

**Game and Fish Department
Budget No. 720
Senate Bill No. 2017**

	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
2023-25 legislative appropriations	174.00¹	\$0	\$134,761,466¹	\$134,761,466¹
2023-25 base budget	164.00	0	89,581,634	89,581,634
Legislative increase (decrease) to base budget	10.00	\$0	\$45,179,832	\$45,179,832

¹This amount includes contingent appropriation from federal funds of \$27.15 million and authorization of 4 FTE positions relating to implementation of the federal Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

**SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE CHANGES TO THE BASE BUDGET AND MAJOR FUNDING ITEMS
Changes to Base Budget**

	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
The legislative action:				
Adjusted funding for base payroll changes			\$295,116	\$295,116
Added funding to provide employee salary increases of 6 percent on July 1, 2023, and 4 percent on July 1, 2024			2,556,898	2,556,898
Added funding for employee health insurance premiums to reflect a revised premium estimate of \$1,643 per month			888,946	888,946
Added 1 FTE enforcement warden position, 2 FTE biologist II positions, and 3 FTE biologist I positions and related operating expenses	6.00		2,303,266	2,303,266
Transferred funding for new FTE positions and estimated savings from vacant FTE positions to a new and vacant FTE funding pool in the Office of Management and Budget			(3,420,755)	(3,420,755)
Added contingent funding from federal funds for implementing the Recovering America's Wildlife Act	4.00		27,150,000	27,150,000
Adjusted funding for base budget changes including an increase of \$1,383,088 in salaries and wages, an increase of \$185,442 in operating expenses, a decrease of (\$1,374,109) in capital assets, an increase of \$1,166,633 in grants - game and fish, an increase of \$1,285,000 in land habitat and deer depredation, an increase of \$13,754 in Missouri River enforcement, and an increase of \$306,585 in Lonetree Reservoir			2,966,393	2,966,393
Added funding for Information Technology Department rate increases			80,908	80,908

Increased funding for fleet services and motor pool increases to provide a total of \$4,867,560			1,157,192	1,157,192
Added funding for midterm conservation agreements relating to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation program			2,777,778	2,777,778
Increased funding for private land open to sportsmen (PLOTS) program to provide a total of \$20.3 million			5,000,000	5,000,000
Added one-time funding for equipment for new FTE positions			294,090	294,090
Added one-time funding for an aquatic nuisance species laboratory and storage facility			850,000	850,000
Added one-time funding for in-car video system and body cameras			550,000	550,000
Added one-time funding for fisheries pond liners			1,000,000	1,000,000
Added one-time funding for fisheries dam repairs			380,000	380,000
Added one-time funding for Devils Lake bunkhouse improvements			350,000	350,000
Total	<u>10.00</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$45,179,832</u>	<u>\$45,179,832</u>

FTE Changes

The Legislative Assembly approved 170 FTE positions for the Game and Fish Department for the 2023-25 biennium, an increase of 6 FTE positions from the 2021-23 biennium authorized level of 164 FTE positions. The Legislative Assembly added the following positions:

- 1 FTE fisheries biologist II position
- 1 FTE enforcement warden investigator position
- 2 FTE private lands biologist I position
- 1 FTE private lands biologist II position
- 1 FTE aquatic nuisance species biologist I position

One-Time Funding

The following is a summary of one-time funding items for the Game and Fish Department for the 2023-25 biennium:

	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
Equipment for new FTE positions	\$0	\$294,090	\$294,090
Aquatic nuisance species laboratory and storage facility	0	850,000	850,000
In-car video system and body cameras	0	550,000	550,000
Fisheries pond liners	0	1,000,000	1,000,000
Fisheries dam repairs at Camel Hump and Baukol Noonan	0	380,000	380,000
Devils Lake bunkhouse improvements	0	350,000	350,000
Total	\$0	\$3,424,090	\$3,424,090

Other Sections in Senate Bill No. 2017

Grants, gifts, and donations line - Section 3 identifies \$100,000 received by the Game and Fish Department in the grants, gifts, and donations line item for surface damage, easements, or reclamation on department-owned or managed properties as a result of mineral exploration and extraction activities.

Contingent authority - Recovering America's Wildlife Act - Section 4 appropriates \$27.15 million and authorizes 4 FTE positions to implement the Recovering America's Wildlife Act during the 2023-25 biennium, contingent upon enactment of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act and after corresponding federal funds have been made available to the state. Any expenditures of funds under this section for conservation or research must be coordinated with and input considered from the Federal Environment Law Impact Review Committee.

Midterm conservation agreements - Section 5 provides that midterm conservation agreements entered with private landowners have a maximum of 30 years with buyout options at 15, 20, and 25 years.

Line item transfer authority - Section 6 authorizes the Game and Fish Department to transfer up to \$2 million between the operating expenses, capital assets, and grants - game and fish line items, during the 2023-25 biennium. The department is required to report transfers to the Legislative Council.

Related Legislation

House Bill No. 1183 (2023) - Peace officer retirement - Includes game and fish wardens within the Public Employees' Retirement System retirement plan as peace officers.

House Bill No. 1538 (2023) - Fishing contests - Creates new sections relating to fishing contests, surcharge fees, and the fishing conservation fund; amends North Dakota Century Code Section 20.1-02-05(20) relating to the powers of the Director of the Game and Fish Department; and provides a continuing appropriation.

Senate Bill No. 2015 (2023) - Funding pools - Includes funding pools from which the agency may receive allocations, including the:

- Employer retirement contribution pool from which the agency is to receive \$199,347 from other funds in accordance with provisions of Section 23 of Senate Bill No. 2015 for the 1 percent employer retirement contribution increase provided for in House Bill No. 1040 (2023) and \$181,817 from other funds for the employer retirement contribution increase relating to peace officers provided for in House Bill No. 1183;
- New and vacant FTE funding pool from which the agency may request funding when hiring new FTE positions or if the agency does not realize sufficient savings from vacant FTE positions in accordance with provisions of Section 22 of Senate Bill No. 2015; and
- Targeted market equity pool from which the agency may receive an allocation as determined by the Office of Management and Budget in accordance with provisions of Section 20 of Senate Bill No. 2015.