal waters.
- In collaboration with NH Fish and Game, NH Sea Grant, Wells National Research Estuarine Reserve, and the University of New Hampshire, began research on Jonah crab mortality, growth rates, and how the practice of removing claws at sea influences the survival of crabs.
- Continued annual fisheries-independent monitoring programs that collect abundance and biological data on over 100 different marine species residing in or migrating through New Hampshire's marine waters. The programs include: juvenile finfish seine survey of estuaries; cooperative Maine/New Hampshire inshore trawl survey of nearshore coastal waters from New Hampshire to the Maine/Canada border; population monitoring of juvenile American eels in certain New Hampshire coastal rivers; rainbow smelt spawning survey in Great Bay tributaries; and a survey of oysters in the Great Bay Estuary for annual growth, seeding, disease, and predation. Much of this information is used in stock assessments and fisheries management plans for some of these species.
- Monitored the catch and harvest of New Hampshire's commercial fisheries in coastal waters. New Hampshire's commercial fishing ports have averaged almost 11 million pounds of landed seafood, valued at over \$33 million during the biennium. A diverse range of species is represented in the state's commercial landings, which included 38 species of fish and invertebrates.
- Additional fisheries-dependent monitoring occurring in New Hampshire coastal and estuarine waters included catch and effort reports from permitted coastal harvesters, rainbow smelt winter angler fishery survey, and a volunteer striped bass angler survey.



Upper Bellamy Dam removal



Upper Bellamy Dam removal complete



Lower Sawyer Mill Dam deconstruction

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MARINE FISHERIES DIVISION



Lower Sawyer Mill Dam removed

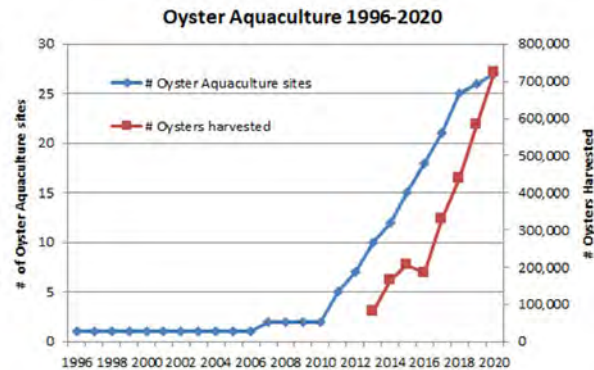


2021 derelict gear clean up



Girl exploring Great Bay

- Coordinated the removal of derelict commercial fishing gear with cooperation from commercial fishing industry members, NH Port Authority, the Yankee Fishermen's Association, New Hampshire State Parks, and North Atlantic Excavation through organized trap clean ups and the Fishing for Energy Program. This effort resulted in the removal of almost 17 tons of gear from New Hampshire's coastline in FY2020 and about 14 tons in early FY2021.
- Monitored aquaculture in New Hampshire, primarily oyster farming, with 78 acres licensed in FY2020. The total oysters harvested from aquaculture sites were 584,153 oysters in FY2019 and 725,004 oysters in FY2020.



- Performed 360 survey assignments and 27 at-sea sampling trips in co-operation with National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries, to gather data on catch and effort for saltwater recreational fisheries. During the biennium, Marine Division staff interviewed between 1,010 and 2,100 anglers each year. In 2019, 609,003 recreational saltwater fishing trips occurred in New Hampshire, and another 920,293 trips were taken in 2020. Atlantic mackerel was the most harvested fish in 2019 and 2020, with close to 1.5 million harvested each year in the state.
- Worked with the seafood industry to distribute direct payments totaling approximately \$2.7 million in 2020 CARES Act funding to eligible New Hampshire seafood industry businesses/individuals. Will continue working with the seafood industry to distribute approximately \$2.9 million in similar funding through the Consolidated Appropriations Act in FY2022.

GREAT BAY NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE

- Over 5,000 visitors came to the exhibit room at the Great Bay Discovery Center in 2019. The Discovery Center was closed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the grounds of the Discovery Center remained open, and thousands of people enjoyed the boardwalk, picnic area, and waterfront.
- Due to the increased outside use of the grounds during the COVID-19 pandemic, staff developed no-touch programs on site to continue the environmental education and natural discovery of the Great Bay Estuary and the fish and wildlife that surround the Bay. These included: assembling

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MARINE FISHERIES DIVISION

approximately 200 free weekly “Grab and Go” kits with nature-themed activities for children ages 4-10; scavenger hunts for families while visiting; and a Christmas Trees for Wildlife Trail program where families could bring their Christmas trees, decorate them with natural items, and watch how wildlife used the old Christmas trees through the use of wildlife trail cams.

- Hosted over 5,000 hours of volunteer time dedicated to education, re-search, and land stewardship.
- Developed video modules that re-created the school field trips and distributed them to teachers along with resources to guide students through a virtual experience at the site. Also developed virtual public lectures, posted resources for teachers and families to the website and social media accounts, created weekly Facebook challenges, launched a live osprey camera, and developed a newsletter to keep volunteers connected to each other and to the organization while they were at home.
- Conducted two Teacher on the Estuary workshops (TOTE) to give New Hampshire high school teachers hands-on science and technology curriculum through estuarine experiential learning related to climate adaptation principles and the natural history of Great Bay.
- Completed a market analysis of environmental education providers in the region and a needs assessment of teachers to understand how to meet K-12 student and teacher education needs.
- Conducted 27 technical assistance workshops and meetings to bring technical information to community planners and local officials in the Great Bay watershed.
- Created an online tool for evaluating the resiliency of saltmarshes nationally and locally.
- Installed new exhibits to interpret horseshoe crabs, osprey, the historical use of cabins along Great Bay and pollinators.
- Completed a five-year management plan for all GBNERR activities.
- Received a positive and comprehensive program evaluation from our federal partner, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- Secured close to \$1 million to improve the Glenn's Cove Wildlife Management Area in Greenland.
- Implemented monitoring indicators useful to assessing and tracking the health of Great Bay, including:
 - ♦ Saltmarsh vegetation surveys
 - ♦ A macro algae survey
 - ♦ Invasive crabs; and
 - ♦ Environmental DNA



Recycled Christmas trees at the Great Bay Discovery Center



Living wall at the Great Bay Discovery Center

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION

Public Affairs Division

EDUCATION UNIT

- The S3 Event Manager Registration System development continued to expand online registration to more education programs providing greater public access to education resources.
- Three webinars on "Climate Change and Wildlife" were produced and aired to the public on the topics of Climate Change in New Hampshire, Phenology, which focused on moose and the winter tick, and Reconnecting Watersheds. A fourth webinar will be produced in the fall of 2021 on Climate Change and New Hampshire's Marine Environment.

Conservation Education

- The Urban Wildlife Education program was revised and initiated in partnership with New Hampshire Audubon Society. The Urban Wildlife Education program provided wildlife education to 700 Manchester School District third graders during the biennium on the topics of habitats, reptiles and amphibians, birds, and mammals. The goal of the program is to introduce children to wildlife to help them see that it is all around them and to encourage them to become good conservation stewards.
- Nine Durant grants were applied for through the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire securing funds to support the schoolyards Wildlife Action Grants, Project WILD, a new Nature Backpack program, The Urban Wildlife Education Program, the *Wild Times for Kids* educational magazine publication, and the Winter Severity Data Collection Program.
- Wildlife Stewards provided 24 presentations on bears, bobcats, and brook trout to the public, reaching 610 people, highlighting Fish and Game's successful wildlife management efforts funded through the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Act.
- Schoolyard Wildlife Action Grants contributed \$10,000 in Durant funds to support 21 schools for schoolyard projects. These projects included establishing pollinator gardens for native pollinators and monarch butterflies, integrated wildlife education spaces in the schoolyard, and a monarch monitoring station.
- Thirteen workshops were held training 261 teachers on use of the Project WILD curriculum supplement which helps teachers integrate wildlife education into their K-12 classrooms. This is a train-the-trainer program, so one teacher trained provides wildlife education to students for many years to come.

Hunter Education

- During the biennium, the Hunter Education program provided 327 classes certifying 3,946 new hunters. In addition, 100 people were certified for trapping through 8 Trapper Education courses.
- Despite the pandemic and the necessary delays, staff and volunteers still managed, with precautions in place, to provide field days to over 2,000 hunters during FY21.



Climate change webinar



Nature Backpack Program contents



Owl Brook

- Maintenance was done on the Owl Brook Hunter Education Center in Holderness including: replacing exterior doors on the classroom building and garage; installing 2 air conditioning units in the classroom building; having the driveway and parking area sealed; replacing the emergency lighting in the classroom building, the small bore range, and the garage; and having the striping in the parking lot redone.

Let's Go Fishing

- The Let's Go Fishing (LGF) Program offered 51 free courses for the public and schools during the biennium. The program also provided one educational seminar on bass fishing for the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association's (NHIAA) High School Bass Fishing Tournament.
- One year of the Barry Conservation Fishing Camp was held in FY20.
- The Let's Go Fishing Program engaged with approximately 2,000 people during the biennium.
- The Watershed Education Program provided support to over 100 schools, 120 teachers, and 6,000 students. This program was delivered through one Watershed Ecology Institute, eight teacher training workshops, and field trip support. During the 2020–2021 school year, much of the program was provided by shifting training and curriculum support to an online format.
- Fifteen schools and 270 students participated in the Winter Severity Data Collection Program to learn how snow depth and temperature affect deer populations in the state.

Becoming an Outdoors-Woman

- The Department's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) Program is co-sponsored with the New Hampshire Wildlife Federation and targets women age 18 and older for workshops that teach outdoor skills usually associated with hunting and fishing, but useful for many outdoor pursuits. During the biennium, 269 women attended BOW and Beyond BOW workshops on such topics as deep sea fishing, ice fishing, shoe and shoot, winter survival, and winter tracking.

INFORMATION UNIT

Website, Publications, News, and Merchandise

- The NH Fish and Game Department's mobile-friendly website saw over 110,000 unique visits each month of the biennium and an increase in visitors each year. The website boasts over 800 pages of informational and educational content, images, and videos.
- In FY20, 333 news releases were issued by Public Affairs and 334 were issued in FY21 in various formats, communicating the Department's messages to media outlets across New Hampshire and in Massachusetts to approximately 1,000 followers. These totals also now include support of the Law Enforcement Division's search and rescue press releases.



*Becoming an Outdoors-Woman
fly fishing class*

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION



2021 NH Wildlife Calendar



On the Nature Trail podcast

- Public Affairs Division staff coordinated the Department's social media outreach and increased our following on all platforms. We now have over 77,000 followers on Facebook (a 22% increase), 3,200 on Twitter (a 60% increase), 33,500 on Instagram (a more than two-fold increase over the biennium), and 3,458 on YouTube, up from 2,287 two years ago. On our YouTube channel people viewed 12,900 hours of our content over the biennium, an increase of over 150%.
- The Division sold 1,595 units of merchandise in 2019 equaling \$35,586 in sales and 3,978 units totaling \$41,058 in 2020.
- The Public Affairs Division sold 4,900 copies of the 2020 New Hampshire Wildlife Calendar and 5,500 copies of the 2021 edition. We had an increase in sales over the biennium due to online sales and both wholesale and retail promotion. These two publications raised \$35,951 in 2020 and \$39,254 in 2021 for the agency.

Broadcast Media

- Our staff produced 5 new episodes of the *NH WildSide* television program, which airs on YouTube.
- A total of 37 Public Education and Government Access television stations from across the country downloaded our content.
- Our show *Outdoor Almanac* is still running on radio stations throughout New Hampshire.
- On Facebook almost 17,000 hours of our videos were viewed during the biennium, which is over a 5-fold increase from the previous biennium.
- Public Affairs has also reintroduced a podcast for the Department, this one based on our "On the Nature Trail" feature in the *NH Wildlife Journal* magazine.

Advertising and Promotion

- Hunting marketing campaigns ran for 4 months during the biennium. The hunting theme was the "Locavore Movement," encouraging people to eat local including locally sourced meats. This was traditional outreach through radio statewide, paid social media, and direct email. Social media ads were targeted to the New Hampshire Lakes Region south to Hartford, CT, east to Portland, Maine, and west to Manchester, Vermont.
- Data on the direct email campaign was statistically insignificant. The agency is now able to capture email addresses through its licensing database with an opt-out message for the first time. The growing email list will address this over time.
- Fishing marketing campaigns ran for 4 months in the biennial. The 2020 theme was the "Angling Affliction" and the 2021 theme was the "Spring Line Up," a baseball analogy. Both campaigns included a traditional radio component and targeted social media ads.
- 2020 saw an unprecedented jump in license sales and participation. This "bubble" is being addressed with ongoing research and messaging. Direct emails were sent to those in the bubble and all who purchased a license in 2020. At the time of this report results were not available.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION

- Adventure talks during the biennium were a challenge due to the pandemic. Two talks related to hunting were held in the fall of 2019. One live-stream ice fishing program was offered in the early winter of 2020. Replays of the two hunting seminars were released on Facebook in early fall 2020.
- The Department held a second Shop WILD Saturday event in December 2019, offering people a chance to purchase Fish and Game merchandise as gifts, which was very successful. We plan to make it an annual event.
- Additional seasons of the popular *North Woods Law: New Hampshire* television show on Animal Planet, which primarily profiles the work of the Conservation Officers at the NH Fish and Game Department, aired in fall 2019, spring and fall 2020, and spring 2021. Individual episodes averaged over 500,000 viewers.
- The Animal Planet series is shown internationally as well and is viewed in more than 180 countries, further extending the reach of the series and the subsequent recognition of New Hampshire and the work of Fish and Game staff.

Barry Conservation Camp

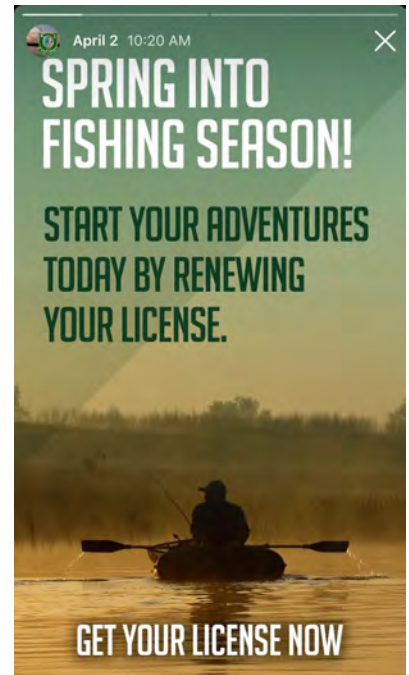
- Public Affairs Division staff managed the Barry Conservation Camp facility, including finishing the work on a large addition to the dining hall and painting of the floors in the dining hall and kitchen. Maintenance work was performed on the kitchen including the installation of new cabinets.
- Over 180 youth attended the camp in 2019. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, camp was not held in 2020. Due to staffing shortages, camp could not be held in 2021.

LANDOWNER RELATIONS PROGRAM

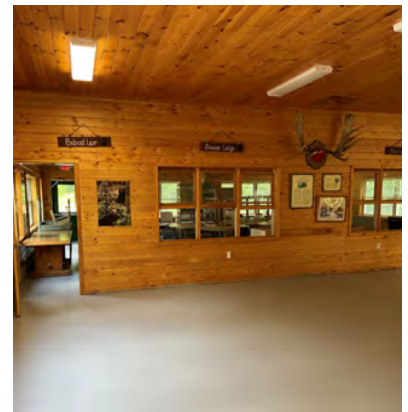
- The Public Affairs Division took over the responsibility of the Landowner Relations Program from the Director's Office during the biennium, saving the Department the salary for a part-time employee.
- The Landowner Relations Program actively recruited landowners for the Operation Land Share Program, bringing the total number of private land acres enrolled in the program and open for public access to over 42,597. These lands are generously left open and unposted by private landowners for hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching.
- Private landowners who keep their land open for public access were provided with free signage and assistance with mitigating related issues through the Landowner Relations Program. Landowners were made aware of opportunities to partner with the Department and other organizations to improve habitat management and public access to their lands.

WILDLIFE HERITAGE FOUNDATION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

- The Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire, the non-profit partner of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, continued to deliver significant private support to the Department over the biennium by providing grants to 28 Fish and Game projects totaling \$226,121.43.



Social media post promoting license participation



Barry Conservation Camp dining hall with new extension



WILDLIFE HERITAGE
FOUNDATION of NH
SHARING THE PAST, SHAPING THE FUTURE.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WILDLIFE DIVISION



A wildlife biologist collects detailed biological data from a harvested bull moose.



A wildlife biologist measures the antler beam diameter of a harvested buck at a deer registration station.

Wildlife Division

GAME PROGRAM

- The Department's Game Management Team used current harvest and biological data, in addition to management goals and objectives established in the 2016-2025 Game Management Plan, to review the population status and physical condition of New Hampshire game species.
- Recommended changes in deer, bear, moose, turkey, furbearers, small game, pheasant, and migratory bird seasons and bag limits were proposed, evaluated, and implemented through the Department's biennial season setting process during the winter of 2020. This process made it through just prior to public hearings when it had to be canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions. Public health guidelines made it impractical to hold public hearings. The process was reinitiated during the winter of 2021 and was completed in June of 2021. Proposed rule changes largely result in increased hunting opportunities for deer, bear, and turkey.
- Moose permit issuance will be suspended in both the Central and Southwest regions due to declines in moose population indices below established cut-off thresholds in the Game Management Plan. Moose numbers in the North region also dropped below the Game Plan's cut-off threshold. However, permits will continue to be issued in this region. Research conducted here since 2014 suggests winter ticks are limiting this population and that reducing moose density may result in a corresponding reduction in tick density. Reduced moose densities should decrease impacts from high winter tick loads and result in healthier, more productive moose.
- The 2020 total deer harvest was 13,044 and represented the state's fourth highest harvest on record going back to 1922. Deer numbers throughout the state continue to be strong with the majority of wildlife management units (WMUs) being at or above population objectives set in the Game Management Plan. This has resulted in increased opportunity for hunters in recent years as we work to reduce or maintain populations at current objectives.
- Increased bear hunting opportunity has continued through the biennium as the Department works to meet population objectives in the Game Management Plan. The 2020 bear harvest represented the highest harvest on record with 1,183 bears taken statewide.
- Turkey numbers continue to remain strong with the 2020 spring harvest representing a record take of 5,718 turkeys. The WMUs with the best turkey populations (H1, H2, K, J2, L, and M) continue to be in the southern part of the state. A two-gobbler spring season bag limit continues to be allowed in these units, which was first implemented during the May 2019 season.
- Crossbow use will be allowed in WMUs L and M, during the archery season for both deer and turkey starting in the fall of 2021.
- The Department also proposed allowing the use of .410 and .28 gauge shotguns, with special shot restrictions, starting in the fall of 2021. The associated shot restrictions ensure that these lighter gauges will have comparable ballistics to larger more traditional gauges and allow for ethical harvest for a wider array of hunters.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WILDLIFE DIVISION

- During the spring 2019 turkey season, the Department initiated an online registration system for hunters to self-register their harvested turkeys. This was in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions. This system proved very popular with hunters and was adopted as an official registration method moving forward.
- The Wildlife Division worked with S3 to develop an electronic registration system for both deer and turkey to be used by our physical registration agents. This company also handles the Department's online licensing system. This platform was expanded to allow for the continued online registration of turkeys previously referenced. The system went active for the 2021 spring turkey season and was only made available to registration stations which were existing license agents. This was in an effort to test the system for problems before expanding it to all interested stations for the 2021 fall deer and turkey seasons.
- The Wildlife Division worked closely with the Public Affairs Division and US Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services to further improve our statewide bear-human conflict mitigation program. This program has helped stabilize bear-human conflicts in New Hampshire, which is a significant achievement given the increase in bear populations, people, and human-related food attractants in our state. Current efforts are focused on developing improved communication strategies to help educate and inform the public and other constituents.
- An important moose mortality and productivity study that was initiated in New Hampshire in 2014 continued through the biennium and involved cooperative efforts in Maine and Vermont. This work has provided critical information regarding mortality and productivity rates of moose and how these are affected by winter tick and climate change. The collaring portion of this study was completed, and results are available in a number of theses that were produced during the course of the research. Currently a post-doctoral student through the University of New Hampshire is evaluating results from the study to determine the most effective and efficient indices to track winter tick impacts over time to inform future management decisions.
- During the winter of 2021, the Game Program reached out to the University of New Hampshire to initiate a cooperative research project to evaluate alternative methods to index furbearer populations. It is anticipated that this research will begin in late spring or early summer of 2021. Methods will be non-invasive (camera traps and track stations) and will be independent of harvest data and associated limitations.
- Cases of avian pox and lymphoproliferative disease virus (LPDV) in turkeys have been monitored for the past 9 years in New Hampshire. While the virus has been widespread, relatively few turkeys seem to have been seriously affected.
- Starting in the fall of 2018, the Department participated in a multi-state West Nile virus surveillance study by asking participants in the small game project's annual Wing and Tail Survey to collect blood samples from hunter-harvested ruffed grouse. This work continues to date, and sampling was expanded to turkeys starting with the spring 2021 season.



Winter tick larvae collected during field sampling. Research has found winter ticks are the primary source of mortality for the state's northern moose populations.



An undergraduate UNH student samples vegetation for winter ticks.

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Biologists from Fish and Game and USDA sample waterfowl for avian influenza.

- In FY2020, pheasants were stocked at 62 sites in 43 towns. In FY2021, 64 sites in 44 towns were stocked with pheasants. The total number of birds released at each site averaged 135, with the exception of the flood-control areas which received approximately 40 more birds per site.
- Biologists captured and leg-banded 1,491 ducks throughout the state as part of ongoing Atlantic Flyway waterfowl monitoring. Resident Canada goose banding was not conducted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Wildlife Division, working in partnership with US Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services, collected a total of 516 samples from captured ducks during the biennium to aid nationwide avian influenza surveillance efforts.
- In a continuing effort to assess bobcat population dynamics in New Hampshire, bobcat carcasses continue to be collected. These are necropsied and provide information on sex, age, weight, and productivity.
- The continued spread of chronic wasting disease (CWD) across the country remains a major concern for New Hampshire and other eastern states. The Department began a CWD monitoring and surveillance program in 2002. During the 2019 and 2020 deer seasons, 735 samples were collected for testing. Since 2002, 7,400 samples have been collected and all have tested negative.

ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL

- The Animal Damage Control Program is a cooperative initiative entering its 35th year between the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department and US Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services. This unique mitigation program combines state and federal expertise, resources, and personnel to resolve wildlife conflicts in the Granite State.
- The program responded to more than 3,000 requests for assistance during this biennium, including 250 site visits and the distribution of over 6,500 educational leaflets. One third of all requests for assistance involved human-bear conflicts. Both agencies have expanded outreach to poultry producers, municipalities, and campgrounds in order to reduce conflicts with bears. Assistance is provided through recommendations, evaluations, educational materials, site visits, formal damage assessments, loan of wildlife mitigation equipment, the distribution of informational leaflets, and when applicable, wildlife depredation permits and damage compensation.
- Since it was initiated in 1986, the program has responded to over 50,000 requests for assistance. Staff also participated in monitoring for disease concerns such as chronic wasting disease, avian influenza, tularemia, and LPDV (turkey pox virus) by gathering biological samples for testing.
- Additionally, staff assisted with state and federal recovery efforts for threatened and endangered species, such as piping plovers and upland sandpipers. The popularity of backyard poultry and bee keeping operations in recent years has increased the need for technical and operational response by this program, particularly when bear damage is involved.

NONGAME AND ENDANGERED WILDLIFE PROGRAM

- The program successfully raised more than \$100,000 in private donations each year through a series of funding campaigns. As a result, the Non-game Program exceeded the requirement necessary to receive \$100,000 in matching General Funds.
- Published eight issues of the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program's nationally recognized *Wildlines* newsletter. Each newsletter was distributed to over 2,800 individuals.
- Updated the NH Wildlife Action Plan habitat maps using the best available science and released them for public use. Maps include both comprehensive statewide land cover and habitats ranked by ecological condition. Wildlife Action Plan maps are used extensively by communities, land trusts, and other conservation partners as an important tool in guiding land use decisions.
- Recovery efforts for the New England cottontail continued. Surveys were conducted to determine the presence of the species in suitable habitat. A captive breeding facility at the Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge was managed to enhance cottontail productivity. A rabbit reporting website was maintained to gather information on the distribution of rabbits in New Hampshire, and hundreds of reports were received.
- In partnership with New Hampshire Audubon, bald eagle (state special concern) and peregrine falcon (state threatened) monitoring and management continued. Monitoring of bald eagles found that the population recovery continued post-delisting (removed from state threatened list during 2017) with 74 young eagles fledged during 2020 alone. A new study of state-endangered northern harriers was initiated, and 8 nest sites were identified in the first year of the project.
- Biologists continued to monitor and successfully manage piping plover and least tern populations on the New Hampshire beaches and common and Roseate terns on the Isles of Shoals. During 2020, common terns (state threatened) had a record nesting season with 3,280 nesting pairs, Roseate terns (state endangered) had a decade record of 96 nesting pairs, and piping plovers (state endangered) had a record of 12 nesting pairs.
- Biologists surveyed Blanding's (state endangered), spotted (state threatened), wood (special concern), and box turtles (state endangered) in New Hampshire to determine the spatial extent and health of populations. Two nationally competitive federal grant awards were implemented for turtle conservation, one to conduct priority conservation actions for Blanding's turtles and a second grant to conduct systematic surveys and develop conservation plans for spotted turtles. Nongame biologists also partnered with the US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Services to launch a Working Lands for Wildlife Program for turtles, a program where landowners can receive financial assistance to voluntarily assist with the implementation of priority turtle actions.
- Biologists continued restoration and recovery efforts for Karner blue butterflies (federally and state endangered) including raising and releasing



The Wildlines newsletter is published quarterly and includes ongoing conservation efforts of the Nongame Program.



A new brochure was published that focused on the importance of pollinators in New Hampshire and actions that can be taken to support these species.



Wildlife biologists in the Nongame Program worked with private landowners to manage habitat for state-threatened spotted turtles.

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A Karner blue butterfly female perched on a spreading dogbane.



A newly hatched piping plover chick at Hampton Beach (photo by Matthew Giambartolomei).

butterflies in a captive rearing laboratory and performing habitat management annually.

- The Nongame Program continued a partnership with the White Mountain Observatory to evaluate the habitat needs of the White Mountain fritillary (state endangered), a species only known to occur on Mount Washington.
- Another new project was initiated in partnership with the Department of Transportation to evaluate opportunities for enhancing habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators along state highway right-of-ways.
- A nationally competitive federal grant award was implemented for brook floater mussels (state endangered) to develop range-wide standard survey protocols, to identify conservation actions for restoration, and to develop propagation techniques and evaluate the feasibility of population augmentation. The brook floater mussel was evaluated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for consideration of addition to the federal threatened and endangered species list. The USFWS determined that the brook floater mussel did not warrant federal protection, largely due to ongoing conservation efforts among state wildlife agencies.
- The Taking Action for Wildlife Team, consisting of members from the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, and the Association of Conservation Commissions, provided technical assistance via workshops and meetings on conservation planning, wildlife and wildlife habitats, and community engagement with a focus on implementing the NH Wildlife Action Plan. The Taking Action for Wildlife team also planned, organized, and implemented an advanced technical assistance training program for 6 communities entitled the Community Conservation Cohort Training. A new brochure was published that focused on pollinators in New Hampshire that will be used to convey the importance of habitat stewardship for these wildlife species to private landowners, communities, and conservation organizations.
- Education staff at NH Audubon in partnership with the Department's Public Affairs Division completed popular Urban Wildlife programs in multiple Manchester elementary schools.
- Biologists reviewed and provided technical assistance on projects seeking state permits from the NH Department of Environmental Services and provided input in selecting mitigation projects. Reviews focused on potential impacts to endangered and threatened wildlife. During the biennium, a total of 7,441 projects (through May 11, 2021) were checked for the presence of rare species using the NH Natural Heritage Bureau's datacheck tool. Those having potential impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered wildlife were reviewed by NH Fish and Game.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

- Habitat biologists assisted landowners with improving wildlife habitats on their lands by providing financial assistance to 35 habitat improvement projects in 21 towns. Awards and technical assistance supported approximately 57 acres of shrubland/young forest enhancement, 241 acres of grassland

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and field maintenance, creation or maintenance of 42.5 acres of wildlife openings, release or planting of 316 mast trees and shrubs, and the development of a wildlife-focused management plan for a 513-acre property.

- Regional wildlife biologists assisted 40 small and large landowners to conserve important habitats by reviewing and providing recommendations on 127 timber harvests covering nearly 19,000 acres.
- Serving on the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program and the State Conservation Committee, Department staff reviewed and funded 50 land conservation projects awarding a total of nearly \$4.5 million. Nearly 30,000 acres of land were conserved through these grant programs. Staff worked to ensure that awarded projects conserved significant wildlife habitats as identified in the NH Wildlife Action Plan and through field work, and that all funded projects were open for public access including hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching.
- The Wildlife Division acquired five properties in fee or conservation easement totaling 1,744.5 acres, which were added to our statewide Wildlife Management Area system. Funds for acquisitions were obtained through Federal Aid in Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) grants, donations, mitigation, or other sources of funding. Properties included:
 - ♦ **Surry Mountain Forest Conservation Easement, Gilsum and Surry (1,324 acres)** - The Department partnered with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to conserve this property that abuts the 1,600+ acre Surry Mountain Lake Flood Control Area. The Department now holds a conservation easement aimed at conserving the property's habitat values, and public access for hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching, among other things. The property has a tremendous oak resource that provides an important food source for area wildlife including deer, bear, wild turkey, ruffed grouse, and more than a dozen other birds and mammals, and is recognized as a popular hunting area.
 - ♦ **Walker Conservation Easement, Durham (25 acres)** - Although small in size, the protection of this parcel helped to fill in a piece of a conservation puzzle that includes over 2,000 acres of abutting lands conserved through the efforts of the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership and now owned either by the Department, TNC, the Society for the Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF), or NH Audubon. This property contains a few large wetland complexes that connect to abutting properties along with Appalachian oak-pine woodland. TNC will hold the fee interest while the Department now holds a conservation easement.
 - ♦ **Ammonoosuc River Forest Conservation Easement, Bethlehem (272 acres)** - The Department partnered with the SPNHF to conserve this property with more than one mile of shoreline along the Ammonoosuc River between Route 302 and the White Mountain National Forest. Fish Habitat Account funds contributed to this effort. The Wildlife Division's Land Agent facilitated the transaction. SPNHF now owns the property which is subject to deed restrictions focused on protecting important fish habitat and providing access for anglers.



A boundary blaze and sign at the Piscassic Wildlife Management Area in Epping. Boundaries need to be marked every 10-15 years to ensure visitors to the properties and abutters know the extent of Fish and Game ownerships, and to ensure habitat management projects stay within bounds.



One of several wetlands on the 123-acre Holland property that was recently purchased and added onto the Cascade Marsh Wildlife Management Area in Sutton.

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A skidder drags cut trees to a log landing for processing at the Owl Brook Wildlife Management Area in Holderness. Woodlands on WMAs are managed to enhance food and cover for an array of wildlife.

- ♦ **Antos Donation, Newmarket (0.5 acre)** - Ed and Eriko Antos donated 0.5 acre of land to the Department very near the shores of Great Bay and abutting other Department lands. In addition to expanding a buffer to Great Bay, the value of this property will help leverage more than \$700,000 of federal funds that helped to conserve the Surry Mountain Forest (see above).
- ♦ **Holland Property, Sutton (123 acres)** - This property was added onto the Cascade Marsh WMA. Total acreage of the WMA is now nearly 680 acres. The Holland parcel contains several wetlands, old sand and gravel pits that are growing in, and hemlock forest. An easement already exists on the property purchased by the State of New Hampshire through the Land Conservation Investment Program of the 1980s and 1990s. The purchase of the remaining fee interest brings the property under the Department's full control, allowing us to manage it to maintain and improve wildlife habitat and protect the integrity of the marsh. The purchase also extinguished a 5-acre buildable lot that was reserved outside of the easement.
- Timber harvests were completed on eight WMAs to enhance wildlife food and cover, generating nearly \$480,561 in revenue. Harvests on eight other WMAs are planned and are ready for implementation pending suitable ground conditions.
- Fields were mowed on 15 state properties to maintain 258 acres of habitat for wild turkey, deer, grassland birds, and other wildlife.
- Staff completed brontosaurus mowing at eight properties encompassing over 102 acres to promote shrubland and young forest habitat to benefit American woodcock, ruffed grouse, and several species of songbirds.
- To facilitate Fish and Game stewardship and public use of WMAs, the Division redecked two access bridges, graded approximately 15 miles of gravel roads, and resurfaced 5 miles of roads at the CT Lakes Natural Area, mowed back 5 miles of woods road at the Kimball Hill WMA, refurbished 45 waterbars along 2 miles of woods road at Pearly Lake WMA, replaced a pedestrian bridge at the Laramie WMA, and secured management access across an abutter's property at the Mascoma WMA.
- Maintenance was completed on 85 miles of Wildlife Management Area boundaries using contractors and in-house staff. Boundaries need to be maintained every 10-15 years to ensure visitors to the properties and our abutters know the extent of our ownerships, and to ensure habitat management projects stay within our bounds.
- Every year several stewardship issues are reported on WMAs. Issues range from illegal ATV activity to dumping to abutter's building a portion of an outbuilding on state land. Each issue takes significant staff time to investigate and address. Staff addressed more than two dozen such issues over the last biennium.
- The Division funded a contract with the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension that:
 - ♦ Delivered a total of 46 workshops and presentations which includ-

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ed detailed information about wildlife habitat associations and habitat stewardship. These workshops were attended by a total of 1,732 landowners, natural resource professionals (e.g., foresters, wildlife biologists, natural resource scientists, loggers, land trust staff), and community leaders (e.g., conservation commission, select board, and planning board members).

- ♦ Provided technical assistance to 66 municipal and private landowners on habitat management issues affecting 9,650 acres of land.
- ♦ Helped fund the training of 24 New Hampshire Coverts Project volunteers over the biennium; they join 448 existing Coverts volunteers, who actively help conserve wildlife habitat in their communities. Over the biennium these volunteers contributed over 46,503 hours of service on behalf of wildlife habitat in their communities (valued at over \$1,192,400).

UNDEVELOPED LAND ACQUIRED DURING THE FY 2020–2021 BIENNIUM

LAND CONSERVATION PROJECTS July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020			
Town	Parcel Name	F&G Interest	Acreage
Newmarket	Great Bay NERR Antos Donation	Fee	0.5
Sutton	Cascade Marsh WMA – Holland Tract	Fee	117.85
Total Fee Owned			118.35
Durham/Newmarket	Great Bay NERR CE Area Crommet and Luberland Creek	Corrective Conservation Easement	No additional lands conserved
Total CE Area			0.00
Brentwood	Brentwood Game Farm	Fee	37.5
Total Surplus			37.5
Total Lands Conserved			118.5

LAND CONSERVATION PROJECTS July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021			
Town	Parcel Name	F&G Interest	Acreage
Bethlehem	Ammonoosuc River Forest Conservation Area (SPNGF/Gould Tract)	CE	272.86
Durham	Great Bay NERR CE Area- Crommet and Luberland Creeks (Walker Tract)	CE	24.5
Gilsum/Surry	Surry Mountain Conservation Easement Area	CE	1324.0
Total Fee Owned			0
Total CE Area			1621.36
Total Lands Conserved			1621.36

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS



**WILDLIFE HERITAGE
FOUNDATION of NH**
SHARING THE PAST, SHAPING THE FUTURE



The Forever Locked moose display

Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire

Fish and Game's Nonprofit Partner

As an official nonprofit partner of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire, an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization, continues to have a significant positive impact on Department programs, services, and activities.

The Foundation was established in 2006 and has awarded 96 grants to NHFG over the years. The Foundation focuses on investing in wild places and wild things, supporting critical Fish and Game Department needs that go under- and un-funded, and for programs impacting future generations. The Foundation helps fund the essential education, conservation, wildlife, fisheries, and law enforcement programs of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.

During this biennium, the Foundation awarded \$166,815.38 in grants for 22 critical Fish and Game programs. Grant-funded projects included anti-predation netting and fencing at the Berlin, Warren, and New Hampton Hatcheries, scholarships for the Department's popular Becoming an Outdoors-Woman fall event, primary sponsorship of Discover WILD New Hampshire Day, and support for a wild brook trout migration assessment project in northern New Hampshire.

The Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire continues to support the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department's Law Enforcement Division Canine Program by providing financial assistance for training, medical care, and equipment needs. During the biennium, Foundation board member Wesley Reed generously donated one new dog, Moxie, to join the canine unit.

The Foundation's Forever Locked moose display is a critical public education asset that is used around New Hampshire and the New England region to promote New Hampshire's great outdoors. The Foundation also continues its strong commitment to support the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department's educational programs, and the Durant Educational Fund provided financial support to a variety of Department education projects. The Durant Fund was established to support educational programs for at least ten years; the first grants were awarded in March of 2018 and continue to be awarded to the Department.

The Foundation generates contributed income through fundraising campaigns, grant proposals, and individual major giving requests to directly support projects and programs at the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.

Funding for the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of New Hampshire's grant program comes from individual and corporate donors, memorial gifts, donations from the Foundation's Board of Directors, the Foundation's Friends Program, special events, and the annual Moose Permit Auction. The Foundation accepts general and targeted cash donations and welcomes annuities and endowments. In most cases, donations are tax deductible. For more information or to donate, visit www.nhwildlifeheritage.org.

2020 Session

Enacted Law:

The session was abbreviated due to the COVID pandemic, and many items of legislation were deferred to the 2021 session.

- HB 496 – Title: Relative to the definition of antique snowmobiles, relative to water quality rules, and relative to the disposition of administrative fines for asbestos management violations. Corrective legislation to clarify the definition of an antique snowmobile. Chapter 10; Effective Date 7/14/20.
- HB 1182 – New Title: Establishing the commission to study the on road usage of non-traditional motor vehicles, relative to motor vehicles and transportation, relative to roadable aircraft, and making an appropriation to the department of education for the purpose of funding the Hudson CTE center. Study committee for OHRV issues. Chapter 33; Effective Date 7/24/20.
- HB 1645 – New Title: Relative to superior court judgments; adding a bail commissioner to the commission on pretrial detention, pretrial scheduling, and pretrial services and the release of a defendant pending trial; prison privatization; misdemeanor domestic violence offenses; immunity from arrest or prosecution for certain alcoholic beverage violations; police officers reporting misconduct; criminal mischief; screening for all law enforcement officers for psychological stability prior to assuming their duties as certified officers; and prohibiting the use of chokeholds by law enforcement officers. New standards for certified police officers. Chapter 12; Effective Date 7/16/20.

2021 Session

Enacted Law:

The COVID pandemic continued, and while more legislation was considered and passed, there remained significant limitations upon the ability of the Legislature to consider all proposals in this session. The following significant items were enacted into law.

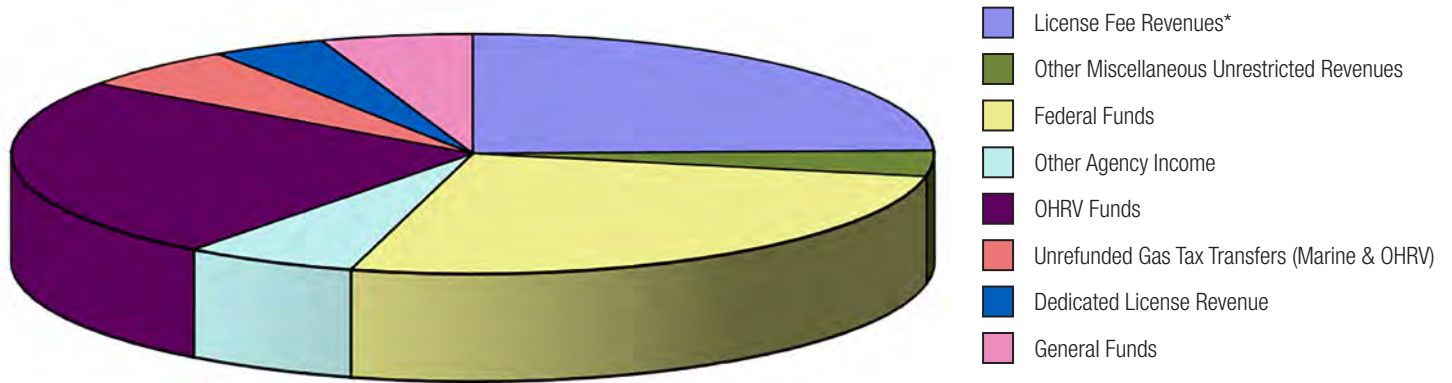
- HB 192 – Title: Relative to pistols permitted for the taking of deer. Added to the list of acceptable firearms that are permitted for the taking of deer. Chapter 6; Effective Date 6/22/21.
- HB 193 – Title: Relative to penalties for improper timber harvesting. Clarified these penalties. Chapter 7; Effective Date 1/1/22.
- HB 342 – Title: Relative to the taking of game by certain lever-action firearms. Added to the list of acceptable firearms, consistent with HB 192 above. Chapter 12; Effective Date 6/22/21.
- HB 529 – Title: Relative to cruelty to a wild animal, fish, or wild bird. Enhanced penalties for cruelty to wildlife. Chapter 156; Effective Date 1/1/22.
- HB 630 – New Title: Authorizing certain procedures for rulemaking. To clarify and simplify filing procedures. Chapter 59; Effective Date 7/24/21.
- SB 51 – Title: Relative to the sale of lobster meat. Clarified which retail establishments are required to obtain this license. Chapter 116; Effective Date 9/7/21.
- SB 129 – Title: Relative to minimizing environmental impacts on the habitats of endangered or threatened species. Pertains to environmental review for threatened and endangered species. Chapter 203; Effective Date 10/9/21.
- SB 146 – Title: Adopting omnibus legislation relative to the environment. To establish screening for zoonotic disease transmission from wildlife, and adopts a license surcharge to certain marine licenses to facilitate cleanup of derelict gear. Chapter 208; Effective Date 10/9/21.

A COMPLEX FUNDING PICTURE

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department uses revenue from fishing and hunting license fees, federal funds, state general funds, and other sources to accomplish its broad mission to serve the people and wildlife of New Hampshire.

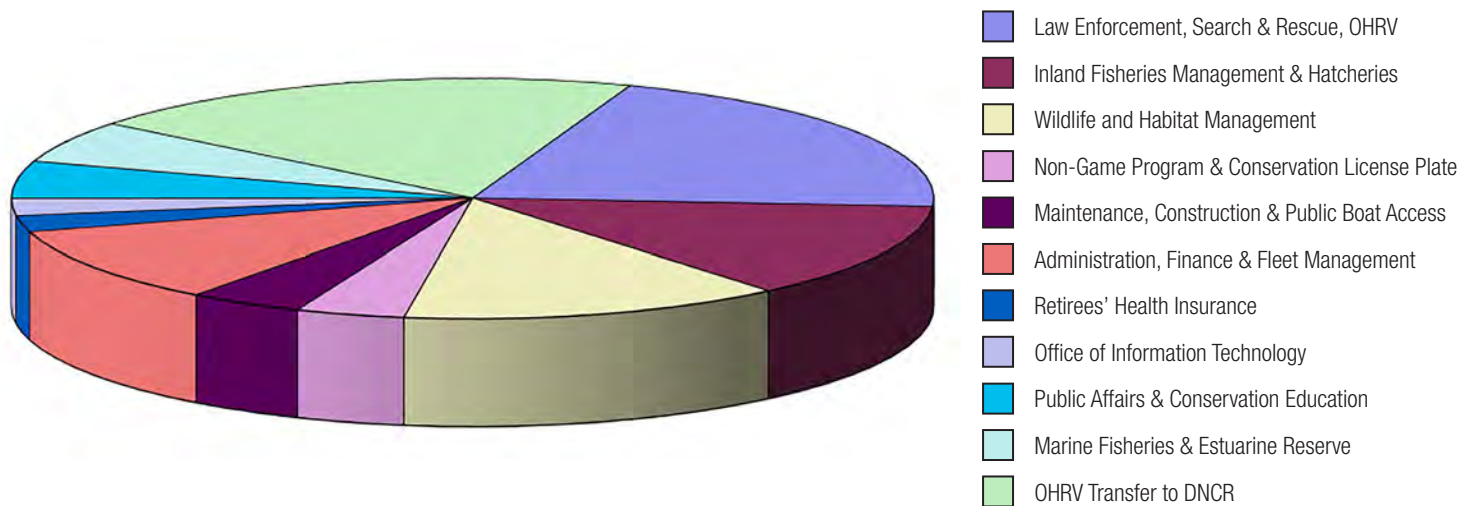
WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM...

TOTAL REVENUES* (FY 2021): \$32,725,335



WHERE THE MONEY GOES...

TOTAL EXPENDITURES (FY 2021): \$32,725,335



***License Fee Revenues:** Includes all resident and nonresident fishing and hunting licenses received for Fiscal Year 2021. The actual amount of license revenue received for the fiscal year was \$11,574,358.

Other Miscellaneous Unrestricted Revenues: Includes court and license agent fines and penalties, sales of surplus property and vehicles, miscellaneous sales and interest earnings.

Total Expenditures of the Fish and Game fund for Fiscal Year 2021 per year-end Monthly Statement of Appropriation by Office is \$33,778,576. Included within this amount is \$1,053,241 of inter-fund expenditure reimbursements. Net result of expenditures for fiscal year 2021 is \$32,725,335.

Other Agency Income: \$5 Boat surcharge - \$256,831; \$1 Search and Rescue surcharge on boat, OHRV and snowmobile registrations and the Hike Safe Card - \$273,728; Nongame donations and Conservation License Plate Funds - \$537,176; Wildlife Heritage Foundation Grant Funds - \$88,786; Other Donations \$102,478; Volkswagen Mitigation Trust Funds \$201,059; Timber sales revenue \$131,023; Other miscellaneous income - \$391,951.

Federal Funds: Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell-Johnson and the Wallop-Breaux Amendment) for inland fisheries management, boat access and aquatic resources education - \$3,141,049; Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson) for wildlife management and hunter education - \$3,526,372; State Wildlife Grants - \$628,432; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for marine fisheries management, the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve program and marine law enforcement - \$1,171,128, other miscellaneous federal revenues - \$104,618.

