

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission

**Will Meet at 10:30 AM
On Wed., November 20, 2024
Department of Natural Resources**

**C-4 Conference Room
Department of Natural Resources
Tawes State Office Building**

Meeting Agenda:

Presentation of the 2023 Conservationist of the Year Award – (Gwen Brewer)

Presentation of the 2023 Employee of the Year Award – (Brian Eyler)

Approval for November 20, 2024, Meeting Agenda

Approval for Minutes from October 16, 2024, Meeting

WHS Administration Update (Kristen Fleming)

2025 WAC Annual Schedule and Draft Monthly Agenda (WAC Discussion)

Maryland Farm Bureau Update (Tyler Hough)

Natural Resources Police Update (Captain Shawn Garren)

Old Business:

- **Revamping Trapping Course Update - (Commissioner Kaitlin Rossignuolo)**
- **License Portal Update - (Associate Director Brian Eyler)**
- **Use of Drone for Deer Recovery and Hunting – Tabled to a future date.**
- **Fox Chasing Non-License Requirement – Tabled to a future date.**
- **Non-Lead Hunting Ammunition – Commissioner Ryan Showalter**

New Business:

- **New Maryland Waterfowl Photography Contest – Associate Director Brian Eyler**

Public Comment:

Adjourn

NOTE: Free Parking will be available on the Navy Stadium Parking Lot, which is the third entrance on right off of Taylor Avenue.

**The Proposed Schedule for the 2024 meetings
Of the Wildlife Advisory Commission is as follows:**

January 17th	Google Meet
February 21st	Google Meet
March 20th	In-Person Meeting at Tawes State Office Building
April 17th	Google Meet
May 15th	No Meeting
June 26th	Google Meet
July 17th	No Meeting
August 21st	Google Meet
September 18th	Google Meet
October 16th	Google Meet
November 20th	In-Person Meeting at Tawes State Office Building
December 18th	No Meeting

***PLEASE NOTE THAT MEETING DATES ARE HELD
ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH***

Note: Unless notified otherwise, all meetings will be held via Google Meet. When meeting in person, they will be held in the C-1 Conference Room of the Department of Natural Resources—Tawes State Office Building beginning at 10:30 a.m. Available parking is located at the Navy Stadium Parking Lot.

NOTE: Free Parking will be available on the Navy Stadium Parking Lot, which is the third entrance on right off of Taylor Avenue.

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES
NOVEMBER 20, 2024

Chair Wagner called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. This meeting was held in person and by teleconference. Chair Wagner asked for a roll call of individuals on the “call.” Unfortunately, because of the anonymity of Google Meet callers, it was impossible to determine the identity of every participant.

Presentation of the 2023 Conservationist of the Year Award – Mr. Matthew Olear – presented by Jonathan McKnight and Dave Brinker

- Associate Director McKnight said WHS was very excited to offer this candidate because of what he has accomplished as a volunteer partner in conservation. The details were outlined in the nomination letter from WHS’ Dr. Gwen Brewer and letters of support by Sarah Milbourne, Western Region Manager of the Maryland Park Service, Ecologist Dave Brinker, Craig Koppie of the USFWS, and Eric Kelley.
- Associate Director McKnight added that one person with enough dedication and drive can make a real difference to a species and ecosystem. The 2023 Conservationist of the Year awardee is an example of that type of commitment and impact.
- Ecologist Brinker provided some background information on peregrine falcons, which were extirpated from the eastern part of the United States in 1972. Some people from Cornell University started an amazing experiment to reintroduce the peregrine falcon to the eastern part of the United States. The Cornell University experiment was widely successful. We now have more peregrine falcons nesting in Maryland than historically. To continue peregrine falcon success, this species must be monitored.
- Ecologist Brinker mentioned that in the last few years, highly pathogenic avian influenza has entered the United States. Biologists are finding that coastal peregrines are dropping out of the population. There are a lot of empty territories in New Jersey and Virginia. In Maryland, there are coastal birds, and birds migrate from the corridor of I-95 West. Mr. Matthew Olear has made an enormous contribution to the monitoring efforts of the peregrine falcon, which is a great help to our staff because WHS does not have the staff to do that work. For 10 years, Mr. Matthew Olear has been monitoring nesting peregrines. Mr. Olear has returned to the traditional peregrine sites (cliff faces at Harper’s Ferry, Point of Rocks, the Cumberland Narrows, and the Allegany Fairgrounds) and collected data. Recently, Ecologist Brinker communicated his concerns about highly pathogenic avian influenza on the peregrine falcon population. Almost immediately, Mr. Olear sent the results of the peregrine falcon from sites in Western Maryland, which are still healthy.
- Ecologist Brinker presented Mr. Matthew Olear with the 2023 Conservationist of the Year Award for all the wonderful work and partnership that Mr. Olear has done for us, which is tremendously valuable to staff and the species.

Presentation of the 2023 Employee of the Year Award – presented to Bob Long by Josh Homyack

- Game Bird Section Leader Josh Homyack presented Bob Long with the 2023 Employee of the Year Award.
- Game Bird Section Leader Homyack mentioned Bob Long's dedication to wildlife conservation, the wild turkey telemetry project, and working on quail and grouse habitat.
- Bob’s excellent work on all of these critical projects has elevated the concerns with the key species involved and motivated others to join in the study and habitat work ongoing across Maryland.

Approval of November 20, 2024, Meeting Agenda

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Keithley moved to accept the November 20, 2024, Wildlife Advisory Commission meeting agenda.
 2. Commissioner Kullberg seconded.

3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes from October 16, 2024, Meeting

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Keithley moved to accept the October 16, 2024, meeting minutes as presented.
 2. Commissioner Smith seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

WHS Administration Program Update – Associate Director Kristen Fleming

- Associate Director Kristen Fleming presented an update on the WHS Administration Program. [ATTACHMENT A]
- A.D. Fleming offered an excellent summary of the status of federal and special funds, staffing for fiscal management and permitting oversight. It is a very important but often overlooked element of the unit.
- Federal Revenue is carried over from the previous fiscal year, so the federal revenue is not the total revenue awarded for the FY25 budget.
- The Special Fund is an estimated amount due to WHS still earning revenue, and ultimately, the federal match is not fully realized as a result of that timing.
- Assistant Secretary Peditto pointed out that staff who manage public lands for hunting, wildlife-dependent recreation, and bird or mammal conservation management are eligible for federal match of their time toward those outcomes. We are working toward a model where we get staffing and other resources with each new land purchase. When Pennsylvania purchases land, it comes with the appropriation of personnel and the operation budget. Vermont does something similar. Maryland does not have that provision as of yet.
- During the discussion, Assistant Secretary Paul Peditto introduced Associate Director John Moulis. Associate Director Moulis took over Regional Operations, previously managed by Harry Spiker (recently retired). Harry had a long and successful career with WHS; John has played a critical role for many years as Eastern Region Manager. The team is looking forward to his contributions as the new Associated Director leading all operations.
- Q&A Section:
 1. Chair Wagner asked why the \$500k decrease in Pittman-Robertson funds for FY26.
 - a. The \$500k decrease in Pittman-Robertson funds for FY26 is primarily due to the expected decline in firearms and ammunition purchases based on national sales trends.
 2. Commissioner Kullberg asked if DNR anticipates any change in funding with the new Administration.
 - a. WHS is in wait-and-see mode. WHS has projections for FY26, and there is some carry-over funding. However, it is something that staff are watching.
 - b. Assistant Secretary Paul Peditto mentioned that all state agencies are examining federal funding and which agencies may get hit.
 3. Chair Wagner recalled the increase in stamps and licenses. Chair Wagner mentioned that he gets questions mainly from hunters about where the money goes. It would be helpful for the Commission to have something that outlines the allocation of the funds.
 - a. Salaries are funded primarily by federal, special, and matching funds.
 - b. The increase goes to habitat improvements, surveys, and studies.
 - c. Associate Director Fleming agreed to provide the Commission with a breakdown summary of the allocation of WHS funds.
 - d. Chair Wagner outlined the importance of linking the money raised from the increased stamps and licenses to the different projects and surveys for the hunters to see. This would help the hunters understand how the increased funding was worth it. The Commission understands that the Wildlife and Heritage Service needs money to operate. The hunting community wants to know how the additional money will be spent.

- e. Commissioner Keithley commented that he frequently follows social media related to hunting groups. Commissioner Keithley pointed out that there are inaccurate posts about where the money goes. Commissioner Keithley suggested that staff provide a clear and to-the-point general-terms document explaining the money allocation and release it to the public.
- f. Chair Wagner noted that it would help the individuals paying the fees understand where the money goes. For example, the sika deer study on the Eastern Shore, the turkey telemetry study, the quail study, and whatever conservation efforts are going on and are being paid for with the extra money produced, staff should communicate that information to the public. Also, providing the information in a related format will help the Commission combat some of the incorrect information.
- g. Chair Wagner recommended inserting the information in the hunting guide and posting it on the WHS webpage.
- h. Associate Director Eyler informed the Commission that much of this information is included in the Annual Big Game Report. However, it isn't easy to get this information into the hands of hunters...or make them read it.
- i. Commissioner Kullberg suggested posting information similar to the pie chart as a virtual aid to help individuals understand.
- j. Commissioner Jenkins recommended adding the funding and projects inside the Guide to Hunting and Trapping. Staff do not have to include item by item but have a breakdown of what the money is going towards.

2025 WAC Annual Schedule and Draft Monthly Agenda – WAC Discussion.

- The Proposed 2025 WAC Annual Schedule and Draft Monthly Agenda document was emailed to the Commission. [ATTACHMENT B]
- Chair Wagner said that he would like the Commission to meet one additional month since there are three months that the Commission does not have a meeting. Also, Chair Wagner mentioned that having at least two in-person meetings would be great. Additionally, Chair Wagner reported never having been on a Wildlife and Heritage Service field trip.
- Vice Chair Schroyer suggested changing the September meeting to a regular business meeting. May, July, and December are big travel months; therefore, Vice Chair Schroyer preferred not to hold meetings during May, July, and December. Keep in mind that there are holidays around these months. Vice Chair Schroyer highlighted that there might be issues related to having a quorum in May, July, and December because people have lives.
- Commissioner Kullberg remembered discussions about field trips; however, the Commission did not develop a consensus.
- Chair Wagner agreed to discuss a field trip that does not require a quorum with Director Karina Stonesifer.
- Chair Wagner mentioned that the business meeting on September 17, 2025, will be held virtually.
- Q&A Section:
 - 1. Commissioner Keithley asked if any three months are slow for staff.
 - a. Associate Director Eyler mentioned that July and December are slow months.
 - b. Assistant Secretary Peditto suggested that a May meeting might make sense if the Commission wanted to add a meeting date because staff will be preparing for regulations and managing post-legislative session outcomes.
- Motion:
 - 1. Commissioner Showalter moved to add the May 21, 2025, meeting to the 2025 Wildlife Advisory Commission Annual Schedule.
 - 2. Commissioner Keithley seconded the motion.
 - 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Natural Resources Police Update (NRP) – Captain Shawn Garren - Absent

Old Business

- Revamping Trapping Course Update – No Update.
- License Portal Update –
 1. Associate Director Eyler informed the Commission that the vendor is making steady progress on the new licensing and registration portal (MDOutdoors).
 2. Staff are testing the deer and turkey check-in components of MDOutdoors.
 3. The vendor is programming the blind site part of the system.
 4. The plan is to deploy the hunting license component on March 1.
- Use of Drones for Deer Recovery and Hunting —
 1. Commissioner Keithley and Chair Wagner pointed out that there are many comments about using drones for deer recovery and hunting.
 2. Associate Director Eyler reminded the Commission that staff is tracking the use of drones for recovery and hunting in other states.
 3. WHS has not moved forward with any proposed use of drone regulations.
 4. Commissioner Jenkins commented that drones are an excellent tool for recovery. Commissioner Jenkins added that if the Commission and DNR continue to drag this on, it may get out of hand and leave people with a bad taste in their mouths related to the use of drones if we were to reverse course. Then, it would be harder to obtain support if that occurs.
 5. The Commission will continue to monitor the use of drones for deer recovery and hunting.
 6. Commissioner Keithley requested the Commission and the Department develop a simple concept for the use of drones before the next regulation cycle. The language could read that drones may be used for the pursuit of wounded or dead wildlife but cannot be used for hunting because there is nothing in the current regulations.
 7. Associate Director Eyler advised the Commission that the topic of drone use would be presented at WHS's next regulation cycle. Therefore, next fall, WHS will discuss the concepts of regulation.
- Fox Chasing Non-License Requirement—Tabled for a future date.
 1. Chair Wagner had discussions with Ms. Seigler and Ms. Brumme Pickett from the fox hunting leadership. The fox-chasing group is not opposed to a fox-chasing license.
 2. Staff also met with the fox-chasing community about changing their permit and/or licensing model.
 3. More discussions are required to work out the details.
- Non-Lead Hunting Ammunition –
 1. Commissioner Showalter said he remained interested in learning more about future plans for lead ammo for hunting. He mentioned meeting briefly with Assistant Secretary Peditto. There is good information that indicates an anti-hunting group is going to advance legislation mandating non-lead hunting ammunition legislation for the 2025 General Assembly. Commissioner Showalter pointed out that the Commission's proactive attempts are probably going to be insufficient to address this particular legislation.
 2. The Department has seen a draft of the non-lead hunting ammunition bill. The bill's draft will make it challenging for lawmakers to say no. There is a phase in the process, but it's a very fast turnaround and focused on banning lead for deer hunting in 2-3 years.
 3. A similar bill almost passed the Senate during the 2024 General Assembly. During the Senate hearing, the hunting community was either opposed outright or supportive of partnering and using incentives to rollout the non-lead model. This information is being used to represent that hunters were supportive of the bill. The Department has worked hard to walk back the latter.
 4. Chair Wagner had numerous conversations with outside organizations, such as the Safari Club, Shooting Sports Association, National Deer Association, and others. These organizations will oppose the mandate of non-lead ammunition for hunting.
 5. Assistant Secretary Peditto mentioned that the phase-in approach cannot take place within three years because the manufacturers cannot produce shots required for hunting some of the game

species. This will, in turn, negatively impact managing the deer population and the R3 Program. However, it may work out if the phase-in is pushed out to five or six years with selected hunting provisions slowly rolled out.

6. Vice Chair Schroyer pointed out that hunters in Garrett County have to travel a distance to purchase ammunition because there are no big supply stores.
7. Vice Chair Schroyer recognized it could work with a phase-in approach for five years but not in two years...so the manufacturers and retailers would have time to catch up.
8. Chair Wagner agreed that non-lead ammunition is coming, and the Commission needs to do what it can to ensure that the bill is something the hunters can accept since we will be forced to live with it.
9. Commissioner Kullberg recalled Chair Wagner's statements about being proactive at the legislature and reiterated that this is an excellent opportunity to determine the Commission's position on non-lead ammunition for hunting. Commissioner Kullberg understood it is a tough pill to swallow, and it is not giving up but creating a template to determine Maryland's best interest. Commissioner Kullberg added that it would be strategic to be on the winning side because of the writing on the wall in the direction that the non-lead ammunition is moving and focusing on the phase-in option.
10. Chair Wagner agreed with Kullberg's comments and encouraged the Commission to be proactive. Chair Wagner noted that it is premature to pick a side until the Commission can review an actual bill. Chair Wagner suggested holding the course until the Commission reviews the official language of the non-lead ammunition for hunting bill.
11. Chair Wagner announced that a December 18 Wildlife Advisory Commission meeting could be added to decide the Commission's position on non-lead ammunition if all members agree.

New Business –

- Social Media Posts about Changing the Black Bear Season from a Western Maryland Bear Hunters Group – Commissioner Rossignuolo. The Western Maryland Bear Hunters Group is scheduled to meet with Game Mammal Section Leader Jonathan Trudeau in Garrett County on January 18, 2025. Commissioner Rossignuolo will be attending to listen to the discussion.
 1. Vice Chair Schroyer informed the Commission that he saw the Western Maryland Bear Hunters Group on Facebook. Vice Chair Schroyer immediately messaged the organizer and cautioned against allowing the new bear group to become another DNR hate page about how bears are managed in Maryland. Vice Chair Schroyer also got the organizer in contact with Game Mammal Section Leader Jonathan Trudeau.
 2. Vice Chair Schroyer encouraged Chair Wagner to attend the January 18, 2025, meeting.
 3. Based on Vice Chair Schroyer's last check, this Western Maryland Bear Hunters Group has over 700 members.
 4. Game Mammals Section Leader Trudeau met with the Western Maryland Bear Hunters Group to see what the group's organizer has envisioned regarding the bear season changes. The organizer is actively pursuing setting up the Western Maryland Bear Hunters as a non-profit organization. The organizer is looking for the DNR to change the bear season in 10 years, which differs from Facebook information.
- New Maryland Waterfowl Photography Contest – Associate Director Eyler presented a discussion on a new project to replace the former migratory game bird or 'duck stamp' model. [ATTACHMENT C] Most Commission members knew that DNR announced the discontinuation of the waterfowl stamp contest. Staff are proposing to replace the waterfowl stamp contest with the waterfowl photography contest. DNR already has a photo contest, which is hosted every year through the Office of Communication. The winning photographs are included in the DNR annual calendar. DNR is going to create a waterfowl category. The winning image will be used in all licensing materials during that calendar year. Excellent photos have been submitted through the DNR Photo Contest every year. A potential hard card would be available for hunters to purchase – one side will have the hunting license and stamp info, and the other would have a high-resolution photograph. Samples of

the hard cards were shared with the Commissioners and guests.

1. Mr. Steve Huettner, representing Ducks Unlimited Maryland, commented that this concept is interesting. Mr. Huettner indicated that he is a volunteer for Maryland Ducks Unlimited and the State Public Policy Chair for Maryland Ducks Unlimited. Also, Mr. Huettner has been working with the DNR for the last year regarding the duck stamp, and there have been many discussions back and forth. Mr. Huettner responded that the lack of feedback was because DNR did no outreach. There was a single press release with three-sentences mentioning that it was the 50th Anniversary Waterfowl Duck Stamp Contest, and the Department was going to get rid of the stamp contest. Additionally, Mr. Huettner expressed that zero outreach was done to the hunting community. It struck a chord as someone who represents 11,000 Duck Unlimited members and raised \$1.2 million dollars last year. Mr. Huettner added that he was not saying moving forward is a bad idea. However, the Department had to realize that when members saw an increase in funding, an increase in the duck stamp and license with the user group supporting it, and then suddenly removed the stamp program without any user group outreach, it struck a chord. As far as moving forward with the Department's proposed solution, that is fine.
2. Associate Director Eyler discussed the outcome of the stamp program removal with the Licensing and Registration Service. Their staff spoke to thousands of constituents and vendors, and there was very little feedback on removing the stamp program. Associate Director Eyler compared this new concept to when Maryland went from a physical check-in location for deer to a Telecheck system. In the first year, the staff received some complaints, and afterward, hunters moved forward with technology and would never want to go back to the brick-and-mortar mandated model.
3. Mr. Huettner acknowledged Associate Director Eyler's points; however, Mr. Huettner stated that outreach should be done next time instead of an executive decision by the Department, especially on the back end of increased fees. Doing the outreach before a significant change would make things easier from a policy perspective and when working with the Department.
4. Mr. Bill Miles drew attention to two things because minutes were taken at this meeting, and Mr. Huettner and Mr. Miles were guests. Mr. Miles declared that it is false that hunters supported the non-lead ammunition bill. Hunters of Maryland LLC helped defeat the bill. Mr. Miles said he wanted his statements to be part of the official meeting minutes.
5. Mr. Miles emphasized that the waterfowl community supports the Department in almost everything; however, when it was known that the Department canceled the 50-year program, it broke the hearts of many waterfowlers. Mr. Miles pointed out it would have been nice if the waterfowl community was allowed to provide input. Mr. Miles commented that the Department did not have the common courtesy to meet with the waterfowl community and inform them of the direction the Department was going in. The waterfowl community would have been the Department's biggest champions. Mr. Miles said the Department wronged the waterfowl community.
6. Mr. Huettner asked if it is possible to award a monetary prize to the winner of the waterfowl photo contest and if this would detract from other entries. He said that Ducks Unlimited would be willing to contribute prize money to support the program.
 - a. Staff would need to discuss the monetary award for the waterfowl photo contest with the Office of the Attorney General and other agency personnel and will get back to him.
7. Chair Wagner asked if Maryland Ducks Unlimited would contribute to the monetary award.
 - a. Mr. Huettner responded that Maryland Ducks Unlimited is interested and would be willing to do so to increase the interest of people in taking waterfowl photography and making submissions.
 - b. Associate Director Eyler suggested that we wait and see how the first year the waterfowl photo contest runs.
8. Chair Wagner indicated that he spoke to around 50 people in the last few months. Some people did not know about the change in the waterfowl stamp program, but some were aware of it. Out of the 50 people, maybe around one or two were upset about no longer having a waterfowl stamp.

This change has been coming down the road for a few years. Ducks Unlimited is one of the leaders in passing legislation of the Duck Stamp Modernization Act of 2023. However, if you review the direction of that legislation, the duck stamp will probably disappear over time. The practice of stamp collection is no longer popular.

9. Chair Wagner pointed out that Maryland Ducks Unlimited is 100% behind a continued contest. However, where was Maryland Ducks Unlimited support when 70% of hunters want Sunday waterfowl hunting?
 - a. Mr. Huettner could not speak about Chair Wagner's question about waterfowl Sunday hunting because he was not the State Policy Chair for Maryland Ducks Unlimited.
 - b. Chair Wagner clarified that the money raised by the waterfowl stamp goes to waterfowl conservation.
 - c. Chair Wagner commented that the new waterfowl photo contest is an elegant solution.
10. Commissioner Keithley proposed that the Department move forward with the new waterfowl photo contest.
11. Commissioner Smith supported the concept of the new waterfowl photo contest.
12. Commissioner Showalter also supported the new waterfowl photo contest.
- Motion
 1. Commissioner Keithley moved to support the DNR with the Maryland Waterfowl Photo Contest as-discussed by using the DNR current photo contest.
 2. Commissioner Showalter seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Public Comment –

- The public may contact the Members of the Commission at wac.dnr@maryland.gov.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

The next meeting will be virtually using Google Meet at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 15, 2025.

Attendance

Members:	TJ. Jenkins, S. Keithley, K. Kullberg, K. Rossignuolo, J. Schroyer, R. Showalter, M. Smith, and C. Wagner
Absent:	J. Parks (member); T. Hough (Farm Bureau); NRP representative
Guest:	S. Huettner, B. Miles, M. Olear, A. Olear, and A. Ward
Staff:	G. Brewer, D. Brinker, H. Devine, B. Eyler, K. Fleming, J. Homyack, B. Long, J. McKnight, J. Moulis, P. Peditto, T. Spencer, J. Tabora, and J. Trudeau

Wildlife & Heritage Service - Administration



Program Update
Wildlife Advisory Commission
November 20, 2024

Wildlife & Heritage Service Administration- Who we are



Kristen Fleming - Associate Director

Hannah Devine - Federal Aid Coordinator

Chief Fiscal Officer - Vacant, *working on recruitment*

Ivonne Montañez - Administrative Specialist/Procurement

Georgia Johnson - Wildlife Permits

Jo Swift

Vacant LTC

Tina Jarvis - Offshore Blind and Shoreline License

Alex Talbot

Joe Bulls



Wildlife & Heritage Service - What we do



Service-wide support:

- Budget/Fiscal Management
- Federal Aid Coordination
- Procurement
- Inventory
- HR/Personnel

Statewide Permitting and Licensing:

- Wildlife Permits
- Offshore Blinds
- Shoreline Licenses



Wildlife & Heritage Service - Wildlife Permits



2024 Program Highlights

- Transitioned all record-keeping to electronic
- Updated Wildlife Damage Control Operator permit to online (including testing)
- Updated web pages to include standardized application forms

Wildlife Permits

- Deer Cooperator Licenses
- Deer Salvage Permits
- Captive Cervid Permits (grandfathered)
- Game Husbandry Permits
- Fur Dealer Permits
- Taxidermy Permits
- Wildlife Damage Control Operator Permits
- Falconry Permits
- Captive Reptile and Amphibian Permits
- Wildlife Rehabilitation Permits
- Endangered Species Permits
- Scientific Collection Permits
- Scientific Collection - Terrapin Permits
- Terrapin Education Permits

Wildlife & Heritage Service - Off-shore Blind, Shoreline Licenses & Waterfowl Permits



2024 Program Highlights

- Digitized records and created online database for waterfowl permits
- Upgraded and digitized OBSL maps and streamlined issuance process
- 403 Waterfowl Permits, 1767 landowner blinds, 2152 non-landowner blinds

Off-shore and Shoreline Licenses

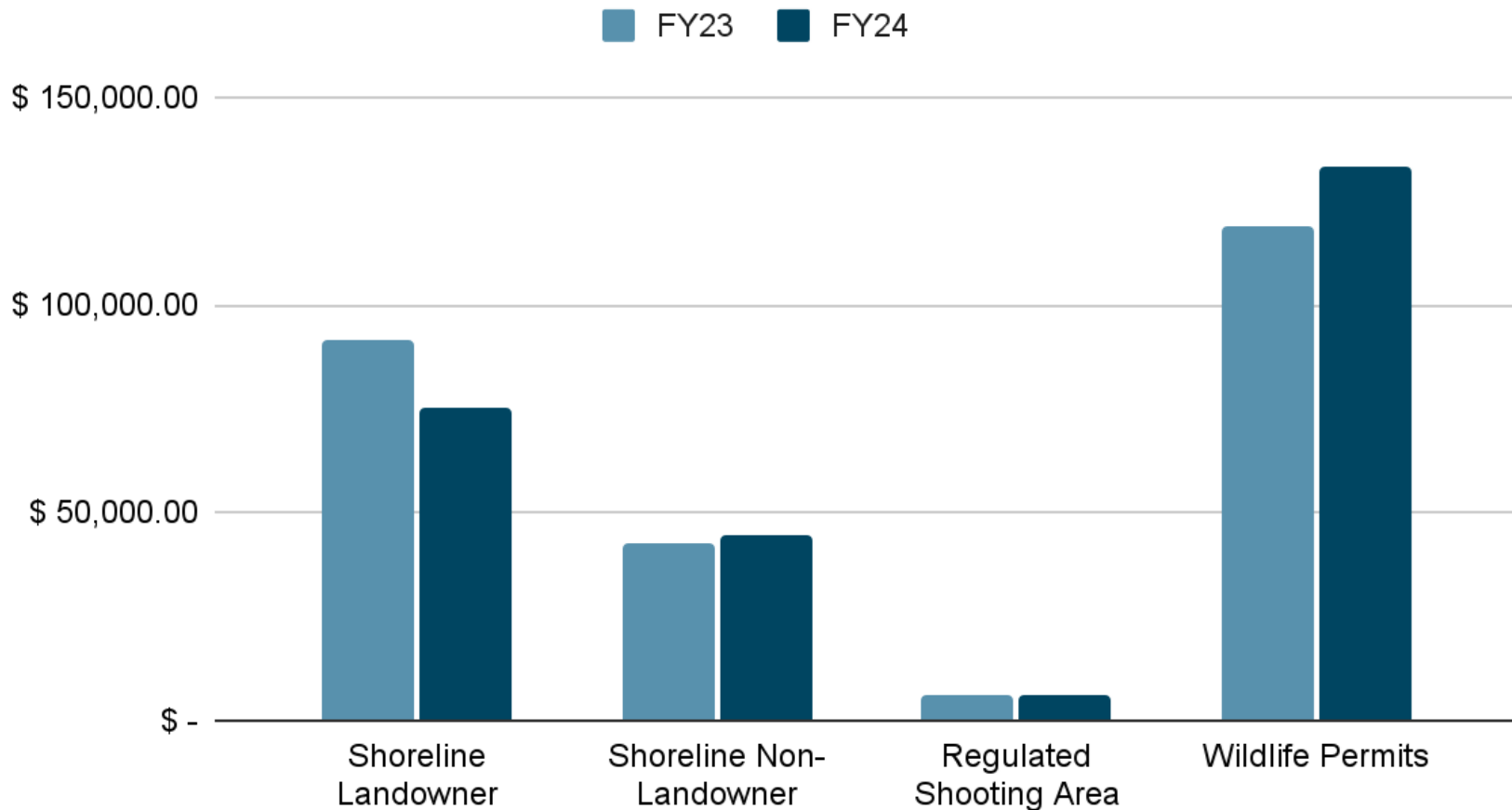
- Shoreline Licensing
- Offshore Waterfowl Blind Permits
- Regulated Shooting Areas Permits
- Waterfowl Guide and Outfitter Permits



Wildlife & Heritage Service - Permit and Licensing Revenue in FY24



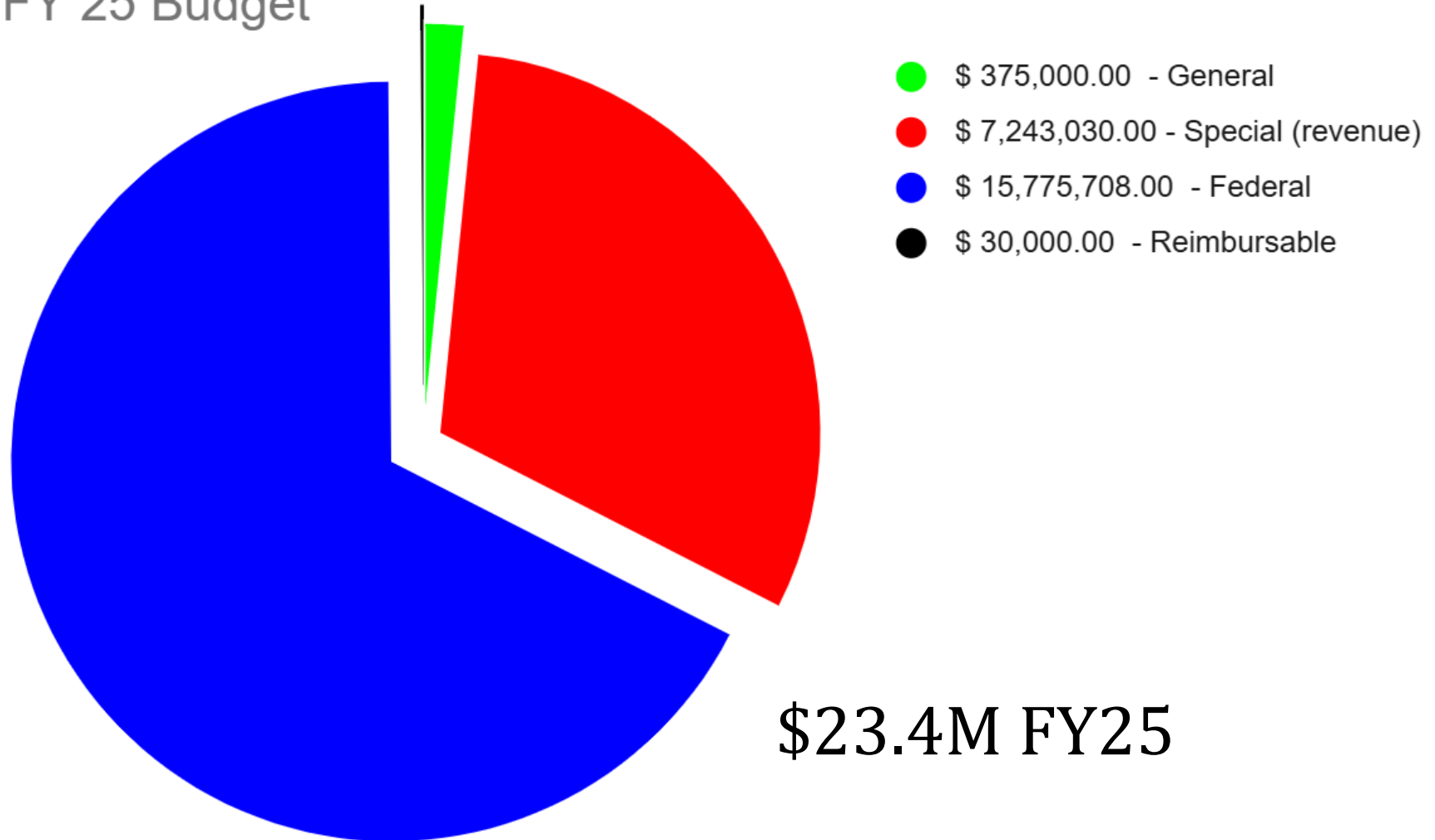
License and Permit Revenue



Wildlife & Heritage Service - FY 25 Budget



FY 25 Budget



Wildlife & Heritage Service - Federal Funds

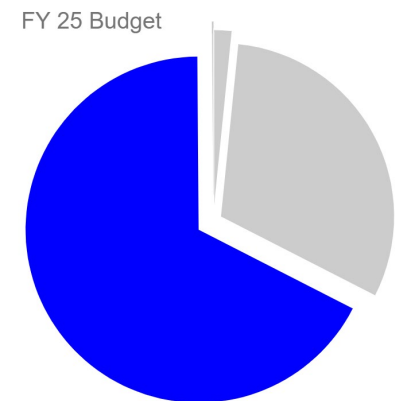


Federal Program Updates

- Approximately \$500k decrease in PR funds expected for FY26
- USFWS will be looking at standalone grants for some multi-state projects starting Jan. 1 (AFC)
- Land match acquisitions must be done during the period of performance

FY 25 Federal Fund Allocation

- Pittman-Robertson -\$14,864,242.19
- State Wildlife Grants - \$773,826
- Section 6 Endangered Species - \$53,115
- White-nose Syndrome Grant - \$50,000
- National Park Service Amphibian Grant - \$34,525



Wildlife & Heritage Service - Special Funds



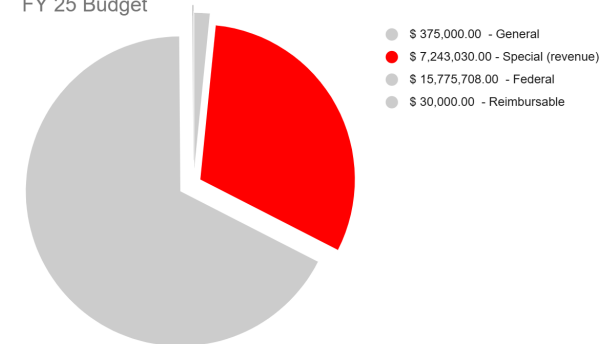
Special Fund Program Updates

- Largest increase from FY 23 to FY 24 was Migratory Game Bird Stamp (75%) - \$649K for FY 24
- Other significant increases were in resident/non-res apprentice, non-resident 3-day and resident regular licenses
- Sika Deer Stamp brought in \$88,880

FY 25 Special Funds

- Wildlife Management & Protection Fund
- Marilyn Mause Bequeath / Other Donations
- Migratory Game Bird Fund
- Chesapeake Bay & Endangered Species
- Upland Wildlife Habitat Fund

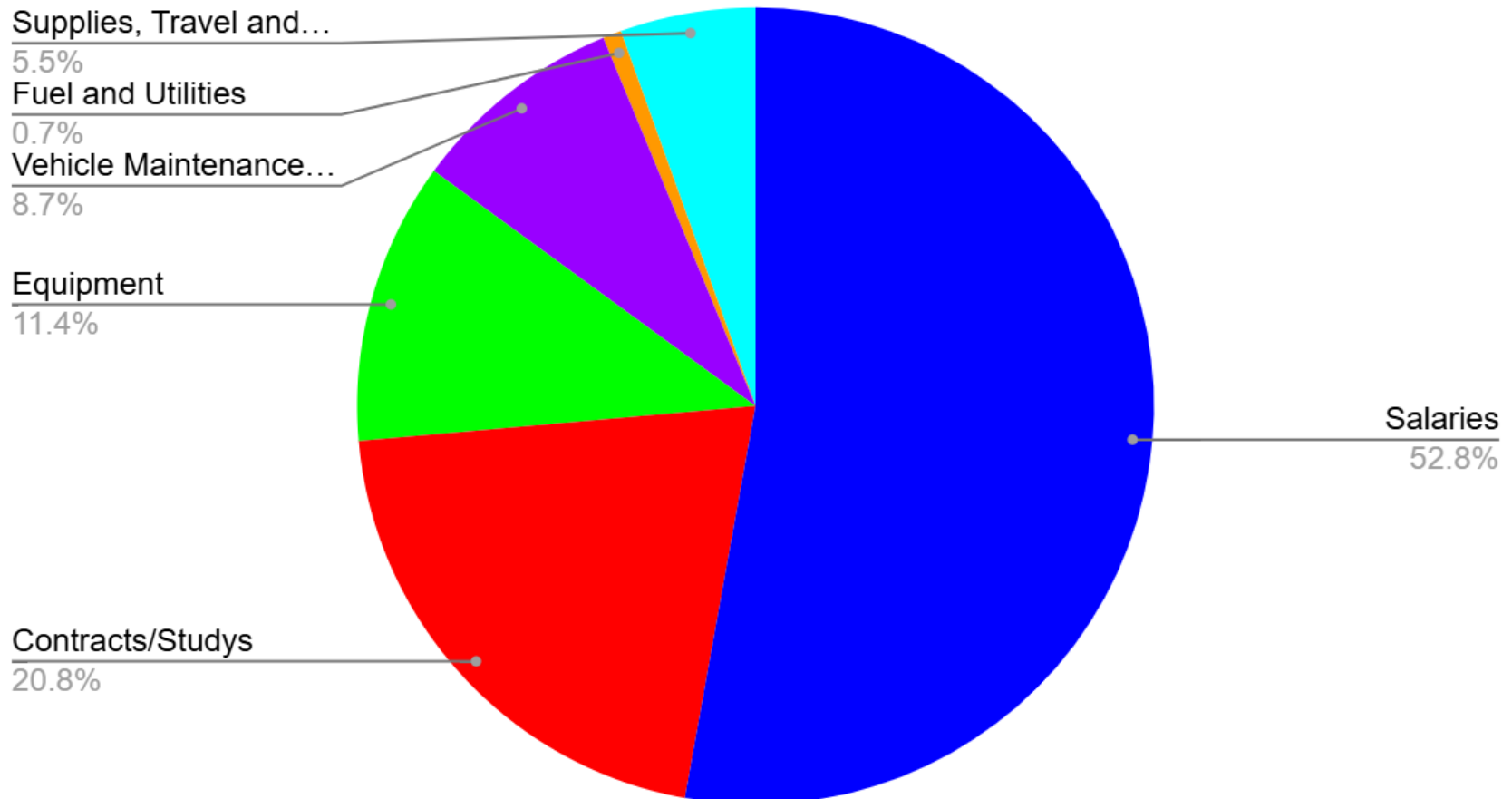
FY 25 Budget



Wildlife & Heritage Service - Where does it go



Budget Categories FY25



Questions?



**2025 WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
ANNUAL SCHEDULE AND DRAFT MONTHLY AGENDA**

JANUARY 15, 2025 - VIRTUAL

- Annual Election of the Chair and Vice Chair (Group)
- Proposed Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits (Josh Homyack and Kayla Harvey)
- 2025 Legislative Session Update (Brian Eyler)

FEBRUARY 19, 2025 – VIRTUAL

- 2025 Legislative Session Update (Brian Eyler)

MARCH 19, 2025 – VIRTUAL

- Migratory Game Bird Proposals – Commission’s Vote Required (Josh Homyack and Kayla Harvey)
- Migratory Game Bird Advisory Committee Report (Josh Homyack)
- 2025 Legislative Session Update (Brian Eyler)
- Call for Conservationist, Employee, and Farmer of the Year Nominations (Group Discussion)

APRIL 16, 2025 - VIRTUAL

- 2025 Legislative Session Outcome (Brian Eyler)
- WAC Legislative Concepts Review (Group Discussion)

MAY 21, 2025- VIRTUAL

JUNE 18, 2025 – IN PERSON

- WHS Game Program Update (Brian Eyler and staff)

JULY 16, 2025 - NO MEETING SCHEDULED

AUGUST 20, 2025 - VIRTUAL

- Natural Heritage Program Update (Jonathan McKnight)
- Wildlife Diversity Advisory Committee (Jonathan McKnight)
- WHS Information and Education Program Update (Chris Markin)

SEPTEMBER 17, 2025 – VIRTUAL

OCTOBER 15, 2025 - VIRTUAL

- WHS Regional Operations Program Update (John Moulis)
- Migratory Game Bird Status Update (Josh Homyack and Kayla Harvey)

NOVEMBER 19, 2025 – IN PERSON

- 2024 Conservationist of the Year Presentation
- Wildlife and Heritage Service FY25 and FY26 Budget Update (Kristen Fleming)
- WHS Administration Update (Kristen Fleming)
- 2026 WAC Annual Schedule and Draft Monthly Agenda – WAC Review

DECEMBER 17, 2025 – NO MEETING SCHEDULED

Waterfowl Photo Contest

ATTACHMENT C



Duck Stamp Contest



-DNR elected to stop hosting the annual duck stamp contest due to expenses and declining artist participation. Artists were notified last year that the 50th anniversary contest would be the last – no opposition.

-Less than 20 artists participating in some years and some recycling artwork from previous years.

-DNR responsible for artwork while in possession

-Expense of soliciting participants, hosting contest, and insuring/shipping artwork back to contributors (any expenses incurred not eligible for Pittman-Robertson 3:1 grant match)



Waterfowl Photo Contest



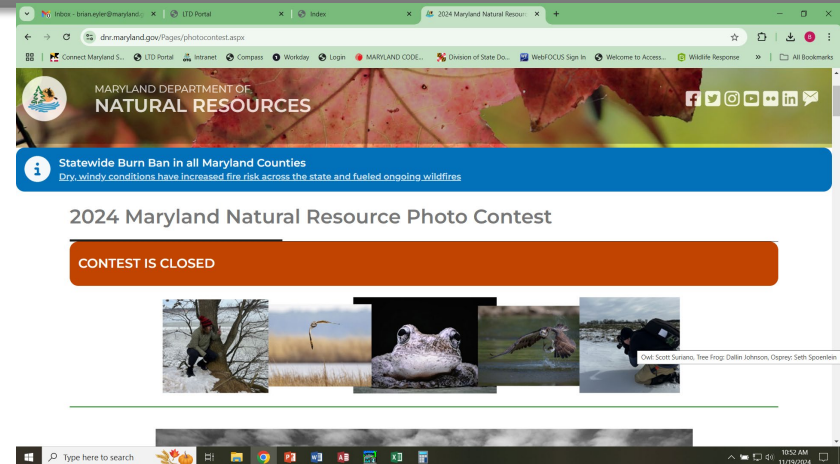
Currently:

-Entrants select the season category that they want to enter under (spring, summer, winter, or fall).

-And they select a subcategory - Birds, Insects, Flora, Recreation, Landscapes, Weather and Wonder, and Wildlife.

Beginning in 2025:

-DNR will offer a dedicated Waterfowl category and the winning image will be used on licensing materials in place of the previous duck stamp



Printed License Image



2024 Resident Annual Fish

Nebraska Resident
CAROLYN WILLIAMS | 2644075

Permit No: D0001700639

NAME		810 9TH AVE	
STREET		HELENA	
CITY		MT	
08/18/1985		FEMALE	
DATE OF BIRTH		SEX	
NOT APPLICABLE		HIP	
PUBLIC WEBSITE		01/01/2024	
PERMIT AGENT		DATE/FROM	
		12/31/2024	
		THRU	

Resident FEE \$38.00

STATE OF NEBRASKA
GAME and PARKS COMMISSION

VOID UNLESS SIGNED

I accept this permit with the understanding that it is issued to residents only, that I am a resident of Nebraska, that I have resided in Nebraska continuously for a period of 30 days prior to making application for this permit, that this permit is not transferable under penalty and that same is void unless signed by me.

Sign Here

is permitted to hunt in the State of Nebraska during the period stated on the face of this permit under restrictions of the Game Laws and the rules of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Director - Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

AQUATIC HABITAT STAMP

2024

\$15.00

NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS COMMISSION



License “Hard Cards”



- Can offer up to 4 card options at one time (possibly 6)
- \$10 fee for card

Questions



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