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Agency History

The creation in 1930 of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department was a continuation of efforts to preserve fish and game species in the state. At its inception the enforcement of game and fish laws was the Department's primary conservation tool. Over the years the legislature has increased enforcement authority and assigned regulatory powers to the agency aiding its efforts to preserve fish and wildlife and their habitats.

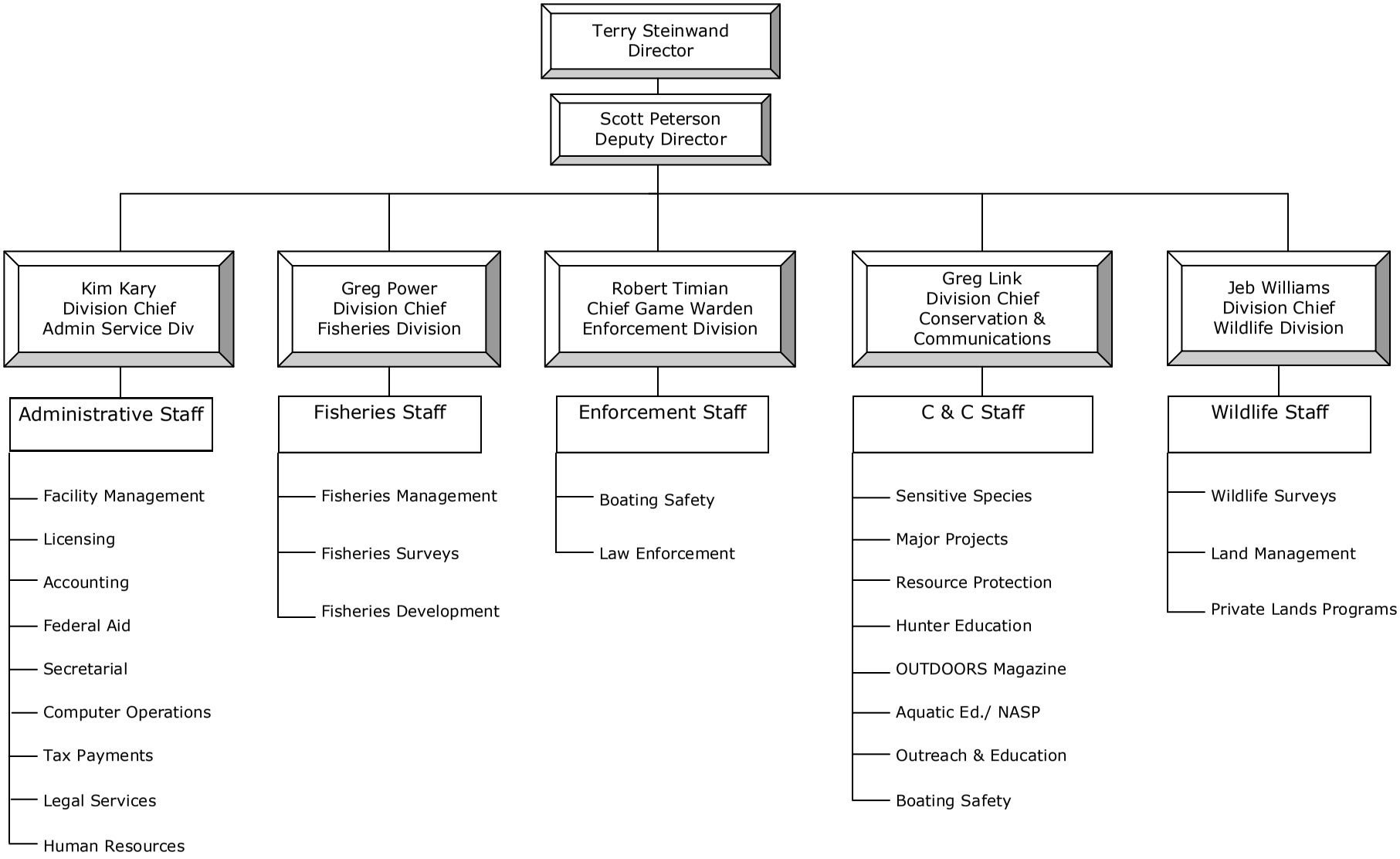
The availability of federal funds for wildlife management programs through the Pittman-Robertson Act (1937) enabled North Dakota and other states to begin scientific management of wildlife resources on a large scale. The Federal Aid in Fish Restoration Act, or the Dingell-Johnson Act (1950) enabled fisheries restoration. In the 1980s, an amendment to the act expanded the tax to motor boat fuels and imported equipment, making more money available to states.

Since 1983, the Game and Fish Department has had regulatory powers over game, fish, and wildlife resources in North Dakota (S. L. 1983, Ch. 261). Specifically, under the direction of the Commissioner, the Department has authority to promulgate rules and regulations governing management of game and fish resources; manage the two fish hatcheries (Riverdale and Valley City) and game management areas; administer the state's habitat improvement program; survey and research fish and wildlife species; issue hunting and fishing licenses; enforce hunting and fishing laws; inform and educate the public on the Department's wildlife management programs; and publish the agency's magazine, North Dakota OUTDOORS (first issue published in 1930), and other informational publications as required by state law.

In 1991, the Commissioner was renamed the Director (S. L. 1991, Ch. 231). The Director was required to submit a proposed wildlife and fish restoration program and project plan and to update segments involving the proposed acquisition of area wetlands, water and land by purchase, lease, easement, or servitude. The Director was given authority to establish a statewide acquisition plan (S. L. 1991, Ch. 42). The Director was charged to appoint a deputy commissioner, a chief state warden, biologists, and technicians all of whom were to enforce the rules and regulations of the Department. Under the supervision of the Director and the advisement of the State Game and Fish Advisory Board, the Department administers regulatory powers over game, fish, and wildlife resources in North Dakota.

The mission of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department is to protect, conserve, and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitat for sustained public consumptive and appreciative use. The Department is currently headquartered in Bismarck and consists of five major divisions: Administrative Services, Fisheries, Enforcement, Conservation and Communications, and Wildlife. There are seven district offices: Dickinson, Williston, Riverdale, Devils Lake, Lonetree, Jamestown, and the Bismarck Shop/Lab.

North Dakota
Game and Fish Department



10/2015

158 FTE's

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

The Administrative Services Division, through the Director, sets policy for the entire Department. It also provides organization and administrative support for all other divisions of the Department. It consists of the director, deputy director, administrative staff, an accounting section, a licensing section, an information technology section, and facility management.

The licensing section handles hundreds of thousands of applications and licenses each year. Many of the licenses are issued through lottery drawings. Licenses issued by telephone, on the web or from the Department's Bismarck office are all part of the same data base. The print-your-own-license and commercial agent web based system is being used more and more each year. Nonresident waterfowl licenses (approx. 24,000/year) are issued entirely on the internet system or by telephone. One hundred percent of the more than 27,000 nonresident small game hunting licenses were issued using these electronic systems. Over 83% of license lottery applicants are using the web to apply for licenses. The lottery process has been improved significantly because of this.

Sales of small game licenses have slightly decreased and deer hunting license sales significantly decreased due to fewer licenses being issued by the department. There were over 101,000 licenses sold in 2010 and only approx. 39,000 sold in 2014. The pronghorn season for 2013 was closed and we issued 176 licenses for 2014. Graphs showing license sales data are attached.

The Department made In Lieu of Tax payments of $1,031,495 for 2011–13 for land owned or managed by the Department as required by law.

Legislation:

Key Game and Fish related bills from the 2015 legislative session:

SB 2017 – Appropriates $77,231,739 for the Game and Fish Department for the biennium beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2017.

SB 2077 – Relating to criminal history record checks for Game and Fish Department volunteers and final applicants.

SB 2093 – Relating to guide and outfitter licenses; and to provide for application.

HB 1081 – Relating to big game and turkey hunting licenses for youth with a life-threatening illness; and to provide for a legislative management study.

HB 1156 – Relating to the option to use deer lottery license refunds for the private land open to sportsmen program.

HB 1158 – Removes the responsibility from county auditors to issue game and fish licenses and manage agents by transferring it to the department effective April 1, 2016.

HB 1197 – Provide for a prohibition on the purchase of real property and easements for wildlife or conservation purposes with public funds.

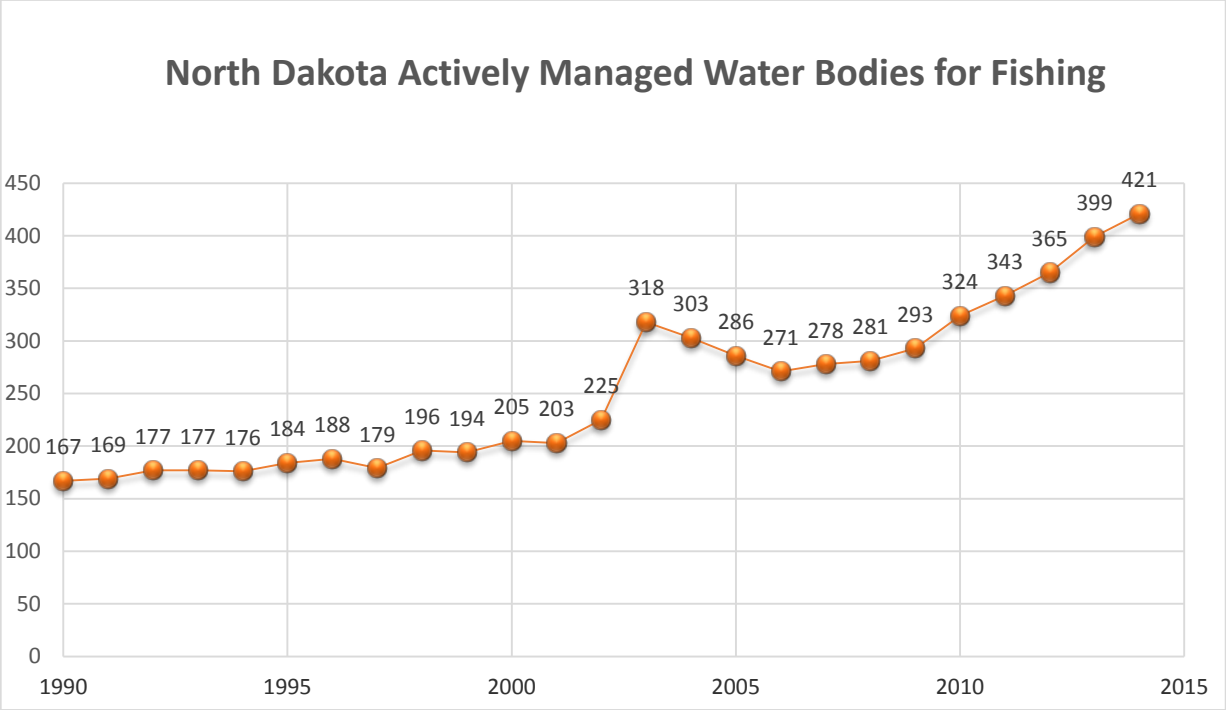
HB 1356 – Relating to depredation prevention by landowners.

HB 1381 – Relating to interference with the taking of wildlife.

FISHERIES DIVISION

The Fisheries Division is responsible for managing fish populations in approximately 420 public waters scattered across the state. As such, "The goal of the fisheries program is to manage North Dakota waters in cooperation with other interests to provide the maximum sustainable quality and quantity of fishing opportunities for the enjoyment of the public."

Mother Nature continues to have a positive effect on the fisheries resources of North Dakota in recent years. Years of rising water, a record number of fishing lakes and aggressive fish management in North Dakota have helped produce record fishing license sales. In 2014 – 15, a record number (~222,000) of fishing licenses were issued. Non-resident licenses sales were record setting (~65,000), an increase of more than 5000 over the previous record. More than 200,000 licensed anglers fished approximately two million days in North Dakota in 2014 – 15. This was despite the fact there was a substantial increase in the cost of all fishing licenses that became effective April 1, 2014. The record amount of ice fishing effort in recent years was more than double that documented ten years ago.



The Fisheries Division consists of various sections to address fishing concerns and enhance fishing opportunities. These sections include fisheries management, development (access, infrastructure), production (stocking, etc), habitat and administration. These different sections work together and along with additional strong working relationships with other Department divisions as well as various public and private entities, created and/or enhanced the development of some of the finest fishing that can be found anywhere. Specific section results can be found in the following narratives:

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SECTION

Fishing regulations are developed every two years, although amendments are commonplace. Fortunately, North Dakota's proclamation framework centers on simplicity and thus substantial changes have been rare. Regulation changes and other fish management decisions (such as stocking requests) are based on the results gleaned from standardized sampling of many lakes. With the number of fishing waters reaching a record high (>400) in recent years, the number of water bodies sampled annually to assess fish populations is approaching 300, with many sampled twice a year. In general, these surveys are used to assess the adult population (the first sampling effort annually) and reproduction (the second sampling) of various species in various lakes. In addition, other activities such as water quality monitoring, research, fish tagging, fish spawning, and creel surveys are conducted as needed. Approximately 32 reported fish kills were investigated during the 2013 – 2015 biennium, but only 11 of these were classified as significant or total fish-kills. Mostly on smaller and/shallower waters, these fish kills are primarily the result of uninhabitable conditions during both winter and summer. The abundant water that North Dakota has experienced in recent years has generally increased the amount of quality fish habitat and tempered the frequency of fish kills statewide.

FISHERIES PRODUCTION SECTION

A strong demand for hatchery production with all the new fishing waters across the state continues to push for maximum production output. During the 2013 – 2015 biennium, over 27 million 1-5" fish, representing 12 species, were stocked into more than 250 North Dakota waters. Most of the stockings were walleye, and most of the brood fish need for spawning originated from Lake Sakakawea and Lake Oahe. In addition, approximately 593,000 adult fish (generally pan fish) were trapped from one water body where surpluses existed and transported/stocked into a water body in need. A total of 37,000 pounds of fish were stocked into new water bodies. The intake structure for the East Unit Rearing ponds (at Garrison Dam NFH) was relocated and once again operational. The intake screen/fish removal system on the main water supply to the Salmonid rearing system at Garrison Dam NFH was replaced along with repairs to the main electric boilers. The pond fertilizing unit (trailer and feed wagon) were replaced at Garrison Dam NFH. At Valley City NFH, numerous repairs to waterlines, pond work and hatchery plumbing supplies were provided to assist with renovation and upkeep of this antiquated facility.

FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT SECTION

Most lakes throughout the state were at normal or above normal pool levels during the 2013 – 2015 biennium. While normal water levels alleviated the demand for work at many sites, there was still a high demand and request to develop new facilities and access to the many new walleye fisheries that have been established. As in the past, one of the primary focuses in the 2013 – 2015 biennium was again to renovate, improve and upgrade old dilapidated facilities such as boat ramps, courtesy docks, vault toilets, and fish cleaning stations. This will continue to be an area of concentration in upcoming work periods as there is a large inventory of facilities on the landscape that were constructed in previous work periods and many are close to the end of their useful life. Overall, around 130 new development projects were undertaken and completed.

Seventeen boat ramps were constructed or upgraded during this period and around 50 new courtesy docks were built and installed. Eight new vault toilets were installed and 10 road/parking area projects were undertaken and completed. Five fish cleaning stations were upgraded by replacing the old table/grinder units with new, larger tables and grinders.

Fisheries Habitat Projects

The Departments "Save Our Lakes Program" (SOL) was created to address aquatic habitat issues (e.g. water quality) facing all of the state's fishing water bodies. During the 2013 – 15 biennium, 17 in lake projects and 27 long term agreements were completed/signed protecting approximately 2,500 riparian acres and an additional 1,000+ acres of uplands was put into rotational (cell/paddock) grazing systems. A total of 85 long term easement checks were conducted. There was 32+ miles of riparian fencing completed, most of this was with cooperation from the Stutsman County SCD. Five alternate water sources were installed. Two low level outlets were improved and or fixed giving biologists the ability to manage water levels in their fisheries. Nine earthen piers were repaired and seven were created. Approximately 8,850 linear feet of shoreline was opened up to access for shore anglers. An additional 300 feet of eroding bank was protected with rip rap.

Fisheries Administration

The number of wholesale and retail bait vendors has grown slightly over time, with 293 vendors in 2014. The number of licensed private fish hatcheries has also remained steady, varying between 3 – 5. With the increase in fishing lakes statewide, the number of fishing tournaments have also trended upward with about 150 permitted annually. The balancing act finding acceptable common ground between tournament and non-tournament anglers continues to be successful (based on the lack of public complaints). Cormorant predation on desirable fish stocks continues to be a problem in some waters across the state with a long-term solution remaining elusive. Intensive take in select waters continues by fisheries staff (permitted by the USFWS) with mixed results. The discovery of curly-leaf pondweed in Raleigh Reservoir marked the only new ANS discovery in North Dakota for 2014. Over 400 complete or partial ANS inspections were undertaken on 216 recreational fishing waters across the state. Zebra mussels on the Red River has been the most recent ANS cause for concern.

CONSERVATION AND COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

The Conservation and Communications Division is comprised of three sections. The Communications Section functions as the Department's liaison to the general public, providing the most up-to-date, department-wide information through all media formats. The Conservation Section reviews development related projects and offers recommendations to both private and government for minimizing impacts to our state's wildlife and their habitats. This Section's focus also includes management of nongame wildlife and species-of-conservation-priority. The Education Section is responsible for all facets of educating the public, e.g. hunter education, fishing, archery, fur harvester education, boating and water safety, etc., offering state-wide, hands-on conservation and skills learning opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages.

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

The Communications Section includes North Dakota OUTDOORS magazine, weekly television broadcast news feature, weekly online webcast and other video products, weekly news release, website, Game and Fish Department hunting and fishing regulations guides, media relations, and public information projects.

Telephone and Written Correspondence

The Communications Section is responsible for handling telephone information calls and answering and/or distributing emails that come into the main agency email account, and responding to written inquiries. Section staff handles several hundred calls per week, depending on the season, and thousands of emails, letters and requests annually. The section also maintains fisheries Whopper and Catch and Release files, and compiles and distributes bi-weekly news clippings to staff.

Publications

The Game and Fish Department produces a four-color magazine, North Dakota OUTDOORS, published 10 times per year and ranging from 24 – 40 pages. OUTDOORS had a mailing list of more than 34,000 on July 1, 2015, about the same as at the start of the biennium. About 23,400 subscriptions were paid, generating approximately $360,000 during the biennium.

In the 2013 – 15 biennium, current issues addressed included results of recent wildlife research in North Dakota, assessment of the annual deer license lottery drawings, fishing highlights, legislation, fish size limit restrictions, increasing enforcement activity, aquatic nuisance species, recovery from the 2011 Missouri River flood, the future of PLOTS, EHD outbreak, agency needs for volunteers, the future of deer management, icefishing prospects, the new Outdoor Heritage Fund, darkhouse spearing participation, record fishing opportunities, species of conservation priority, early goose season, sage grouse habitat, educating wildlife professionals, one deer license proposal, pneumonia in bighorn sheep, Devils Lake walleye population changes, statewide fisheries assessment, Devils Lake walleye length limit need, Lake Oahe walleye spawning information and more.

Media/Public Information

The Communications Section is responsible for weekly and special news releases distributed to about 170 media outlets, and another 6,500 individuals and organizations; an online legislative newsletter compiled and updated daily during the 2015 legislative session; and a seasonal spring snow goose hunting information hotline. Section staff answers hundreds of phone calls and emails weekly. This project also develops the various hunting and fishing regulations guides. Participation in the electronic news distribution service more than tripled in the last biennium with nearly 13,000 individuals now using the system.

Photography

Section personnel take thousands of photographs each biennium for illustrating articles in North Dakota OUTDOORS, and for use on the agency website, and use by all staff for slide shows, power point presentations, newspapers, media and other private and public publications.

Videography

North Dakota OUTDOORS, a weekly television news feature, maintained its appearance on major North Dakota stations with a viewing audience of approximately 100,000 weekly. The weekly online news webcast, OUTDOORS Online, also has consistent broadcasts on cable access channels in most major cities. The webcast attracts several thousand viewers per week.

Game and Fish Website

The website includes most of the basic Game and Fish Department information such as season regulations, lake and species information, the Department's magazine and video features, and a variety of other topics. It attracts between 5,000 and 10,000 individual visits per day and also handles a great majority of license sales in the state.

Outreach Biologists

In June 2014, Game and Fish administration reassigned the outreach biologists, stationed in Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, and Bismarck, from the Education Section to the Communications Section to promote more suitable functionality within the division. The outreach biologists are vital local experts for interacting with wildlife clubs, local leaders, local media, and assisting other Department divisions with local issues.

CONSERVATION SECTION

Coordination, Technical Assistance, and Special Projects

Conservation section staff continued their primary task of reviewing development related projects and offering recommendations intended to lessen the severity of such projects on fish and wildlife resources. During the 2013 – 15 biennium, staff reviewed and commented on

approximately 700 proposed development related projects. These projects range from construction of roads, oil wells, wind turbines and transmission lines, to drainage projects, dams, and changes in land use practices. In addition to written requests, staff receive and respond to numerous informal inquiries via phone, email and walk-in traffic.

Staff spent a considerable amount of time the past biennium dealing with issues impacting public lands in North Dakota. The majority of the efforts involved lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, which total about 1.3 million acres. These lands are located primarily in western North Dakota. The primary purpose of the Department's involvement is to ensure adequate consideration of natural resources and the interests of state sportsmen and women in public land management policies and actions. Examples of conservation section involvement includes the review of oil well placement, road and pipeline alignments, wildlife transplants such as bighorn sheep, land trades and divestitures, grazing issues, unique or rare species, access and natural resource protection. During the past biennium, staff also continued to provide input on issues related to the Forest Plan for U.S. Forest Service managed lands. This includes review and comment on various pasture allotments throughout the grasslands.

Flooding and water management has been a major issue during the past biennium. Department personnel have worked diligently with the Corps of Engineers and communities of Fargo and West Fargo on the Fargo Moorhead Diversion Project. The diversion has numerous environmental challenges including the crossing of five tributaries, loss of river channel and riparian forest, construction of two in-channel control structures and numerous fish by-pass structures. Additional efforts have and will be expended working on Missouri and Souris river flood related projects (i.e. high water diversion channels, stabilization measures).

Department staff work with project sponsors and regulatory agencies to minimize the opportunity for aquatic nuisance species to spread to uninfested waters. Additionally, fishery and conservation section staff inspect equipment coming into the state to assure they are free of aquatic nuisance species.

The Department has continued its efforts to ensure that mitigation commitments associated with development projects are carried forth and maintained. These efforts have focused on three major areas: roadside mitigation along major highways for Department of Transportation commitments, mitigation for Corps of Engineers Section 404 permits and State Engineer Sovereign Land permits.

Sovereign land issues continue to be a major issue that conservation section staff worked on in the 2013-15 biennium. For the past several years the Department has been working with the State Engineers Office (the agency who administers sovereign land) to clear up land ownership disputes in riparian areas along the Yellowstone and Missouri rivers. Increasing land ownership disputes between recreationalists (primarily hunters) and riparian landowners are escalating with both sides wanting answers over who owns what. Considerable progress has been made as the State Engineers Office has recently developed criteria for delineating public lands and rules governing the public's use of those lands. The Department has entered into an MOU with the State Engineers Office to provide enforcement of sovereign land rules/regulations.

Nongame and Species of Conservation Priority

In North Dakota, nongame wildlife represents more than 80 percent of the state's vertebrate fauna, with more than 300 bird species, roughly 80 mammal species, 75 fish species, 15 reptile species and 11 amphibian species. Freshwater mussels, insects and many other small organisms are also considered nongame. Oftentimes they are the rarer and/or less studied species. Many of these species serve as biological indicators, reflecting the general health of our environment. In order to focus its management of nongame species, the Department developed a strategic planning document called the Wildlife Action Plan in 2005. North Dakota's Wildlife Action Plan focuses on those species of fish and wildlife considered to be species of conservation priority or the most at risk in terms of extirpation from the state. The plan includes information relating to the distribution, abundance, habitat requirements, threats, conservation actions, and monitoring techniques for species of conservation priority. Recently, there has been increasing direction for states to consider climate change in their implementation strategies and a requirement that the Wildlife Action Plan be updated by the end of 2015. As a result, section staff recently completed a 2-year revision process of the Plan and submitted a copy of it to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's regional office in July of 2015.

Prior to 2001, funding to manage nongame species was limited. Since that time, however, federal funding has been made available to states with approved Wildlife Action Plans through the State Wildlife Grant Program. The SWG program is a matching grants program, meaning all federal dollars awarded must be matched with nonfederal dollars. All projects require at least 35 percent nonfederal match. The Department receives an annual federal apportionment of approximately $500,000. The knowledge gained from projects funded with SWG has proved invaluable in revising the State Wildlife Action Plan.

Much of the emphasis of the SWG program has been gathering baseline information on species of conservation priority to get a better understanding of their status, distribution and relative abundance. During the past decade, studies have been initiated on prairie dogs, fringe mammals, bats, raptors, snapping turtles and leopard frogs. Considerable effort has also been made to implement projects to conserve or enhance habitat. Some SWG projects focus on determining the effectiveness of a conservation action, such as monitoring grassland bird use of prairie restoration sites funded through SWG.

Section staff also spends considerable time handling phone calls, emails and walk-ins from the public regarding nongame and/or rare wildlife. Staff conduct field surveys such as monitoring bald eagle nests, shorebird counts, studying grassland bird use of PLOTS, and monitoring key habitat.

EDUCATION SECTION

Conservation and Outdoor Skills Park (State Fair Area)

For nearly 20 years the Game and Fish Department has partnered with the state fair to showcase the outdoors during the nine days of the North Dakota state fair. Activities include fishing,

hunting, trapping, archery and a chance to visit with Department staff. During the nine-day event, the Department has roughly 30 staff members on hand and nearly 50 volunteers who assist with this effort. The Conservation and Outdoor Skills Park averages 18,000 visitors.

In addition to the areas use during the fair, it is also a big hit locally from April to October as an urban fishery with local school groups and also the general angling public. The area has also become a great spot for youth and women's pre-hunt meetings. Many of the local wildlife clubs and Boy Scouts also use the area for meetings and other outdoor activities. The area is approximately 5 acres, which includes a fishing pond, several cabins, a large meeting area and plenty of grass and trees. Following the 2011 flood, fair officials offered the Department more land and an additional building that was refurbished, which the Department heats and cools. It is a very popular site for wildlife club meetings and various other outdoor events year-round.

Hunter Education

State law requires those born after December 31, 1961 to successfully complete an approved hunter education course before buying a North Dakota hunting license. Approximately 15,000 youth and adults took hunter education during the biennium. The course is offered through a network of more than 675 volunteer instructors in both the traditional and online courses. The home study (online) course is increasing in popularity; instructors are offering this option as long as the Department maintains the practical portion of the final exam. To date, more than 199,000 North Dakotans have become Hunter Education certified. In 2015, we added a new course option titled a field day. The field day is a third option for adult students (16 and older) to complete the Hunter Education certification process.

It should be noted that over the past three years, females account for close to 40 percent of hunter education graduates. A free online hunter education study guide is now offered through a link on the Department's website, which offers students and adults the opportunity to study and refresh their hunter education knowledge.

In 2015, we held our first Hunter Education Academy for new or existing Hunter Education instructors. The Academy is now the standard to fully complete the instructor certification process. All new instructors must complete the Academy within three years of starting the instructor application process.

In addition to managing its four WMA-based public shooting ranges, the Department also distributes $220,000 of grant funds during the biennium to local shooting range facilities for range improvements or expansions. Major enhancements were made to both McLean and Schmidt ranges (Oahe WMA south of Bismarck/Mandan) during the 2013 – 2015 biennium.

Boating and Water Safety

Since 1985, when the Safe Boating law was passed, approximately 20,000 students have completed the North Dakota Boating Course and have been certified. Annually, 1,000 – 1,200 students complete the boating course. The Department features an online course provided by two course providers and an additional 250 students complete the course through this venue. North

Dakota is at an all-time high for registered boats. Currently there are over 60,000 boats registered in North Dakota.

Department staff also annually holds the Missouri River SPLASH (safety, prevention, learning, and summertime happenings) campaign to promote boating safety, lifejacket usage and navigation rules to all boaters. A partnership with Corps of Engineers to provide life jacket loaner sites at Lake Sakakawea was established. To date, there are 12 life jacket loaner sites. The Game and Fish Department has partnerships with local county and city enforcement departments to provide more coverage on our state's recreational waters. New guidelines were established for navigation permits. Permits require local city/county entities to apply or renew permits for navigation buoys every three years.

Several radio spots were developed to promote and further remind boaters of the navigation rules and safety issues. Staff continues continue to work with video crew and TV stations to promote safe boating and water safety messages.

Becoming an Outdoors-Woman

The Game and Fish Department successfully completed its 20th annual Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) workshop in 2014, which offered the participants a choice of 32 different classes. This year featured the 12th Winter BOW event, which included ice fishing, tracking and snowshoeing, cross country skiing, fur handling, and winter survival.

The 2014 event was the seventh year BOW had partnered with Delta Waterfowl to offer a woman's waterfowl hunt as well as classes on waterfowl identification, clay target shooting and setting up a successful decoy spread, which has been a huge success. Several one-day events continue to be offered, including darkhouse spearfishing, an overnight camping/backpacking trip, and a catfishing event on the Red River.

In addition, we offered a Do-It-Yourself Winter Series, which consisted of one-day or overnight events that allowed women the chance to create equipment they would use in outdoor activities, and an overnight canoe/kayak trip.

BOW Workshops are designed to provide women, who may not otherwise have the opportunity, to experience outdoor pursuits on their own. These workshops continue to be very popular and reach a range of demographics.

North Dakota Hooked on Fishing

Department instructors teach about the basics of fishing including bait and tackle, fish biology, aquatic habitats, and where to find a variety of North Dakota fish species. Classes are often taught near a body of water for hands-on opportunities. 4,000 – 5,000 hours are donated annually by aquatic volunteer instructors who participate in a wide variety of fishing events around the state to include small community events sponsored by groups such as Lure Em' For Life and the North Dakota State Fair.

The Family Fishing Days program was continued this biennium. This project's intent is to encourage residents of Bismarck and surrounding communities to participate in fishing by providing equipment and expertise in an accessible location. To accomplish this, from June through August the pond is staffed with instructors every Wednesday and Saturday to assist anglers. Fishing equipment, bait, and tackle are also provided at no cost. By having both equipment and assistance available at regular intervals throughout the fishing season, we are able to target both new and seasoned anglers who don't participate regularly. This program's popularity increases each year.

Fur Harvester

Game and Fish furbearer hunting and trapping instructors teach the history of furbearer hunting and trapping and their role in future wildlife management, ethical hunting and trapping, use of trapping equipment, techniques of hunting and trapping, and proper preparation and marketing of furs.

During the 2013 – 2015 reporting period, instructors volunteered 454 hours, teaching 12 courses to 456 students. This represents all fur harvester classes and presentations including the full 16-hour certification workshop. Students who successfully complete the course are certified in trapper education and receive a unique number. Similar to hunter education, this number is recognized by all states that require completion of a trapper education course before trapping, using certain types of equipment or trapping certain species. North Dakota does not require this certification to trap, snare or hunt furbearers.

National Archery in the Schools

NASP is a widely popular, in-school archery program operating in 47 states, Australia, Canada, Mexico and Africa. NASP is a two-week introductory archery program designed to be taught by physical education teachers in grades 4 – 12, coordinated on a state level in most cases by state wildlife conservation agencies.

In 2008, the Department became the coordinating agency for NASP in North Dakota. To date, one staff member has been trained as a trainer specialist, five staff members have been trained as basic archery instructor trainers, two are in the process of becoming certified trainers and 13 staff members are certified as basic archery instructors.

Currently, about 150 schools participate in the program in North Dakota. With a goal of enrolling 50 percent of North Dakota schools, the grant program continued with nearly $80,000 available to schools to help them purchase equipment during the 2013 – 15 biennium.

The state tournament series continues to grow in popularity with over 500 kids now participating. In both 2014 and 2015, nearly 100 youth from several North Dakota schools travelled to Kentucky to represent North Dakota in the national tournament, an event that now attracts more than 12,000 students from 37 states. Several regional tournaments have also started to spring up in communities across North Dakota. In 2015, a ND High School Junior placed in the top 5 in the NASP National Tournament.

Habitats of North Dakota

The Habitats of North Dakota program continues to be an important component in the fourth-grade studies curriculum and life science curriculum for kindergarten through 12th grade. The program that was initiated in 2008 has grown to encompass topics such as habitats, wildlife of North Dakota, elementary science resources provided by the Department, preschool methods of teaching life science, integration of the visual arts into life science curriculum, and graduate credit courses offered through the University of North Dakota (UND).

Habitats of North Dakota workshops are provided at the University of Mary, Valley City State University, Jamestown College, Minot State University, North Dakota State University, Dickinson State University (both Bismarck and Dickinson campuses), and the University of North Dakota for all pre-service elementary education majors. Additional graduate credit workshops are offered for licensed teachers in Minot, Bismarck, Valley City, Devils Lake, and Dickinson. Continuing education in-service workshops are offered statewide and presentations are made at the North Dakota Science Teachers Conference each year. The Habitats of North Dakota program has expanded to Roosevelt Zoo in Minot and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute program offered through UND. Approximately 80 teachers receive graduate credit for enrolling in Habitats of North Dakota related workshops. Additionally, approximately 300 more receive information through shorter training opportunities.

Habitat presentation requests throughout the state continue for classrooms, scout groups, and pre-service teachers. Habitats of North Dakota is presented at the Gateway to Science Environmental Festival in Bismarck, serving students from the region. Approximately 240 students are reached at this event. Habitats of North Dakota is also part of the annual Earth Day celebration in April, reaching approximately 100 students.

WILDLIFE DIVISION

The Wildlife Division functions within three sections. The Game Management Section is responsible for all surveys, research, and proclamations for North Dakota's game species. The completed surveys consist of ground and aerial observations, and harvest surveys completed by hunters. The Wildlife Resource Management Section is responsible for the management of approximately 210,000 acres of wildlife management areas for wildlife production and public hunting opportunities. These areas offer a wide variety of public hunting opportunity across North Dakota. The Private Lands Section is responsible for the Private Lands Open to Sportsmen program where the Department works directly with private landowners who are willing to open their property to public walk-in hunting. The landowner is compensated in return for the access provided along with the habitat associated with his/her property.

GAME MANAGEMENT SECTION

The Game Management Section is responsible for managing populations of wildlife species that are hunted and trapped in the state. The overall goal of the section is to provide maximum quality hunting and trapping opportunities while minimizing human/wildlife conflicts. This work is accomplished through a series of surveys, censuses, and inventories to monitor the population status and the harvest of these important resources. Research studies provide new information to help better understand the biology and ecology of the species and their habitats. The information and knowledge gained from these activities are used to guide management decisions, to make hunting and trapping season recommendations to the Director and the Governor, and to provide information to the public and other agencies and organizations.

The section staff of 13 includes 4 big game biologists, 2 upland game biologists, 2 migratory game bird biologists (1 of which also serves as the section leader), a furbearer biologist, a wildlife veterinarian, a survey and data coordinator, a pilot, and a game management technician. Throughout the year, a number of temporary/seasonal employees assist with a significant portion of the section's workload. Because of this minimal staffing, section staff work cooperatively on many surveys and projects, and other department personnel often provide assistance.

During the 2013 – 2015 biennium, we saw significant declines in some game populations. Severe weather during three consecutive winters had significant impacts on the number of deer, pronghorn, pheasants, grouse, and turkeys. Ducks and geese continue to benefit from the exceptional water conditions provided by the exceptional winter snowfalls and spring rains. Reductions in the acreage of CRP across the state have also impacted grassland dependent species such as deer, pheasants, grouse, and ducks. Sage-grouse numbers remain at an all time low because of habitat loss, poor production, and mortality due to West Nile virus. Moose, elk, and bighorn sheep provide special "once in a lifetime" hunts for hundreds of hunters each year. Special seasons (spring light geese and resident Canada geese) were conducted to increase the harvest in an effort to bring populations back into balance with management objectives.

Summaries of activities by group follow:

Big Game

The overall goal of big game management in North Dakota is to maximize hunting opportunities, while maintaining populations within landowner tolerance levels, and the carrying capacity of the land. To achieve this goal we have both short-term and long-term objectives. The long-term objective is to develop predictive models for managing each of our big game species through adaptive harvest management techniques (i.e., a process of continually updating and evaluating new survey and harvest data and incorporating the results into updated models). To achieve these long-term goals our short-term goal is to evaluate all historical data bases for each of the species. This analysis will allow us to decipher which variables provide the greatest predictive value as to future changes in big game populations.

On a national basis, we have contributed tissue samples for a number of genetic, parasite, and disease research projects. In recent years, we have worked cooperatively on research and management projects with other agencies in Alberta, Georgia, Iowa, Manitoba, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Oregon, South Dakota, and Wyoming. The big game staff has been actively involved with a number of professional regional workshops including the Annual Midwest Deer and Turkey Workshop (hosted 2011), Biennial Pronghorn Workshop (hosted 2004), Biennial Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Symposium, North American Moose Symposium, Elk and Mule Deer Working Group, International Association of Natural Resource Pilots, and other professional meetings and symposiums as they are available.

In recent years, we have presented professional papers and published articles on all six big game species found in North Dakota. Peer reviewed papers on the status of bighorn sheep in North Dakota (*Proceedings of the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council*, *Journal of Wildlife Management*, 2014, and *Wildlife Society* Bulletin, 2014), white-tailed deer (*Journal of Wildlife Management*, 2005 and 2007), mule deer (*Journal of Wildlife Management*, 2015), pronghorn (*Journal of Wildlife Management*, 2011 and *American Midland Naturalist*, 2012 and moose (*Alces*, 2008 and 2013). Articles on mule deer, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn are in preparation.

Additionally, we have also served as reviewers for professional journal articles on big game topics submitted to The Prairie Naturalist, Proceedings of the Biennial Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council, and The Journal of Wildlife Management. Big game staff recently served as contributing authors on Habitat Guidelines for Mule Deer (2009 publication of Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies), and several documents relating to bighorn sheep via the Wild Sheep Working Group.

The big game staff developed a contact list for landowners wanting deer harvested on their land. This effort is intended to focus hunting pressure on areas with chronic depredation problems. On a daily basis, we provide information to the public on life history characteristics, weapon restrictions, season structure, and disease issues related to big game in North Dakota.

White-tailed Deer:

- The regular deer-gun hunter harvest survey monitors the success rates, composition, and distribution of the harvest for each license type, in each hunting unit in the state. In 2005, we implemented a review of all available data on white-tailed deer. Based upon this review, management goals were set for each hunting unit (see PR Report W-67-R-47: No. A-172). In 2010 and 2011, the goals for each hunting unit were reevaluated and modified. We are currently (2015) in the process of reassessing deer management goals. This process of revisiting management goals for each hunting unit will be reoccurring on five-year intervals.
- In 2014, questionnaires were sent to 12,802 (27%) of the 48,000 deer-gun licenses issued. These questionnaires are mailed to hunters immediately after the deer-gun season closes. Note: these questionnaires go out to both white-tailed deer and mule deer hunters.
- The archery hunter harvest survey monitors the success rates, distribution, and composition of the harvest in the state. In 2014, deer-bow questionnaires were sent to a random sample of 5,361 (25%) resident and 538 (33%) of the nonresident bow hunters. questionnaires are mailed to archery hunters immediately after the archery season closes. In 2013, the Department implemented a new program where all archery licenses will be issued either at the Bismarck office, Game and Fish website, or by calling (800) 406-6409, or at license vendors participating in the Department's online licensing system. Nonresident any-deer licenses are only issued from the Department's Bismarck office. Prior to this new system, questionnaires were sent out based on a list of who had purchased a license the previous year.
- The muzzleloader hunter harvest survey monitors the success rates, composition, and distribution for each license type. Each year, every muzzleloader hunter is mailed a questionnaire immediately after the muzzleloader season closes. In 2014, a total of 932 muzzleloader licenses were issued.
- The youth hunter harvest survey monitors the success rates, composition, and distribution for each license type. Each year every youth hunter is mailed a questionnaire immediately after the regular deer-gun season closes. In 2014, a total of 3,865 questionnaires were mailed out to youth hunters.
- When snow conditions permit, winter white-tailed deer surveys are conducted on a series of established study areas. Historically, this job was based on the aerial coverage of 109 permanent survey areas located within each of the ten major deer management units in North Dakota. These areas include 17 river systems, 81 small block-type study areas, and 11 larger monitoring blocks. After reviewing historical data, and considering input from staff that conduct these surveys over the past year, a number of the smaller survey areas were eliminated in favor of larger monitoring blocks. This reduced the number of survey areas to 26 block-type study areas and river system segments within eight hunting units. One additional monitoring area is currently being considered for unit 2L. As a result of these changes, each hunting unit outside of the badlands units now has a designated census area. Boundaries of each survey area have been digitized into a GIS format. Data is now entered directly into the Department website. During the winter of 2014 – 2015, the lack of needed snow conditions did not permit any aerial surveys to be conducted.
- We are continuing to evaluate the use of hunter observation questionnaires as a means of providing population indices (deer sighted per hour of effort, and buck/doe/fawn ratios).

In 2004, this questionnaire was expanded to cover all of North Dakota. This questionnaire serves as a bridge for monitoring deer population trends during years when winter aerial survey data is not available. Additionally, this questionnaire monitors observation rates of elk, moose, mountain lions, and feral pigs. In 2014, a total of 1,244 useable hunter observation questionnaires were returned. From these questionnaires, a total of 20,888 white-tailed deer and 5,021 mule deer were classified by hunters.

- In May 2005, a research project was completed on movements, survival rates, mortality factors, and habitat use of white-tailed deer in central North Dakota on Lonetree Wildlife Management Area. Results of this research were published in the The Journal of Wildlife Management in 2007. We have summarized all historical radio-collar data collected for white-tailed deer in North Dakota. In 2009, a white-tailed deer research project was implemented in hunting unit 2J1 near Wing, North Dakota. The final report was submitted in May 2013. A similar research project got underway in hunting unit 2C in January 2012. Field work was completed in December 2013, and the final report is expected in November 2015. A new project, with similar methodology, began in January 2014 with studies in hunting units 3D1 and 3F2 in North Dakota and Perkins County South Dakota. Field work for this project will conclude in December 2015, with the final report expected in January 2017. We are currently collaborating with South Dakota State University to evaluate home range, habitat use, dispersal movements, and survival rates on a regional landscape scale (i.e., western Minnesota and eastern North and South Dakota). This dataset will evaluate the home ranges of more than 1,000 female white-tailed deer across a three state area. Additionally, historical weather data (1948 to present) has recently been tabulated to evaluate and derive a winter severity index across the state using established methodology (Brinkman et al. 2005. Movement of female white-tailed deer: effects of climate and intensive row-crop agriculture. Journal of Wildlife Management 69(3):1099-1111).
- Big game staff are currently serving on a University of North Dakota committee evaluating the development and use of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) for monitoring wildlife (particularly white-tailed deer) and other wildlife species.
- The 2015 North Dakota deer-gun hunting season will include 43,275 licenses, 4,725 fewer than 2014 and the lowest number since 1978. A concurrent season will not be held again in 2015, and hunters will be allowed only one license for the gun season.

Mule Deer:

- Mule deer populations are monitored in the western badlands by annually conducting a fall production survey and spring population index.
- Twenty-four study areas covering 306.3 square miles are flown during the fall production survey and the spring population index. Mule deer numbers increased from low levels in 2012 following the three severe winters of 2008 – 2010. The number of antlered hunting licenses has been gradually increasing since 2013, while no antlerless mule deer licenses have been issued since 2011. The 2015 spring index was 24% higher than 2014 index, and 16% above the long-term average.
- Mule deer fawn production increased in 2013 and 2014 following record low fawn-to-doe ratios in 2009 – 2011. The 2014 fawn/doe ratio was 95 fawns per 100 does which was higher than 2013 (0.74:1.0), and above the long-term average of 90 fawns per 100 does. This was the highest fawn/doe ratio since 1999. The 2014 buck/doe ratio was 50 bucks

per 100 does, which was similar to the 2013 ratio and long-term average (0.43:1.0). Production was the lowest in 2011 with 59 fawns per 100 does.

- North Dakota Game and Fish Department big game staff are collaborating with Dr. Josh Millspaugh, from the University of Missouri, the Mule Deer Foundation (MDF), and the ND Industrial Commission Oil and Gas Research Council to assess the effects of Oil and Gas Development on Mule Deer Populations in Western North Dakota. This is a five-year project designed to: 1) Investigate and quantify effects of oil and gas development to mule deer populations through study of survival, movements, resource selection, abundance, and recruitment, and 2) To model the effects of oil and gas development on population dynamics of mule deer populations. A key component of objective 1 will be the identification of mitigation measures intended to reduce and avoid impacts to mule deer populations.

Pronghorn:

- Pronghorn abundance, distribution, reproduction, and sex ratios are determined by aerially surveying selected survey units (from a total of 51 survey units) covering 30,142 square miles of pronghorn habitat. The annual aerial survey consists of 25 survey units covering approximately 15,000 square miles.
- Pronghorn numbers have dramatically declined due to the severe winters of 2008 – 2010, but have gradually increased since 2013. The July 2015 statewide pronghorn survey indicated a population of 5,236, with a buck-to-doe ratio of 44 bucks per 100 does and a fawn-to-doe ratio 52 fawns per 100 does.
- Hunting unit 4A was opened in 2014 with 250 ANY licenses. Hunting units 4A (250 ANY), 3B (100 ANY), and 4C (60 ANY) were open during the 2015 season. All license holders are mailed a questionnaire to determine harvest statistics.
- The Department is collaborating with the University of Alberta to analyze historical pronghorn population datasets to determine which factors most explain changes in pronghorn abundance.

Moose:

The North Dakota moose population has declined in what is considered traditional habitat in the Pembina Hills, Turtle Mountains, and Red River Valley region and remains stable in what is considered nontraditional habitat in other areas, especially the northwest portion of the state. Moose hunting units M1C (Pembina Hills) and hunting unit M4 (Turtle Mountains) remain closed due to low observed numbers. The number of hunting licenses issued statewide has increased slightly since 2013 due to the addition of antlerless tags in hunting units M9 and M10 and small increases in units M9 and M10. License numbers in units M5, 6, and 8 remain the same as previous years.

- Annual aerial surveys are conducted on 400 square miles of primary moose range as well as 2700 square miles of secondary moose range when snow conditions are adequate.
- All moose license holders are contacted after the annual hunting season for harvest statistics.
- Mobile check stations are conducted annually on opening weekend.
- A total of 111 moose licenses were available in 2014, and 131 are available in 2015.

Elk:
North Dakota elk populations are being managed at stable to decreasing numbers because of depredation concerns and low landowner tolerance.

- Annual aerial surveys are conducted on 500 square miles of primary elk range as weather conditions permit.
- All elk license holders are contacted annually for harvest success.
- Mobile check stations are conducted annually on opening weekends of the elk seasons. A total of 261 licenses were made available in 2014, and 301 were available in 2015.
- The elk population in units E1 and E2 continue to remain stable. Elk numbers in unit E3 and E4 are also beginning to stabilize after a successful population reduction effort by the National Park Service in Theodore Roosevelt National Park in 2010 and 2011.

Bighorn Sheep:
The North Dakota Game & Fish Department has been active in the management of the state's population of bighorn sheep since the inception of its management partnership with the Wild Sheep Foundation – Midwest Chapter (WSF – Midwest) in 1999.

Recent projects have included:

- 2014 – 24 (4M, 20F) bighorn sheep were translocated from Luscar Mine, in Alberta, Canada, to Sheep Creek, North Dakota in February 2014.
- Nine adult rams were harvested from 2013 – 2014 (100% success). All rams were horn-plugged and biological samples and measurements were collected.
- An all-age pneumonia-related die-off occurred during summer 2014 and has persisted through 2015. Approximately 20 percent of the state's adult population has been lost and only three of the Alberta bighorn sheep have survived. The Department continues to document and assess the impacts of the die-off.
- Due to a loss of a significant number of mature rams, the hunting season was closed in 2015.

The Department has continued to collect and analyze telemetry data from radio-collared bighorn sheep in an effort to gather data pertaining to home range, lambing areas, adult survivability, and providing empirical data to land management agencies. Two research manuscripts and a ten-year management plan were published in 2014. Department personnel also co-authored a comprehensive North American management document for the WAFWA Wild Sheep Working Group.

One bighorn sheep license is auctioned annually by Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF) – Midwest, with $145,000 being raised from 2013 to 2014 for bighorn sheep management projects in North Dakota. No auction license was offered in 2015.

Upland Game

The upland game section is responsible for maintaining population trend data for 16 species of upland game. Population trend data are gathered through use of long-term established surveys that include counts made in winter, spring and summer. These surveys form the basis of

population trend estimates that are used to establish annual hunting seasons. Upland game hunters are one of the largest contingents of hunters in North Dakota. Resident license sales rebounded from a low of 57,912 in 1989 to a high of 105,820 in 2008, an increase of over 80 percent. During the period 2013-2015, over 90,000+ licenses were sold to residents each year. Non-resident sales increased nearly 500 percent from 7,441 in 1989 to a high of 46,508 in 2002. Non-resident small game license sales peaked in 2008 at 36,370. From 2013 to 2015, nonresident license sales have been around 30,000. A substantial portion of Department income is received from small game license sales.

Ring-necked pheasant:
Ring-necked pheasant numbers have slowly increased in North Dakota since 2014. The combination of a milder winter and warmer, dryer spring in 2014 has resulted in higher numbers of pheasants over much of the primary pheasant range in North Dakota, even though changes in land- use due to high commodity prices and removal of grassland acres from the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) continues to occur. As a result, the number of pheasant hunters (both resident and non-resident) has also increased, slowly again approaching the 80,000 mark. Most of the increase in numbers of small game hunters can be attributed to higher pheasant numbers.

Pheasants and pheasant broods are counted along 20-mile standardized transects from mid-July to September 1. Around 100 survey routes (approximately 5,000 miles) are run annually to measure pheasant production. From 2010 to 2015, total number of pheasants seen on roadside counts has declined from the record numbers observed during 2003 – 2008. Birds observed per 100 miles increased from a low of 57.1 birds per 100 miles in 2001 to 204.9 birds per 100 miles in 2007, only to decline to 62.1 birds per 100 miles in 2011 (67.1 in 2013). A total of 110.3 pheasants per 100 miles driven were observed in 2015, a good increase from previous years. Likewise, total number of broods seen increased between 2001 and 2007 (peaking at 24.1 broods per 100 miles in 2007) but declined to 6.9 broods in 2011 (13.2 broods in 2015).

Hunter harvest questionnaires are mailed out annually to estimate number of hunters, hunting trips, and harvest. Harvest of ring-necked pheasants showed a steady increase since 1997; peaked in 2007; and has slowly decreased since. In 1997, a total of 136,076 roosters were harvested as compared to over 900,000 roosters harvested in 2007. From 2009 – 2012, harvest has been around 600,000 roosters annually. It dropped to 447,134 in 2013 but rebounded to over 587,700 in 2014. The number of hunting trips over the same period has slowly declined while pheasants harvested per hunter has slowly increased. But as pheasant numbers declined, so did hunting activity. As the number of non-resident hunters increased during the mid-2000's, the Department began sampling those hunters on an annual basis, rather than every 3-5 years. Presently, Conservation Reserve Program acres are about one-half what they were in the mid-2000's. This will continue to suppress our pheasant population in North Dakota from its peak high.

Ruffed Grouse:
Ten drumming routes are run annually in three separate districts to determine the breeding population of ruffed grouse in North Dakota. Results of this survey show ruffed grouse numbers remaining low after dropping to a cyclic low in 2002-2004. Drumming counts declined drastically in 2013, but have showed some improvement in 2014 and 2015. Wing envelopes are sent to approximately 100 ruffed grouse hunters, with additional samples coming from wing

barrel collection sites. Wing envelopes with bird parts help estimate hunting activity and success. Harvest data are collected from the same questionnaires as used for estimating harvest for other upland game bird species. Ruffed grouse harvest was estimated at 193 birds (probably an all-time low) in 2002, jumped to 2,163 birds in 2008 (a recent high) and has remained around 1,000 birds through 2013 (exception was 2011 when only 455 birds were harvested). Ruffed grouse habitat continues to decline in all aspen habitat areas of the state as trees are cleared for cash grain operations and to create livestock pasture. Habitat is also continuing to become fragmented by the establishment of home sites scattered throughout the limited woody acreage left in North Dakota.

Tree Squirrels (gray, fox, red):
The rural mail carrier survey is used to determine population trends for tree squirrels. Rural mail carriers record population data for squirrels during four time intervals throughout the year. Counts are made in April, July, September, and January. Cooperators and mileage driven are similar during each survey period. They observed fewer tree squirrels in July 2014 (1.22 squirrels/mile) than in July 2013 (3.08); more in September 2014 (1.35) than in September 2013 (0.97); a smaller number of squirrels in January 2015 (1.14) than in January 2014 (1.61); but more in April 2015 survey (1.641) than in April 2014 (1.37).

In addition, tree squirrels are also recorded on the late summer roadside counts though squirrel data is very sparse. The small game harvest questionnaire used to estimate hunter activity for grouse, partridge and pheasant is also used to estimate tree squirrel harvest. In addition, known squirrel hunters are sent a harvest survey card at the end of the hunting season which asks about their squirrel hunting activity, success and harvest by species. Tree squirrel harvest ranged between 7,185 and 8,898 for the period 2007 – 2010; reached an all-time high of 15,720 squirrels in 2011, then declined to 10,495 squirrels in 2012 and 9,192 in 2013. Most of the harvest was comprised of fox squirrels.

Rabbits and Hares (snowshoe, cottontail, and jackrabbit):
Population surveys to determine trends of cottontail rabbits are similar to those used for tree squirrels. Rural mail carriers census cottontails during four periods of the year (January, April, July, and September). They observed fewer cottontails during the July 2014 survey (0.33 cottontails/100 miles) than in July 2013 (0.36); more during the September 2014 survey (0.25) than in September 2013 (0.20); fewer cottontails during the January 2015 survey (0.20) than in January 2014 (0.23); and more cottontails during the April 2015 survey (0.26) compared to the April 2014 count (0.25). In addition, cottontails are also recorded on the late summer roadside counts though population data is very sparse. No license is required by hunters to hunt or harvest rabbits or hares.

Harvest estimates for cottontails are obtained from the small game harvest questionnaire. During the period 2006-2010, the cottontail harvest ranged from 11,107 (2009) to 27,907 (2008); dropped to 8,533 cottontails in 2011 but rebounded to 9,852 cottontails in 2012 and increased again in 2013 to 10,402 rabbits. Only ancillary data is gathered on jackrabbits while no data is collected on snowshoe rabbits.

Wild Turkeys (Merriam's, Eastern, and Rio Grande):
Three species of wild turkeys have been introduced into North Dakota. There has been no attempt to manage each species separately. Season recommendations are based upon population trend data gathered on summer brood surveys and a questionnaire distributed to approximately 1,000 landowners in March. The questionnaire asks for the number of wild turkeys that wintered on their land. Both surveys are presently showing a declining turkey population since 2004. Two hunting seasons are held each year; a spring 'gobbler only' season and a fall season where any turkey is legal. Prior to the fall 2005 turkey season, only North Dakota residents were eligible to apply for licenses for both hunting seasons. The 2005 Legislature amended the N.D. Century Code, and it now allows nonresident licenses to be available after the resident lottery is held. The 2007 Legislature passed two bills affecting turkey hunting. The first bill allows first-time spring wild turkey applicants, ages 15 and younger, to receive one wild turkey gobbler license. The second bill makes available one spring wild turkey license to the National Wild Turkey Federation for raffle or auction. Finally, in 2015, the Legislature made available to the Outdoor Adventure Foundation up to two spring turkey licenses for youth who have been diagnosed with cancer or a life-threatening illness.

Hunter harvest questionnaires are sent to a sample of hunters after the close of each season to estimate hunter activity and harvest. Turkey numbers steadily increased from 1993 to 2007, but starting in the spring of 2008 and continuing through the summer of 2014, turkey numbers have declined in most areas of the state. This is the result of several long, snowy winters and poor production, which has resulted in fewer young birds being added to the fall population. Fall license numbers increased from 3,154 in 1994 to 10,980 in 2004, but since have decreased to 3,805 in 2014. Fall harvest shows a similar trend with 1,484 birds harvested in 1994 compared to 3,773 harvested in 2004 but harvest has steadily decreased to 1,212 birds in 2012, 1,012 birds in 2013 and 1,108 birds in 2014. Fall hunter success has declined from 64 percent in 2003 to 40 percent in 2014. Spring license numbers steadily increased since the first season in 1976 as has the area open to spring turkey hunting. In the last ten years, spring license numbers have increased from 1,435 in 1996 to over 7,000 in 2008 and 2009. However, the last five years (2011 - 2014) license numbers have decreased to below 7,000 for the same reasons fall licenses have decreased. A total of 5,881 licenses were issued for the spring 2014 hunting season. Likewise, spring harvest increased from 641 gobblers in 1996 to 2,859 in 2008. Since then, harvest has decreased to a low of 1,698 gobblers in 2011. Harvest was 1,947 gobblers in 2014. Spring hunter success declined to around 36 percent in 2009 and 2011, improved to 46 percent in 2012, then dropped to 42 percent in 2014.

Prairie Chicken:
The Wildlife Division invested time and dollars into a prairie chicken restoration project in Grand Forks County. From 1992 through 1998, 414 wild trapped prairie chickens were released on this area. Initially these transplants helped the population increase to a level capable of supporting a hunting season. Recent severe winters and wet springs have resulted in a dramatic decline in North Dakota's prairie chicken population. Over 200 historic and active leks are censused annually in the prairie chicken range in North Dakota. Both prairie chicken booming grounds and sharp-tail dancing grounds are included in the survey, and some breeding grounds include both species. A prairie chicken hunting season in North Dakota was opened in 2004 and was continued until 2009. This was the first hunting season on prairie chickens in North Dakota

since 1945. Since 2010, the hunting season on prairie chickens has been closed due to significant decrease of all booming ground counts. During the period 2013-2015 prairie chicken numbers decreased on the Sheyenne grasslands from 54 males counted in the spring of 2013 to 51 in 2015. In Grand Forks county prairie chickens decreased from 63 males to 49 in 2015. Currently, we are in the process of developing a Prairie Chicken Working Group in North Dakota which will help identify threats and overall goals for management activities in North Dakota.

Sharp-tailed Grouse:
The Wildlife Division annually censuses sharp-tailed grouse in the spring on over 700 square miles to determine the breeding population. Brood surveys (150 routes, 4,700 miles) are run in July and August to determine reproduction. Hunter questionnaires (sample size 9,000 resident questionnaires; 4,500 non-resident questionnaires) are used to estimate number of hunters, hunting trips, and harvest. Wing envelope surveys are used to gather age and sex data as well as distribution data on sharp-tails. Envelopes are mailed each year to approximately 1,600 hunters (8,000 envelopes). The spring sharp-tail population has increased substantially from 2013-2015.

In 2013, our spring grouse survey counted 3,418 males on dancing grounds and in 2015 NDGF staff counted 4,346 which is an increase of 22%. This increase can be attributed to suitable weather conditions. But with the loss of CRP acres, new sign-ups, and particularly extensions of current CRP contracts, will be critical in maintaining sharp-tail numbers in most of North Dakota. Sharp-tailed grouse harvest has averaged roughly 72,000 birds over the past three years. North Dakota has averaged roughly 21,000 sharp-tailed grouse hunters over the past three years. 2014 and 2015 have been excellent years for grouse hunters and participation has increase as a result of improved grouse numbers.

Sage-Grouse:
Sage-grouse have declined in North Dakota, and over their entire range, over the past 50 years. Over the past three years, the sage-grouse population in North Dakota has decreased by roughly 5% each year accept in 2012 when the population increased roughly 14%. North Dakota is on the fringe of the sage-grouse range in North America, and small changes in habitat composition apparently have not been kind to sage-grouse. This loss of habitat influenced wildlife managers to write a management plan in 2005. The 2005 plan was revised in 2014 and the final draft is available on the Department's website. Beginning in 2008, the sage-grouse season was closed due to lek counts falling below management objectives. Division personnel count all known sage-grouse strutting grounds in North Dakota, visiting each active ground (15 to 20 grounds) 2 – 3 times and checking inactive grounds as time permits. Sage-grouse lek numbers have been steadily decreasing since an outbreak of West Nile Virus in 2007 – 2008. In 2015, biologists counted 30 males. In 2014, the count was 31 males compared to 50 males in 2013. The record high was recorded in 1980 when biologists counted 380 males on 23 leks. Research on sage-grouse was initiated in North Dakota in 2000. Two Masters Theses have been produced: *Greater Sage-grouse on the Edge of their Range: Leks and Surrounding Landscapes in the Dakotas*, by Joe T. Smith and *Nesting and Brood-rearing Habitat Selection of Greater Sage-grouse and Associated Survival of Hens and Broods in North Dakota* by Katie M. Brunson. In addition, Ph.D. dissertations, *Sage-grouse wintering ecology* by Christopher Swanson, have resulted from this research. Information acquired from this research will be used to focus management efforts to protect sage-grouse.

Gray Partridge:
Several surveys are used to determine population trends of gray partridge in North Dakota. In addition to brood surveys (350 routes, 8,800 miles), hunter questionnaires (9,000 resident questionnaires, 4,400 non-resident questionnaires) and a wing survey (8,000 envelopes mailed to 1,600 hunters), the Department also utilizes rural mail carriers to estimate the spring breeding population. Cooperating carriers travel sixty to seventy thousand miles during a three-day survey period in mid-April. All surveys have shown a drastic drop in partridge populations in North Dakota beginning in 1993. In the past 3 years the partridge population has slowly increasing in most of the state. In 2013, biologists counted only 32 broods, surveying roughly 9,000 miles, and in 2015 biologists counted 75 broods during the same time period. Partridge numbers are well below the historic levels but can recover if suitable habitat and weather conditions exist.

Migratory Game Birds

Migratory game birds in North Dakota include ducks (18+ species), geese (4 species), tundra swans, coots, sandhill cranes, mourning doves, snipe, and woodcock. Because these game birds are migratory, they are protected by international treaties and their management is shared by the states, provinces, and countries throughout their range. Thus, migratory game bird management activities encompass a great deal of coordination and cooperative work with government and non-government organizations, officials, and biologists throughout North America. In addition, the migratory game bird staff handles all endangered whooping crane coordination because of the close associations between whooping crane management and migratory game bird management.

The migratory game bird staff conducts 11 regular surveys to measure the population status and harvest of more than 27 species of migratory game birds, including 4 races of Canada geese that breed, migrate, and winter in 3 populations. These surveys along with work on many other annual efforts are part of the cooperative continent-wide management of migratory game birds. This year, 2015, marked the 68th year of our statewide breeding duck survey. To our knowledge, this is the longest running, systematic breeding waterfowl survey in the world.

In addition to these regular surveys and projects, migratory game bird staff work on and contribute to a number of research and management projects including Giant Canada goose population management, trapping and banding, the operational Central Flyway duck banding project, a distribution and derivation of blue-winged teal harvest analysis and report, a band wear/loss study on diving ducks, a comprehensive study of effects of oil and gas development on breeding ducks, a study comparing migration chronology between mallards and lesser scaup, a study examining factors to redhead duck recruitment, Arctic nesting light goose research, Tall Grass Prairie Canada goose research, the national waterfowl parts collection survey, adaptive harvest management and other harvest strategies for waterfowl, sandhill crane population delineation research and management, national mourning dove banding study, national mourning dove harvest management strategy, mourning dove parts collection survey, waterfowl rest area establishment, hunting proclamations and guides, informational presentations and work with media, wildlife, university, and school groups and citizens throughout North America, peer

review of professional literature and presentations, and work on various other committees and projects within the Department and with other agencies and organizations.

A high priority for the migratory bird staff is cooperative work with all governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations that are stakeholders in the migratory bird resource. We have significant responsibilities in the Central Flyway Council, the Central Flyway Waterfowl Technical Committee (including 15 subcommittees), the Central Flyway Webless Migratory Game Bird Technical Committee (including four subcommittees), the Central Management Unit Dove Technical Committee, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (including the Bird Conservation Committee, the Waterfowl Working Group, the Migratory Shore, Upland Game Bird Working Group, and the Lead and Fish and Wildlife Health Working Group), the Adaptive Harvest Management Working Group, the Dove Task Force, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Science Support Team, the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, the Arctic Goose Joint Venture, and the Arctic Goose Habitat Working. Work with all of these entities is vital to the continued successful management of migratory game bird hunting in North Dakota. The Department provided Ducks Unlimited with a grant for $525,000 to fund joint North American Waterfowl Management Plan Private Lands Biologists which work with private landowners improving waterfowl habitat through rotational grazing systems and creation of stock dams.

During the past 21 years, duck numbers have increased substantially in North Dakota due to the abundance of CRP provided nesting cover and persistent record high water conditions. Resident Canada goose numbers have increased to record levels and are well above the population objective. Populations of migrant Canada geese, snow geese and Ross's geese are all above objective levels. We now expend considerable effort managing a permit program (under a U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special State Canada Goose Permit) that allows agricultural producers and other entities to take adult and gosling Canada geese, and their nests and eggs to manage crop depredations, human health and safety issues and nuisance concerns. Sandhill crane numbers remain stable and mourning dove numbers appear to be slightly declining in the Central Management Unit.

In response to high waterfowl populations, numbers of non-resident waterfowl hunters have remained high with significant guiding and outfitting activity and leasing of private land for hunting. This increased demand for places to hunt, coupled with increased posting and the resultant reduced public access to private lands has caused significant difficulties and dissatisfaction with resident hunters. This may be a primary reason that the number of resident waterfowl hunters has declined.

Furbearer Management

The overall goal is to monitor the status of all furbearers in the state. Common furbearing species include (but not limited to) badger, bobcat (south and west of the Missouri River), beaver, coyote, mink, muskrat, raccoon, red fox, and striped skunk. Furbearing species that are less common include American marten, black bear, bobcat (north and east of the Missouri River), grey and swift fox, gray wolf, fisher, mountain lion, and river otter. Annual objectives for

furbearers are to estimate relative population densities, numbers of commercially important fur species that are sold, and harvest of furbearers statewide.

In order to meet annual objectives, the Department conducts 3 surveys. First, the April rural mail carrier survey is used to obtain relative densities by physiographic region. Second, the Department requires fur buyers to turn in their fur buying records in order to be eligible to purchase a fur buying permit for the following year. These annual fur buyers' reports have been collected and compiled since 1937. And third, furbearer harvest questionnaires are mailed out in April to a random sample of hunters and trappers who bought either a furbearer or combination license during the previous harvest season. For those furbearers that are difficult to monitor using the above methods, including bobcats, mountain lions, and fishers, mandatory tagging and carcass collection of harvested animals is required.

The Department continues to investigate reports of less common furbearer occurrences (e.g. sightings, incidental captures, road kills, etc.) to monitor changes in distribution and abundance. Additionally, furbearer carcasses that are collected through mandatory tagging, incidental trapping, automobile collisions, depredation removals, etc. are examined and necropsied to monitor population health and reproduction. Furbearers that are routinely necropsied by Department staff include American marten, bobcats, fishers, mountain lions, river otters, and swift fox, as well as the occasional black bear or gray wolf.

The Department communicates with many organizations and agencies when gathering and interpreting information on furbearers in North Dakota including USDA-Wildlife Services, USGS-Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Three Affiliated Tribes, Fur Takers of North Dakota, North Dakota Fur Hunters and Trappers, Delta Waterfowl, Midwest Furbearer Workgroup, and Swift Fox Conservation Team.

Surveys indicate that during the past 2 years, coyotes and muskrats were the most commonly bought furbearers. Number of pelts bought annually ranged from 21,101 last year to 62,436 the previous year. Prices paid per pelt were highest among bobcat and coyote. Coyote, raccoon, and muskrat pelts were the highest income generators to the state annually. The Department sold an average of 16,655 (resident and non-resident) furbearer licenses and 59,528 combination licenses each year. Results from the questionnaires indicate that coyotes and muskrats were the most commonly harvested furbearers. More furbearers were harvested during the 2014 – 2015 season compared to the 2013 – 2014 season, primarily due to a higher coyote harvest. Bobcat harvests during the past two seasons (32 in 2013 – 2014, 25 in 2014 – 2015) were below the long-term average. Mountain lions and fishers also had limited open harvests the past two seasons, with trends indicating that the number of mountain lions is decreasing, while that of fishers is increasing.

Wildlife Health Management

This section is responsible for monitoring and managing disease status and trends. Disease related projects and work during 2013 – 2015 concentrated heavily on chronic wasting disease (CWD), bovine tuberculosis (TB), rabies and other disease outbreaks as they occurred. Since 2002 CWD surveillance has been conducted in ND. Two types of CWD surveillance were

conducted by the Department. Targeted surveillance was conducted statewide and year-round. It is used for early detection of initial infection and new foci. Targeted animals include free-ranging deer, elk, and moose that show signs consistent with CWD, died of unknown causes, road kills, and free-ranging cervids removed from farmed facilities. Hunter-harvested surveillance is used to estimate prevalence over time and space. Hunter-harvest surveillance is conducted in selected units. In 2007, the CWD surveillance units were reevaluated and redesigned to allow for increased efficiency and a more appropriate strategy for detecting this disease. There are now six surveillance units comprised of individual deer hunting units that are sampled on a rotating basis with two surveillance units being sampled each year. This rotation allows the entire state and all six units to be sampled every three years.

The combined totals of hunter harvested animals sampled and tested for CWD in 2013 (Units 1 and 2 and 2014 (Units 3 and 4) was 2.384 White tail deer, 330 mule deer, 55 elk, and 53 moose. The combined totals of targeted animals sampled and tested for CWD in the 2013 – 2015 biennium were 177 deer, 4 elk, and 69 moose. To date, CWD has only been identified in 6 mule deer in deer and 1 white tail deer in unit 3F2. A special CWD monitoring block has been created in 3F2 and yearly surveillance will continue into the future in this unit.

Carcass transportation guidelines and feeding bans were updated and signed by Governor's Proclamation. Newly identified units within states and provinces were added to the list of areas with CWD as test results were confirmed.

Investigations of die-offs and numerous necropsies have been performed on various species including waterfowl, upland game birds, nongame birds, big game animals, furbearers, and nongame mammals. Causes of death and illness were identified. Assistance was provided to the Law Enforcement Division to determine the cause of death in potential criminal investigations. Serology has been performed on various species to determine the level of exposure of wildlife to certain disease agents. All reports of dead or dying moose in ND were investigated due to the population crash in northwestern MN moose.

The Wildlife Disease Program works with a variety of state and federal wildlife and livestock related agencies. All meetings of the ND Board of Animal Health were attended and we continue to work with their non-traditional livestock committee on farmed cervid issues and toward the elimination of contact between free-ranging and farmed cervids. We are also a part of the feral swine eradication working group. Updates on wildlife disease in ND were given to various groups, including the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Health Committee.

PRIVATE LANDS INITIATIVE SECTION

The Private Land Initiative (PLI) is the Department's single largest program and has been receiving more attention as the issue of the loss of hunting access continues to grow. A total of $7,126,665 (program payments and depredation only) was spent from the Private Lands Initiative during the 2013 – 2015 biennium to improve wildlife habitat on private land and to provide hunting access through various Private Land Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS) programs,

and to alleviate big game depredation problems on private livestock feed supplies. Some of the accomplishments of these programs during the 2013 – 2015 biennium were the following:

Depredation:
The Department spent $276,935 during the biennium on big game depredation problems. Of this amount $68,980 was spent to cost-share with landowners for the construction of deer-proof hay yards. Another $78,649 was spent on materials for deer-proof hay yards. The balance included buying temporary snow fence, deer-proof hay yards and gates, propane cannons, deer repellents, and grain for short-stop feeding deer to alleviate depredation. This amount also includes salaries and expenses for Department personnel when working on depredation problems

PLI Programs:

- Worked with cooperators on approximately 221 acres of wildlife food plots per year on private lands, totaling $18,900.
- Habitat Plot Program: Provided cost-share and annual cash rent payments for 298 farmers and ranchers located in 46 counties in North Dakota. $975,757 was paid directly to farmers and ranchers to rent these habitat plots averaging 85,898 acres each year of the biennium. These areas are open to walking public access for hunting, fishing, and other types of walking outdoor recreation.
- Working Lands Program: Provide annual payments of $908,100 to 556 landowners for opening up 357,217 acres to public access for hunting, fishing and other types of walking outdoor recreation.
- CRP Access Program: Provided cost-share of $214,000 to landowners for CRP grass and/or shrub plantings on 5,037 acres and $1,452,099 paid to landowners in exchange for public access for hunting, fishing and other types of walking outdoor recreation for the life of the CRP contract. The Dept. also spent $15,112 on fees to have these agreements recorded.
- Wetland Reserve Incentive Program: Provided $366,479 to landowners who enrolled their land in the Wetland Reserve Program and provided public access for the term of their WRP contract.
- Provided $220,489 to Pheasants Forever to fund joint PF/NDGFD/NRCS Farm Bill Biologists stationed at Jamestown, Dickinson, Hettinger and Forman ND.
- Provided $45,813 to Ducks Unlimited to fund joint DU/NDGFD/NRCS Farm Bill Biologists stationed at Napoleon, Minnewaukan, and Turtle Lake.
- Provided $1,024 to landowners for cost-share on tree and shrub plantings.
- Developed and made available two PLOTS Guide publications (70,000/year) to licenses vendors, resident and non-resident sportsmen.
- Provide $80,000 to the US Fish & Wildlife Service to fund a joint USFWS/NDGFD Private Lands Biologist at Lake Ilo National Wildlife Refuge (NWR).
- Provided cost-share of $700 to the Save The Hens Foundation for a tree removal project in southeast ND.
- Provide $11,041 to Soil Conservation Districts for cost-sharing on native grass drills.
- Spent $1,558 on various projects to benefit sage-grouse.
- Contracted with Badger Creek Wildfire to improve habitat conditions on PLOTS tracts by conducting prescribed burns on 599 acres for a total cost of $39,529.

- The Department received an Outdoor Heritage Grant in 2014 for $1,900,000. Of this amount $400,000 was for Save Our Lakes. The Private Lands Initiative portion of $1,500,000 has been obligated in 6-10 years agreements. A total of $243,932 has been spent.
- In 2015, the Department received a second grant from the Outdoor Heritage Fund for $3,000,000 to use towards the Pheasant Habitat Initiative. This is tied to the Department CREP program with the UDSA and we are working with them to finalize an agreement.

WILDLIFE RESOURCE SECTION

The Wildlife Resource Section's primary responsibility is to manage approximately 212,853 acres of habitat contained within the State Wildlife Management Area (WMA) system. These lands are incredibly diverse in terms of habitat type and provide extensive hunting and other compatible recreational and educational opportunities. WMA's, in unique places such as the Killdeer Mountains, Turtle Mountains, Pembina Hills, Missouri River, and the prairie coteau, offer the public the chance to experience the variety of North Dakota's wildlife habitats. Providing public access, controlling noxious weeds, managing boundaries, and enhancing and maintaining habitat are just a few of the responsibilities associated with the WMA system.

A major challenge continues to be the control of noxious weeds. The Department spends approximately $500,000 per biennium on chemical, biological, and mechanical weed control efforts. The Department is also a member of the North Dakota Weed Control Association and cooperates with private landowners and other state and federal agencies to find innovative and effective methods of controlling noxious weeds.

The Department's management objectives for specific WMA's are met by conducting various management techniques on these WMA's. Management techniques are based on sound biological practices and may include prescribed burning, rotational haying, grazing, and in some cases, wildlife food plots.

Prescribed burning is conducted on grasslands primarily for the purposes of controlling the spread of exotic invasive species, controlling noxious weeds, or removing dead or decadent herbaceous growth to stimulate new and more vigorous growth. All personnel involved in prescribed burning have met the Department's prescribed fire training needs.

Rotational haying is generally conducted on tame grass stands or dense nesting cover plantings on certain WMA's. This practice is done in an effort to remove old growth so that these fields can be opened up to stimulate new growth. Haying practices are generally not conducted on the same planting in consecutive years. Haying is conducted on approximately 7,200 acres per year and is usually conducted by a local cooperator.

Grazing is generally conducted on native grass stands to control invasion by exotic (non-native) species, to prevent a build-up of decadent grass, and to remove old growth so that these native stands can be opened up to stimulate new growth of native grasses. Grazing practices are generally not conducted on the same stands in consecutive years and are usually not set up as

season long grazing agreements. Grazing prescriptions vary for each WMA depending on soils, existing vegetation, and goal. Grazing is conducted on approximately 7,300 acres per year and is usually done by a local cooperator.

Wildlife food plots are established in an attempt to help sustain local wildlife populations through the winter months and to help alleviate wildlife depredation problems to adjacent private landowners. Approximately 10,900 acres of wildlife food plots are established through crop share agreements with local cooperators, contracted, or by Department personnel each year. The practice of utilizing wildlife feeders has gradually been phased out on WMA's statewide due to potential disease issues.

ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

The Enforcement Division report is printed annually in the North Dakota OUTDOORS magazine. The most recent publication was February 2015. It can be found on our website at: http://gf.nd.gov/publications

ND GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
DEPARTMENT REVENUE REPORT
JULY 1, 2013 THRU JUNE 30 2015

ACCOUNT NAME	13-15 NET AMOUNT
Conference Registration Fees	49,383.70
Donations	284,381.37
Easements - Test Holes - Right of Way	11,724.31
Fines-Forfeitures-Escheat	16,972.59
Game & Fish	180,009.20
Game & Fish Collectors Stamp	9,019.00
Game & Fish-Fishing Licenses	6,382,924.00
Game & Fish-Hunting Licenses	17,269,358.20
Game & Fish-Lottery	2,969,112.00
Game & Fish-Other Licenses	5,108,036.75
Interest Income	1,661.05
Interest On Investment	112,815.24
Lease-Rental Of Land	71,312.84
Lease-Rental of Rooms-Bldgs	5,061.00
Mineral Lease Royalties	15,349.83
Mineral Royalties	1,003,254.06
Misc Refunds	171,862.73
Misc Sales and Service	90,780.00
Misc Sales-Concessions	160.00
Motorboat License Fees	1,933,217.00
Non-Game Contributions	202.50
Other Reimb. - Jury Pay, Etc.	9,262.15
PLI Sportsmen Habitat Stamp	2,725,642.00
Postage	1,361.00
Refund Of Prior Bienn Expen	29,126.53
Revenue From Fed Government	25,069,158.84
Sale Of Agriculture Products	108,068.39
Sale of Confiscated Property	2,601.27
Sale Of Noncapital Asset-Surpl	9,148.75
Sale Of Publications	380,339.75
Sale Of Salvage & Scrap	2,497.86
Tsfr Fm Highway Tax Dist. Fund	260,730.00
Wildlife Habitat Stamp	1,766,425.00
Tsfr Fm ND Outdoor Heritage Fund	200,000.00
TOTAL REVENUES	**66,250,958.91**

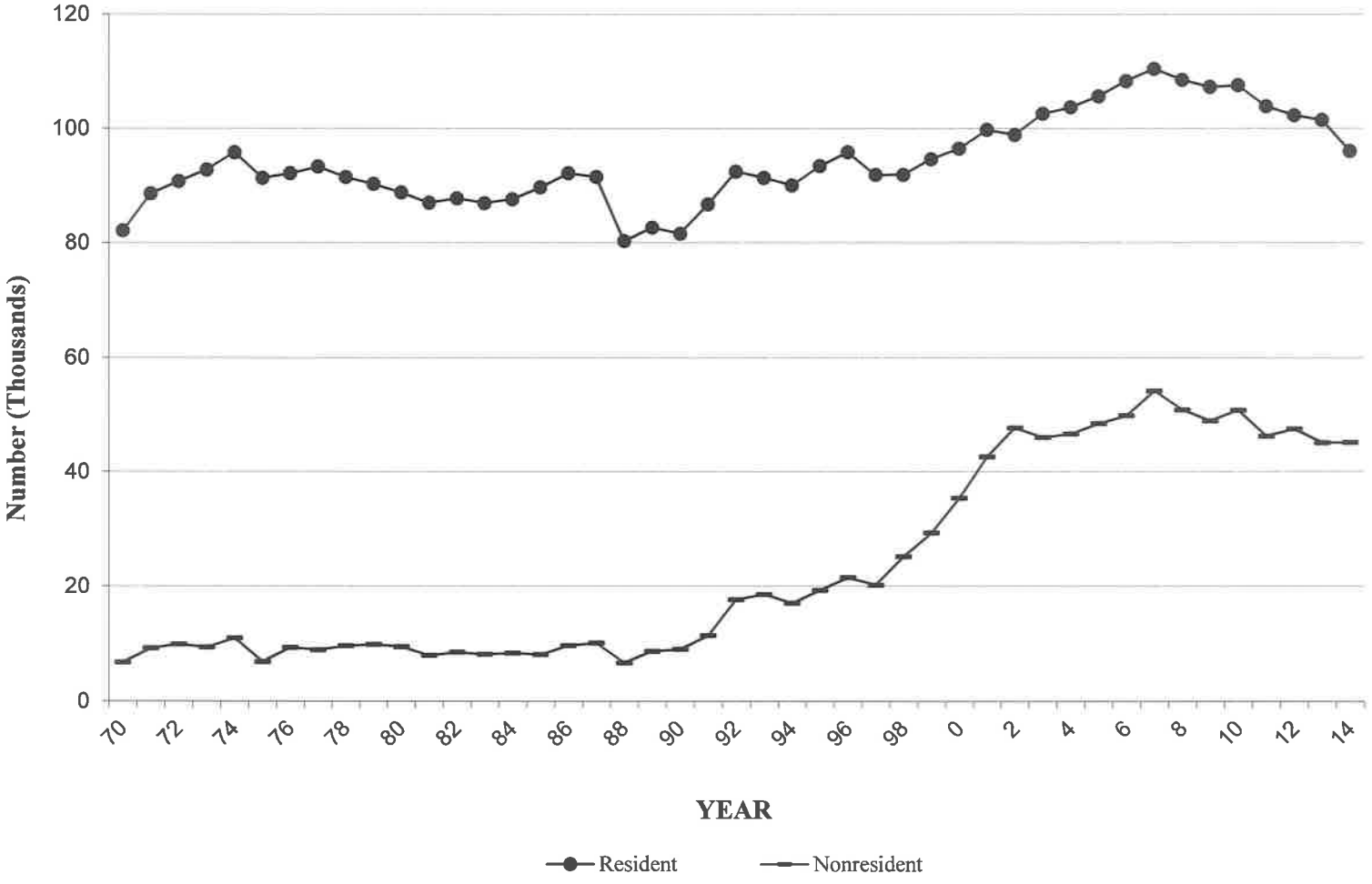
NORTH DAKOTA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
DEPARTMENT APPROPIATION REPORT
JULY 1, 2013 THRU JUNE 30, 2015

	ORIGINAL 2013-15 APPROPIATION	ADJUSTED 2013-15 APPROPIATION	BIENNIUM EXPENDITURES	UNEXPENDED BALANCE
Salaries & Wages	25,899,606.00	25,907,213.20	25,368,347.18	538,866.02
Accrued Leave Payments	816,366.00	816,366.00	121,753.36	694,612.64
Operating Expenses	12,956,728.00	13,042,942.00	11,514,890.23	1,528,051.77
Capital Assets	3,885,061.00	4,376,061.00	3,553,629.10	822,431.90
Construction Carryover	0.00	283,923.00	282,998.61	924.39
Grants-Game And Fish	7,122,500.00	7,122,500.00	5,779,386.07	1,343,113.93
Habitat & Deer Depredation	12,707,403.00	13,356,238.00	11,225,672.35	2,130,565.65
Noxious Weed Control	650,000.00	650,000.00	532,030.31	117,969.69
Missouri River Enforcement	275,939.00	275,939.00	231,885.75	44,053.25
Grant-Gift-Donation	800,000.00	800,000.00	480,359.42	319,640.58
Nongame Wildlife	120,000.00	120,000.00	36,861.17	83,138.83
Lonetree Reservoir	1,935,636.00	1,935,636.00	1,525,446.67	410,189.33
Wildlife Services	384,400.00	384,400.00	384,400.00	0.00
Total Expenditures	**67,553,639.00**	**69,071,218.20**	**61,037,660.22**	**8,033,557.98**

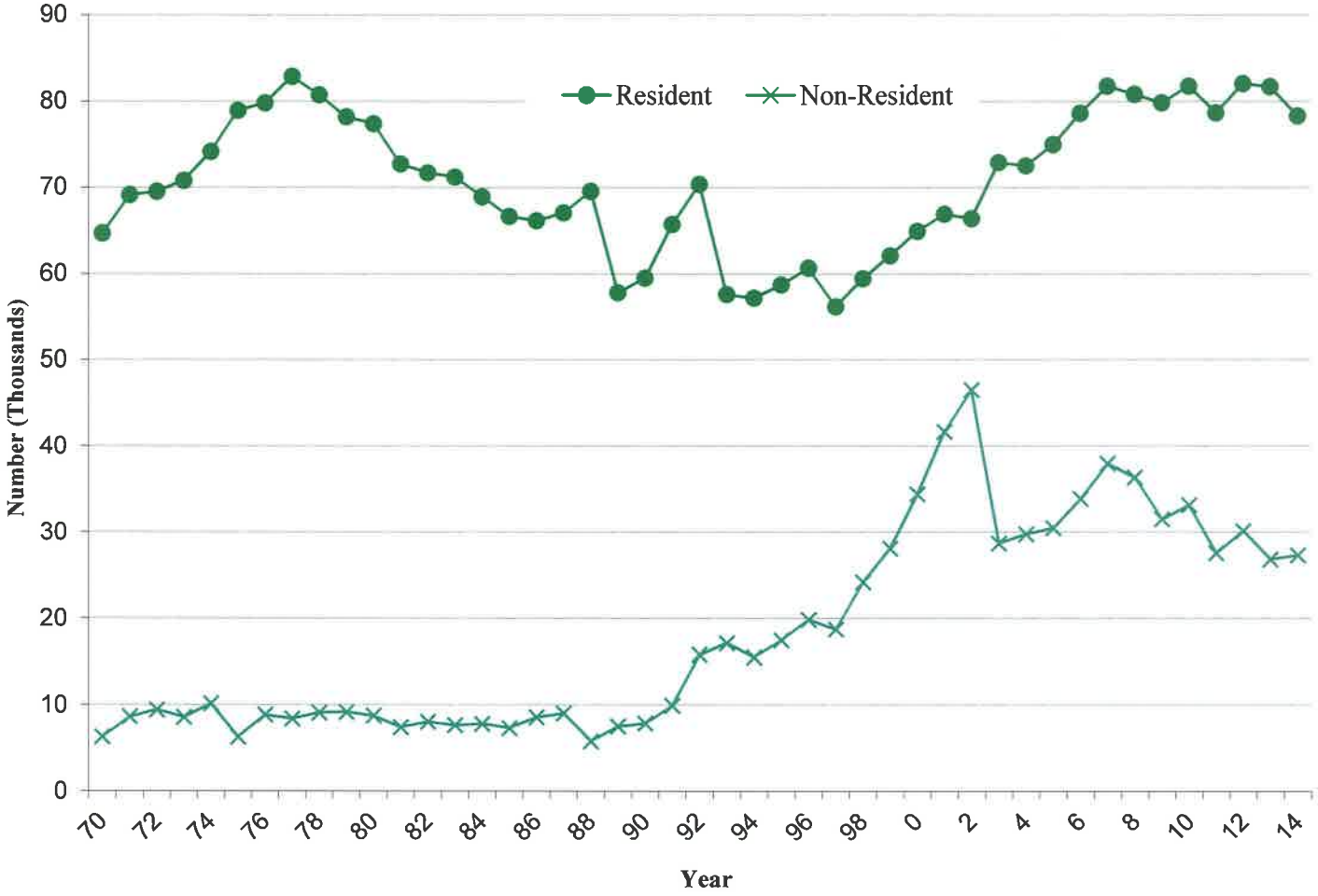
NORTH DAKOTA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM
JULY 1, 2013 THRU JUNE 30, 2015

	DEPARTMENT TOTALS	ADMINISTRATION	FISHERIES	ENFORCEMENT	CONSERVATION & COMMUNICATION	WILDLIFE	DIFFERENCE
Salaries & Wages	25,368,347.18	7,888,604.65	3,453,194.87	5,620,775.39	3,533,666.77	4,872,105.50	0.00
Accrued Leave Payments	121,753.36	121,753.36	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Operating Expenses	11,514,890.23	3,392,538.30	1,702,516.88	2,013,499.57	1,536,041.09	2,870,294.39	0.00
Capital Assets	3,553,629.10	1,161,183.39	1,128,767.47	144,865.00	286,488.25	832,324.99	0.00
Construction Carryover	282,998.61	282,998.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grants-Game And Fish	5,779,386.07	224,565.87	2,036,142.56	0.00	1,541,453.61	1,977,224.03	0.00
Habitat & Deer Depredation	11,225,672.35	0.00	970,877.09	0.00	0.00	10,254,795.26	0.00
Noxious Weed Control	532,030.31	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	532,030.31	0.00
Missouri River Enforcement	231,885.75	0.00	0.00	231,885.75	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grant-Gift-Donation	480,359.42	133,549.52	5,761.03	0.00	0.00	341,048.87	0.00
Nongame Wildlife	36,861.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	36,861.17	0.00	0.00
Lonetree Reservoir	1,525,446.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,525,446.67	0.00
Wildlife Services	384,400.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	384,400.00	0.00
TOTAL	**61,037,660.22**	**13,205,193.70**	**9,297,259.90**	**8,011,025.71**	**6,934,510.89**	**23,589,670.02**	**0.00**

NORTH DAKOTA
GENERAL GAME LICENSE SALES



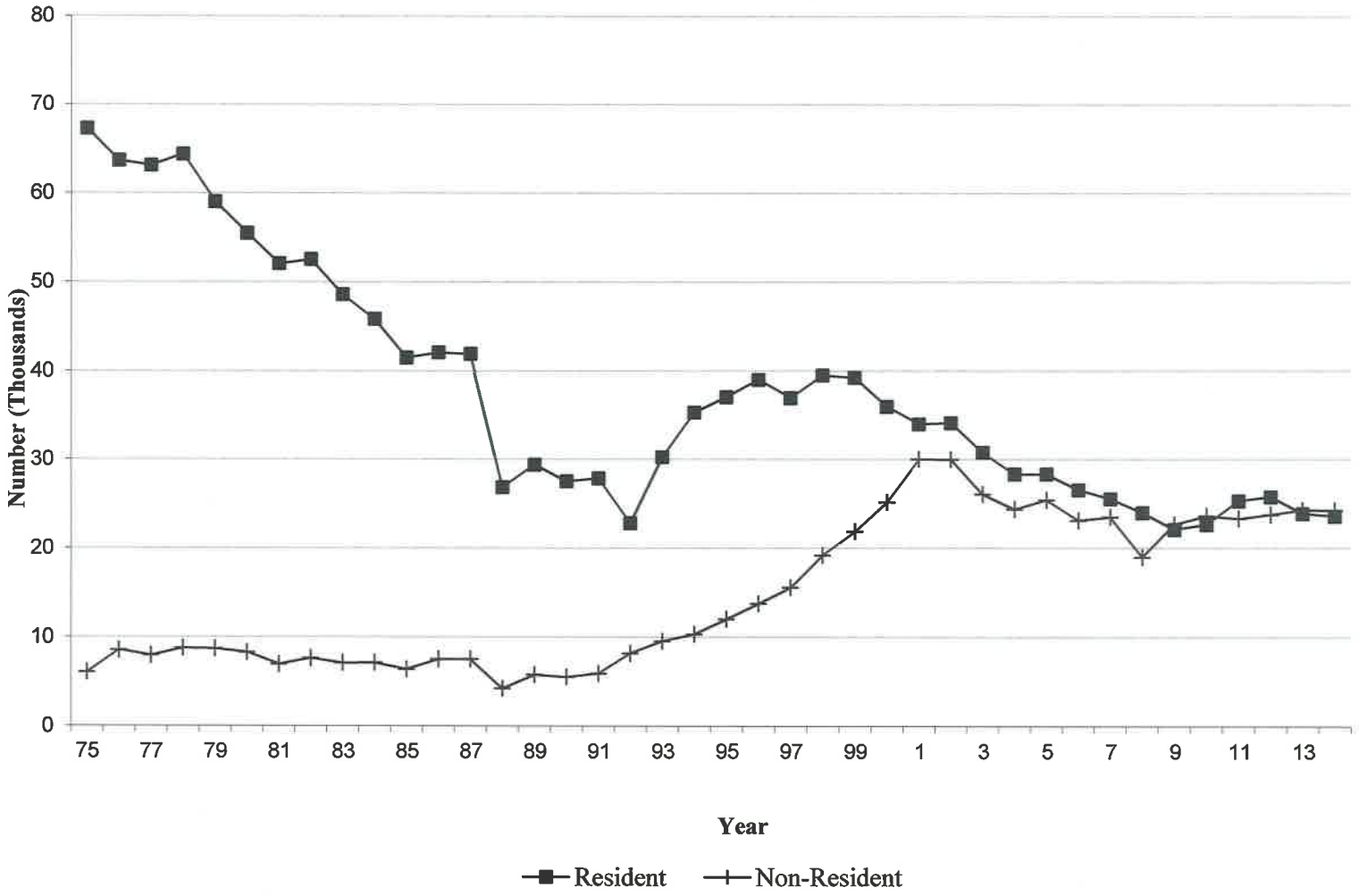
SMALL GAME LICENSE SALES
North Dakota



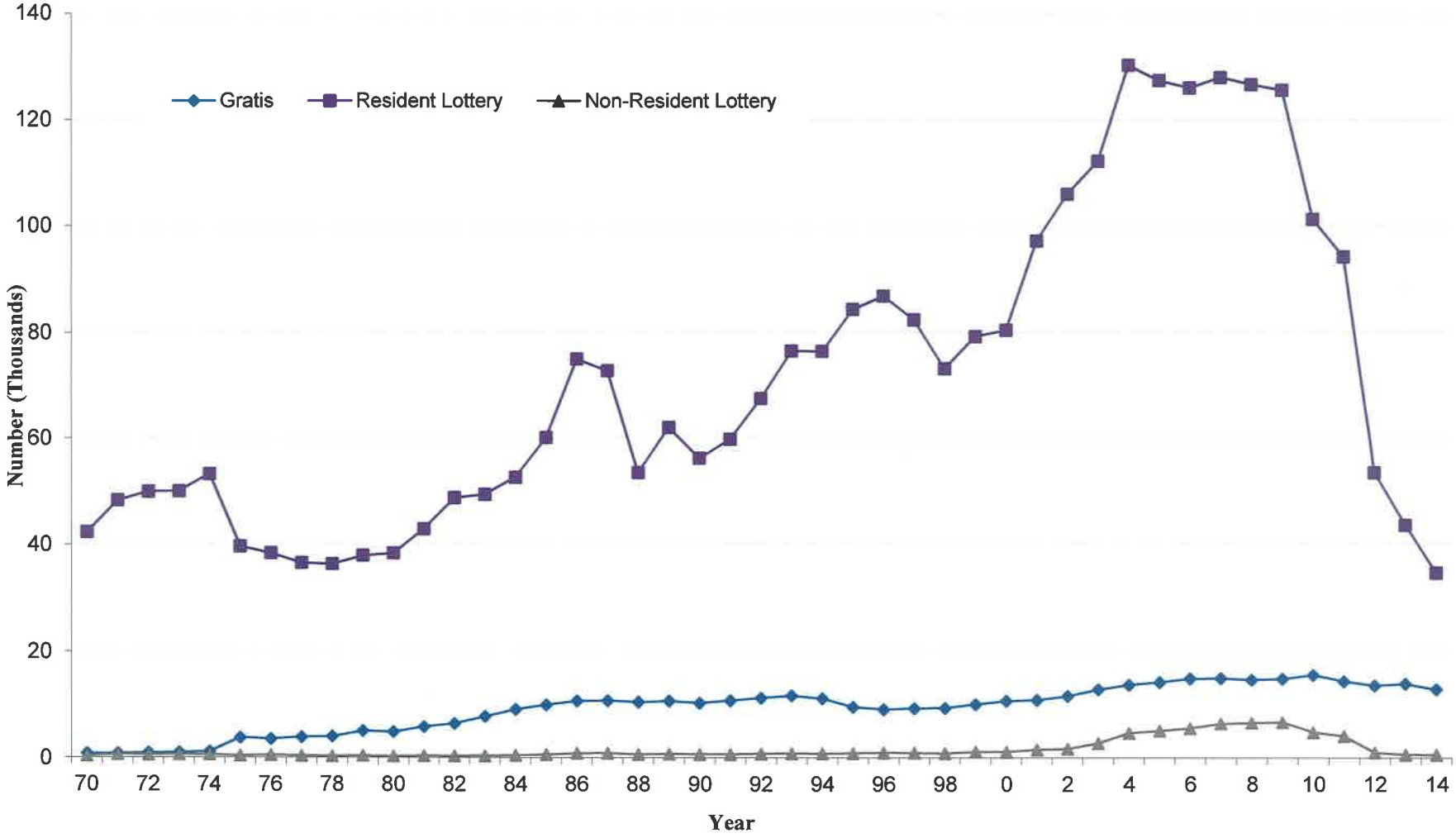
There was a major non-resident license system change in 2003.

Waterfowl Hunters

North Dakota

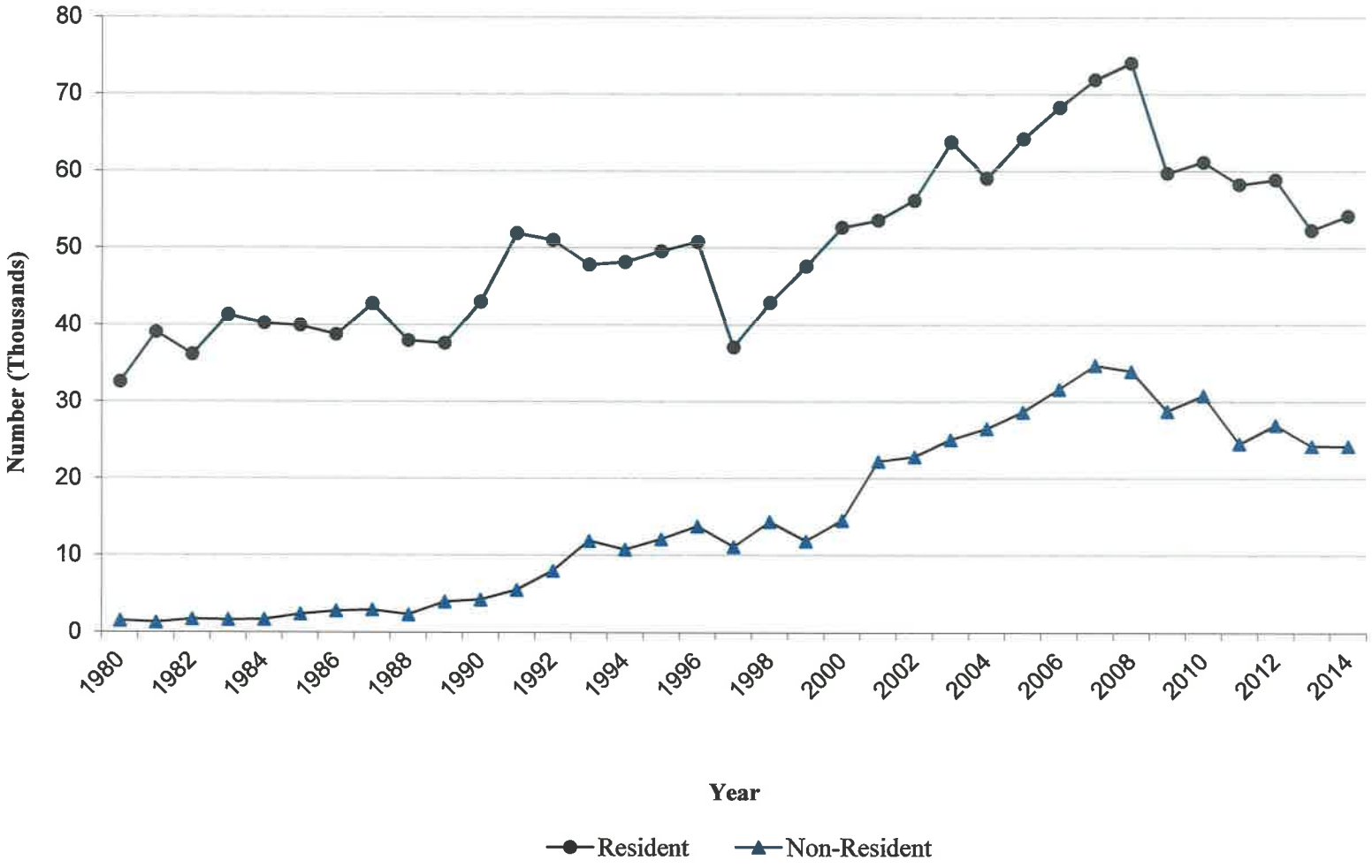


North Dakota
Deer Gun Licenses Issued

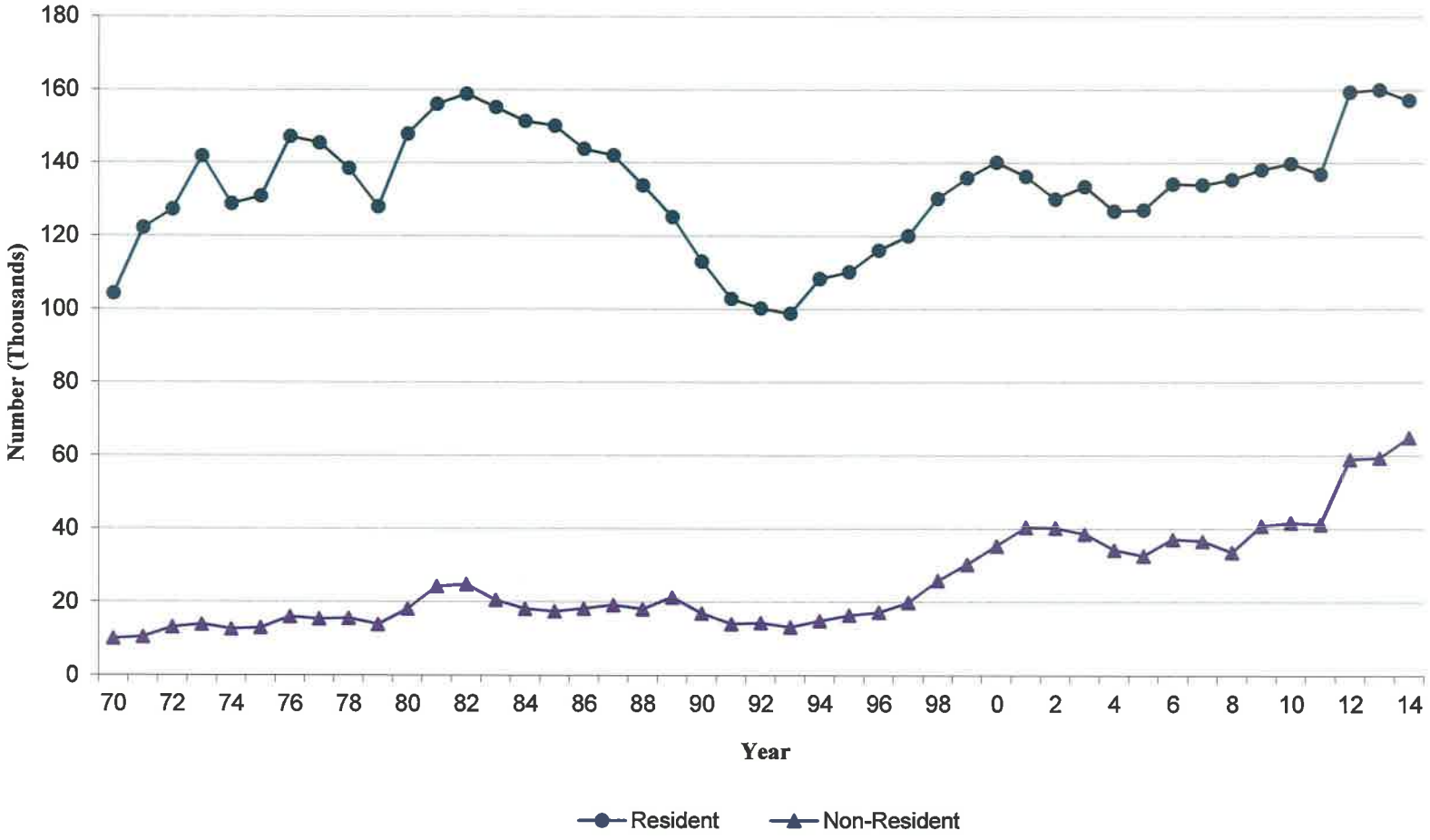


Licensed Pheasant Hunters

North Dakota



North Dakota
Fishing License Sales



RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Copies of the minutes from meetings conducted by the Department are available at the Game and Fish Department's Bismarck office. Requests should be sent to: Director, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501-5095.

Wildlife survey results and fish and wildlife status reports are published annually. Single copies of these reports (Progress or Job Completion) are available at the Bismarck office.

The Department publishes a magazine, North Dakota OUTDOORS, available at the address listed above. Single copies of the magazine are available at $2 per copy. The yearly subscription rate (10 issues) is $10. The three-year subscription rate is $20.

A variety of pamphlets, brochures and booklets pertaining to fish, wildlife, lakes, wildlife habitat, and other topics are available for free distribution at the Bismarck office. The Department's web page is: http://gfnd.gov. The Department's email address is ndgf@nd.gov.