



2024 INFORMATION GUIDE



TIME OUTDOORS IS TIME WELL SPENT

From Game and Parks



By its very nature, the work of stewarding our state's fish, wildlife, parks and outdoor recreation resources is forward-focused, aiming to serve the best long-term interests of the people and those resources. We know conservation and recreation work must never be shortsighted; it requires constant reflection on both our successes and challenges.

But every few years, we take a step back from our day-to-day efforts to recenter and build plans that allow us to meet the changing needs of Nebraska, its people and its precious resources.

For Nebraska Game and Parks, 2023 was that year. We launched both our three-year strategic plan and our five-year plan to recruit and retain outdoor recreationists. These plans serve as guides, focusing our efforts on achieving our agency's vision: providing access to healthy land, waters and wildlife that inspire people for generations to come.

To achieve this, we work alongside a strong community of outdoor enthusiasts, landowners, conservationists, and government and nonprofit agencies across the state. These are people who share our deep commitment to our state's fish, wildlife and outdoor spaces, as well as their conservation for future generations.

Their contributions shape our priority initiatives and actions. And combined with the efforts of our talented and passionate Game and Parks team — people who believe wholeheartedly in our mission — we will continue to grow the value Nebraskans and our visitors place on these exceptional outdoor resources.

We know these resources make a difference to our quality of life, our mental health and our well-being. We know they make a difference to our state's flora and fauna, to the at-risk species and the common ones that enrich Nebraska.

Inside this report, you'll find stories of partnerships and dedication, ones on research and innovation, and of incredible people who contribute their time to serve Nebraska. You'll discover more of what Nebraska Game and Parks can do when relationships and growth are prioritized, and we hope it leaves you inspired to join us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy McCoy". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

Timothy McCoy
Director





Our mission

The mission of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is stewardship of the state's fish, wildlife, park, and outdoor recreation resources in the best long-term interests of the people and those resources.

Economic impact

Outdoor recreation contributes greatly to our quality of life. In Nebraska, hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and state park visitation support more than 24,000 jobs and have an economic impact of nearly \$4 billion annually.

Because of their participation in outdoor recreation, Nebraskans and visitors to our state contributed tremendously to the economy. In 2023, there were approximately:

- 189,000 licensed hunters;
- 241,000 licensed anglers;
- 485,000 park entry permits purchased by visitors;
- 126,000 shooting sports participants; and
- 80,000 registered boats.

By the numbers

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission owns or manages a number of properties around the state for recreational use or for the conservation of wildlife, including:

- 8 state parks, comprising 31,836 acres
- 60 state recreation areas, comprising 65,427 acres
- 10 state historical parks, comprising 2,497 acres
- 2 state recreation trails, comprising 4,144 acres and 324 miles
- 5 fish hatcheries, which raise and stock 68 million fish in 299 public waters
- 281 wildlife management areas, encompassing 184,422 acres

Wildlife management areas provide wildlife habitat and access, but Nebraska Game and Parks also oversees the Open Fields and Waters program, which enrolls private lands for walk-in access for hunting, fishing and trapping.

- 388,000 land acres are enrolled in Open Fields and Waters, including 42 stream miles and 39 ponds and lakes

Resources

Financials

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is funded mainly by user pay, which includes revenue from the sale of hunting and fishing permits and stamps, sale of state park entry permits, and fees for camping, lodging and activities in Nebraska's state parks and recreation areas. In 2023, approximately 89% of the agency revenues were generated through user pay and federal reimbursement, and approximately 11% came from the State General Fund.

Aside from the General Fund, 18 specific funds have been established for agency use. All funds are subject to budgetary authority provided by the Legislature and the governor. Many of these funds are restricted, meaning their revenues may only be spent for uses designated under state law and may not be transferred to the general fund. The 18 funds include: Game Cash Fund, Park Cash Fund, Habitat Cash Fund, Federal Funds, Fort Atkinson National Park Service Federal Fund, Nebraska Outdoor Recreational Development Act Fund, Recreational Trails Federal Fund, Aquatic Habitat Fund, Wildlife Conservation Fund, Game Law Investigation Fund, Cowboy Trail Fund, Wildlife Education Fund, Hunters Helping the Hungry Fund, Nebraska Snowmobile Trail Fund, State Park Improvement and Maintenance Fund, Game and Parks Capital Maintenance Fund, Water Recreation Enhancement Fund, and the Trail Development and Maintenance Fund.

The agency's major funds, their revenue sources and what they are used for are described in greater detail below:

GENERAL FUND: This is supported by money collected by the State Department of Revenue, deposited with the State Treasurer and appropriated by the Legislature. General Fund money is appropriated to the Commission for operating activities that are not self-supporting (primarily state park operations and nongame and endangered species activities); general administrative activities, applicable to the entire agency and difficult to prorate among the other funding sources; and activities that extend beyond the statutory use of the various cash funds.

GAME CASH FUND: This derives its revenues from user fees for various resident and nonresident permits related to game, including big game, small game, fishing and lifetime permits. This fund was the agency's second largest source of funding in 2023 and is the primary funding source for fish and wildlife conservation and management activities. This fund is restricted to funding only those activities related to the support of fish and game, the provision of boating facilities, administration and enforcement of the State Boat Act, production of publications, administration, construction, operation and maintenance of fish hatcheries and for the distribution of fish. Transfers from this fund to the General Fund are not authorized under existing law.

PARK CASH FUND: This was the agency's largest source of funding in 2023. Revenues are derived from user fees for park entry permits, lodging, camping, activities, equipment rentals and facility use rentals. This fund is dedicated to the administration, improvement, maintenance and operation of the state park system, comprised of state parks, recreation areas, trails and historical parks. Transfers from this fund to the General Fund are not authorized under existing law.

HABITAT CASH FUNDS: These are generated through user fees from habitat and migratory waterfowl stamps, primarily from the sale of the stamps tied to hunting and fishing.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FUND: This receives money via the state income tax checkoff program and from gifts and donations. This fund only can be used to pay for collection costs and to carry out the provisions of the Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act. Transfers from this fund to the General Fund are not authorized under existing law.

WILDLIFE EDUCATION FUND: This receives a portion of the money from issuance and renewal of the Mountain Lion Conservation Plates. This fund supports youth education programs relating to wildlife conservation practices. Transfers from this fund to the General Fund are not authorized under existing law.

FEDERAL GRANTS: These were the agency's third largest "cash" funding sources in 2023. They include reimbursable and direct grants. Federal grant awards are received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation and other federal agencies. The awards define what the funding is to be used for and typically are reimbursable awards. Grant monies may reimburse a cash fund or be spent as direct federal funding.

NEBRASKA OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACT FUND: This is restricted to the development, operation and maintenance of areas of the state park system. The primary source of revenue is the Nebraska Tobacco Products Tax. The portion of the tax earmarked for NORDA is the equivalent of one cent on a conventional package of cigarettes. This fund is critical to the development and maintenance of the state park buildings and amenities infrastructure.

GAME AND PARKS CAPITAL MAINTENANCE FUND: This is to be used to build, repair, rehabilitate, modify or improve any infrastructure within the statutory authority and administration of the Commission. Revenues in this fund are derived from sales taxes on non-farm ATVs and motorboats.

2023 calendar year revenue sources

Source	Amount	% of Total
Camping and Lodging Fees	\$16.25 M	15%
Federal and State Grant Reimbursements	\$15.25 M	14%
Hunting Permits and Stamps	\$15.17 M	14%
General Fund Appropriation Expended	\$12.89 M	11%
Direct Federal Funds	\$11.66 M	10%
Park Entry Permits	\$8.65 M	8%
Motorboat, ATV and UTV sales tax	\$7.54 M	7%
Fishing Permits and Stamps	\$6.03 M	5%
Investment Income	\$5.30 M	4%
Donations	\$3.47 M	3%
Concessions and Admissions	\$2.91 M	3%
Miscellaneous	\$2.64 M	2%
Hunt/Fish Combination Permits	\$1.81 M	2%
Tobacco Products Tax	\$1.31 M	1%
Boating Registration	\$1.17 M	1%
Total Revenue Sources	\$112.05 M	

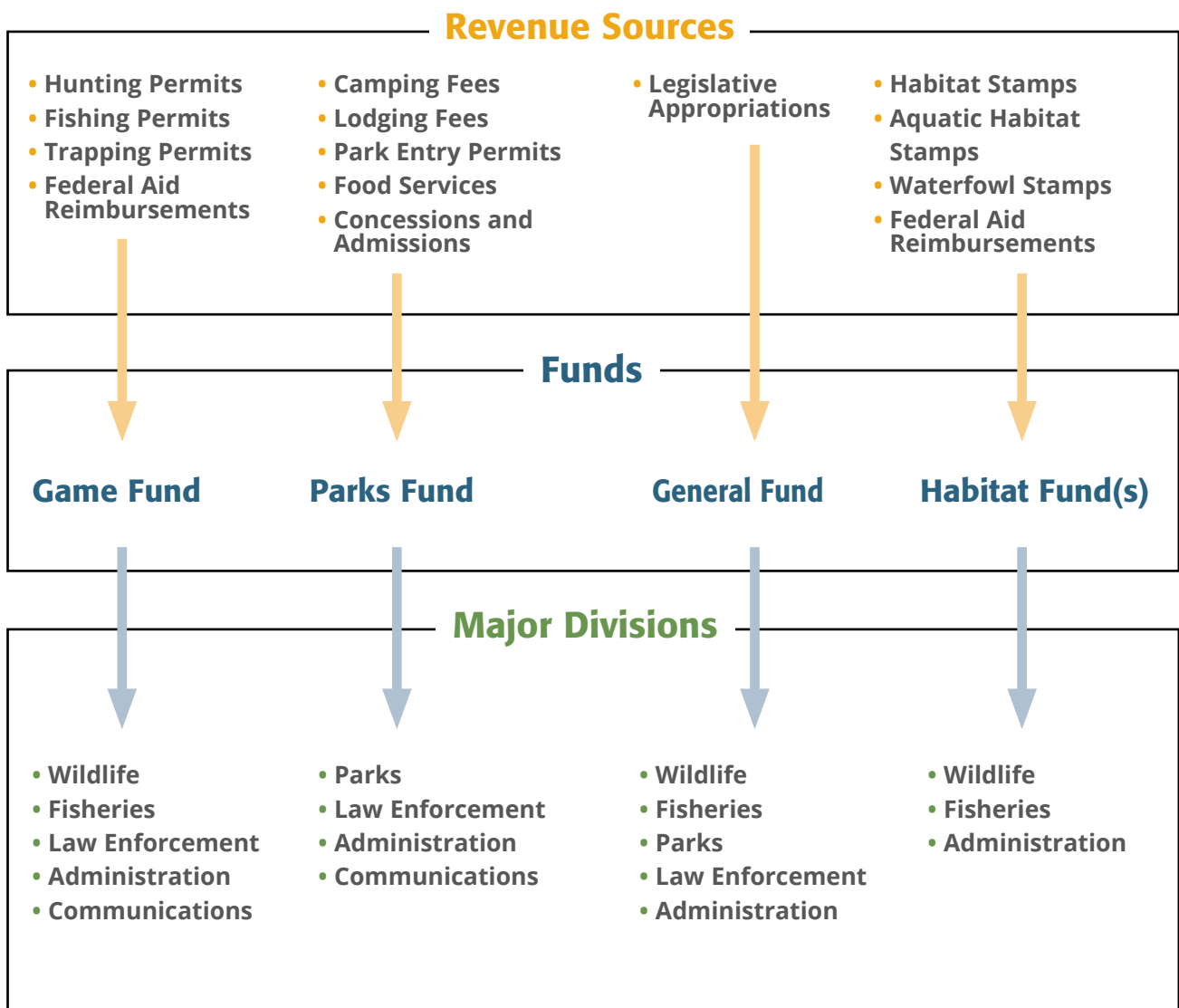
2023 calendar year expenditures

Source	Amount	% of Total
Capital	\$35.5 M	28%
Parks	\$31.9 M	25%
Wildlife	\$20.5 M	16%
Fisheries	\$10.8 M	9%
Law Enforcement	\$9.1 M	7%
Administration	\$6.9 M	6%
Communications	\$5.2 M	4%
Planning, Engineering and Construction	\$4.7 M	4%
Fish and Wildlife Education	\$0.8 M	1%
Total Expenditures	\$125.4 M	100%

How We are Funded

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is funded predominately by user pay, which includes revenue from the sale of hunting and fishing stamps and permits, sale of state park entry permits, and fees for camping, lodging and activities in Nebraska's state parks and recreation areas.

In 2023, approximately 89% of the agency revenues were generated through user pay and federal reimbursement, and approximately 11% came from the State General Fund. Revenues from permit sales, federal grants and other sources are placed into several funds, including Game Cash Fund, Park Cash Fund, General Fund and Habitat Fund. Money in these funds then is used to pay for specific programs, as illustrated in the diagram below:





COMMISSIONERS

District 1	Vacant
District 2	Donna Kush, Omaha
District 3	Ken Curry, Columbus
District 4	John Hoggatt, Kearney
District 5	Dan Hughes, Venango
District 6	Pat Berggren, Broken Bow
District 7	Doug Zingula, Sidney
District 8	Rick Brandt, Roca
At Large	Scott Cassels, Omaha

Director	Tim McCoy	402-471-5539
Deputy Director	Jim Swenson	402-471-5499
Assistant Director	Roger Kuhn	402-471-5512

CONTACTS

Switchboard		402-471-0641
Administration	Angela Janda-Craig	402-471-1542
Boating Safety	Jeff Clauson	402-471-5531
Budget and Fiscal	Kay Mencl	402-471-5189
Communications	Christy Firestone	402-471-5593
Engineering	Tiffani Gerber	402-471-5571
Fisheries	Dean Rosenthal	402-471-5495
Fish & Wildlife Education	Andrea Faas	402-471-5581
Information Technology	Troy Kroeger	402-471-5646
Hunter Education	Vacant	402-471-6134
Law Enforcement	Jeff Clauson (interim)	402-471-5531
Nebraska Wildlife Crimestoppers		800-742-7627
Parks	Jeff Fields	402-471-5499
Park Reservations		402-471-1414
Permits		402-471-5520
Personnel	Dirk Hood	402-471-5453
Planning and Programing	Michelle Stryker	402-471-5425
Wildlife	Alicia Hardin	402-471-5448

OFFICES

Headquarters	Lincoln	402-471-0641
Southeast District	Lincoln	402-471-0641
Southwest District	North Platte	308-535-8025
Northwest District	Alliance	308-763-2940
Northeast District	Norfolk	402-370-3374
Service Center	Kearney	308-865-5310
Service Center	Bassett	402-684-2921
Service Center	Omaha	402-595-2144

ONLINE

visit us online at
OutdoorNebraska.gov

follow us on



The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, facility, or service, should contact the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Lincoln, NE 402-471-0641, the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission, Lincoln, NE 402-471-2024, TTY/TDD 800-642-6112; Director, Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

