

Funding N.H. Fish & Game



Without support from all the State's citizens – through General Funds or other revenue sources – major changes will be triggered at Fish and Game that will compromise our ability to deliver services that the public relies upon.

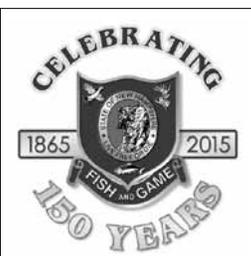
On behalf of the state and all its citizens, the N.H. Fish and Game Department manages New Hampshire's fish, wildlife and marine resources, boosting our tourist economy and enhancing our quality of life. Without legislative action, the Fish and Game Department will soon lack the funding necessary to carry out these responsibilities.

The Fish and Game Fund will be essentially depleted by June 30, 2015.

Unprecedented situation:

Seeing the difficulties ahead, administrators have for years urged Legislators to establish a new funding source and avert the crisis.

- **The Legislature met the challenge and kept Fish and Game solvent for the current biennium by providing stopgap funding.** To keep the Department going, a transfer was made from the General Fund to the Fish and Game Fund of \$699,000 for FY 14 and \$893,000 for FY 15.
- It also set up a Legislative Commission to Study Opportunities and Options to Improve the Sustainability of the Fish and Game Department.



This panel has recommended that the Fish and Game Commission be granted authority to set and adjust license fees, and that some support for Fish and Game come from the General Fund. It emphasized finding a means to allow the broader public who benefit from Fish and Game to contribute.

Fish and Game is doing its part

- Meanwhile, Fish and Game is actively working to recruit and retain hunters and anglers through marketing campaigns, educational workshops and opportunities like the Apprentice Hunting License.
- Fish and Game has also tightened its belt, keeping expenses to the bare bones, eliminating programs, and cutting staff by 11% since 2006.
- Fish and Game is enhancing revenue through sales of merchandise and voluntary Hike Safe cards, and by seeking grants and sponsorships. It also mobilizes hundreds of volunteers each year.

What happens now?

- The State's budget is currently being developed for the FY 16 and FY 17 biennium. It is anticipated that some General Fund money, or revenue from another source, will be assigned to the Department.
- Legislation has also been proposed giving the Fish and Game Executive Director and Commission the authority to set and adjust license fees.
- We appreciate your support as the Legislature works to shore up the Department's finances.
- Please stay informed at: wildnh.com/funding.

New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

Connecting people to life outdoors...since 1865

150 Years Conserving Fish and Wildlife:

An investment for future generations

Ripple Effect on the Economy

Fish and Game's work brings jobs and tourists to New Hampshire, creating a major economic engine for the state. Our science-based management of fish, wildlife and marine resources provides benefits to all our residents and visitors. Over the years, a proportionally small investment in the Fish and Game Department has brought enormous benefits:

- **Wildlife-associated recreation contributed \$556 million in expenditures to N.H.'s economy in 2011**, according to the 2011 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.
- **Anglers, hunters and wildlife watchers spent \$112 million on food and lodging in N.H.**
- **In 2013, commercial marine fisheries landings in New Hampshire were valued at \$20 million.**

Fish and wildlife conservation provides healthy outdoor recreational opportunities for N.H. residents and tourists (in 2011):

- 56,000 people hunted in N.H.
- 228,000 people fished in N.H.
- 630,000 people watched wildlife in N.H.

Supporting Our Quality of Life

Over 90% of N.H. residents place a high level of importance on having fish and wildlife resources properly managed and conserved. The overwhelming majority of people in New Hampshire consider wildlife an important aspect of their lives.

Fish and Game programs promote clean water, clean air and a healthy environment for wildlife and people. The Department provides critical support for habitat and land conservation in the state. It also creates opportunities for the boating and paddling public to access New Hampshire's water resources.

Our conservation partners support keeping Fish and Game solvent – and have expressed concern for the future of our state's wildlife and natural areas if the Fish and Game Department does not have the funding to carry out its responsibilities.

Why is Fish and Game facing a deficit?

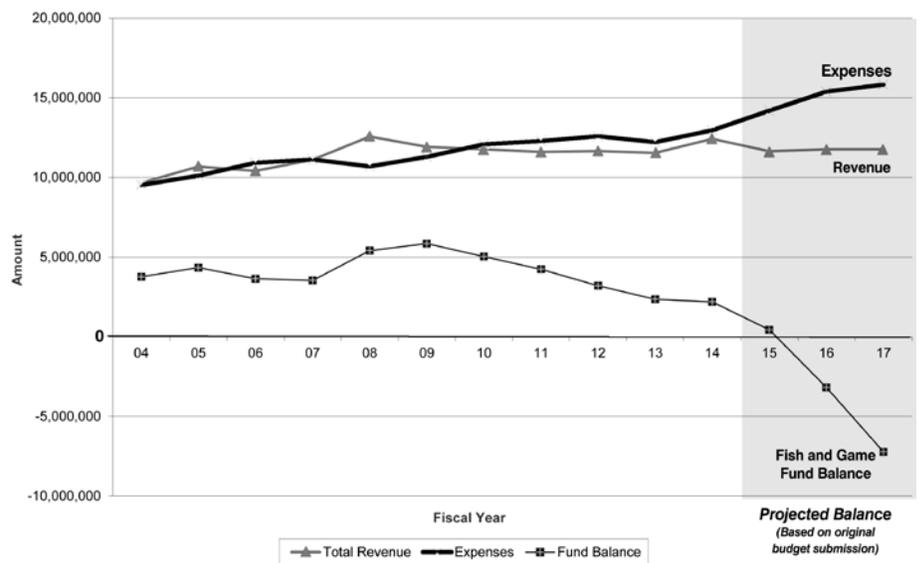
Unlike most state agencies, Fish and Game is mainly self-funded. Its revenue comes from hunting and fishing license fees and federal sources such as Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration funds.

With the number of hunters and anglers rising only slightly in recent years, the Department has faced flat revenues.

Meanwhile, the cost of maintaining essential services for all N.H. citizens has continued to rise. The public relies on Fish and Game to carry out a wide variety of responsibilities not related to hunting

and fishing, from search and rescue, to assessing the impact of development projects on wildlife, to resolving human/wildlife conflicts, draining the Fish and Game Fund.

COSTS HAVE OUTPACED REVENUES, DRAWING DOWN THE F&G FUND. THE FUND IS EXPECTED TO BE CLOSE TO ZERO BY THE END OF FY 15.



A strong Fish and Game is essential for N.H.'s citizens, wildlife and economy • wildnh.com