

**Agency Purpose**

The mission of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is *to work with citizens to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life.* DNR's responsibilities are broad, but are fundamentally focused on enhancing and sustaining Minnesota's quality of life through the balanced union of this three-part mission.

**At a Glance**

DNR seeks to achieve the following six goals to fulfill its mission:

**Goal 1** – Grow Minnesota's natural resource-based economies that promote conservation of its abundant natural resources

- Forest certification on 4.8 million acres of state forest lands maintains the market competitiveness of Minnesota's forest industry, providing timber, habitat, clean water, and recreation opportunities
- \$4.3 billion generated each year by fishing, hunting, and wildlife-watching –supporting 55,000 jobs
- 12 million acres of state mineral rights –mining is the biggest contributor to northeast Minnesota's economy

**Goal 2** – Conserve and enhance Minnesota's water resources and watersheds

- DNR maps and monitors ground water – two-thirds of public water supply comes from ground water
- DNR monitors the state's surface waters with 2,800 monitoring sites across the state

**Goal 3** – Conserve and enhance Minnesota's natural lands and habitats

- 58 state forests, encompassing 4.2 million acres

- 1,430 wildlife management areas (WMAs) with 1.3 million acres of habitat and 840 shoreland miles administered as aquatic management areas (AMAs)
- Approximately 150 scientific and natural areas (SNAs), encompassing 180,000 acres

**Goal 4** – Maintain the health of Minnesota's fish and wildlife populations and provide great recreation opportunities

- 29% of Minnesotans fish, 15% Minnesotans hunt or trap, and 54% view or photograph wildlife

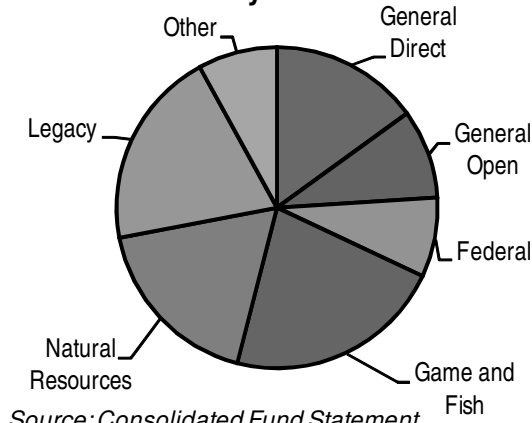
**Goal 5** – Maintain and enhance Minnesota's will high-quality and diverse outdoor recreation system

- 74 state parks and recreation areas, 54 state forest campgrounds and day use areas, 8 state waysides
- 1,300 miles of developed state trails, 23,000 miles of snowmobile trails, 1,500 miles of cross-country ski trails, 2,000 miles of off-highway vehicle trails
- 30 water trails totaling 4,300 miles, 1,600 public accesses, 350 fishing piers and shore fishing sites

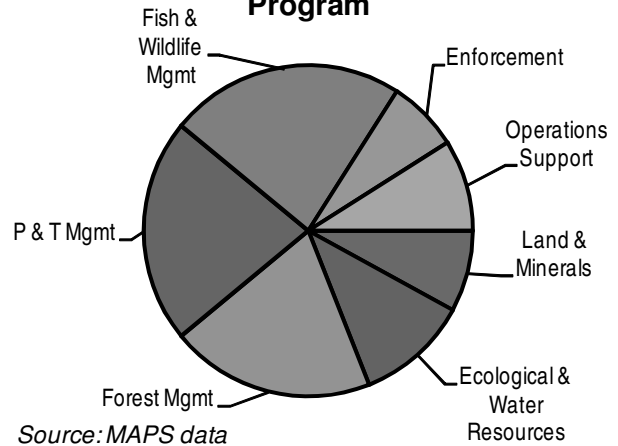
**Goal 6** - Effectively and efficiently deliver services to meet our mission

- DNR manages 5,000 pieces of fleet equipment and 2,500 buildings worth more than \$1 billion

**Est. FY 2010-11 Expenditures by Fund**



**Est. FY 2010-11 Expenditures by Program**



*Natural resource protection:* Minnesota's natural lands and waters serve as the foundation for the state's triple bottom line – a healthy environment, a strong economy, and vibrant communities. Natural resource systems provide immeasurable public benefits – from flood mitigation and erosion control to the high quality of life natural lands and waters provide to communities. Protection of the state's rich, natural assets (such as clean water, fish and wildlife, and timber) sustains Minnesota's global, natural resource-based economies and fosters a strong, outdoor heritage in the state.

*Economic development:* Correspondingly, natural resource-based economies – including recreation tourism, forest products, and water and mineral resources – serve as a cornerstone for Minnesota's economic well-being, generating billions of dollars in the state. For instance, Minnesota's forest industry supports 38,000 jobs and is the state's fourth largest manufacturing sector by employment, while the annual total economic impact of watercraft and boat trip spending is \$4 billion. Sustaining the quality of the state's valuable natural resources, by investing in conservation and ensuring environmentally sound practices, supports the long-term success of Minnesota's natural resource-based economies and provides a high return on investment.

*Outdoor recreation:* Likewise, outdoor recreation produces important economic benefits, creating jobs and generating significant spending in local economies. For instance, statewide trail-related activities support 43,000 jobs, with trail users spending \$3.3 billion annually. Outdoor recreation also connects people to the outdoors, fostering an ethic of natural resource stewardship among Minnesotans and building an engaged, diverse outdoor recreation public that supports conservation of the state's valued lands and waters.

Recognizing the interdependency of environment and economy, DNR works to optimize the state's triple bottom line to ensure that all Minnesotans are provided high-quality natural resources (clean water, natural lands, and healthy fish and wildlife populations) as a foundation for economic wealth and fun recreation opportunities.



## Strategies

Minnesota is facing unprecedented change. Complex natural resource challenges are reshaping the state's resource base. Invasive species threaten the health and resiliency of Minnesota's lands and waters. Growth and development patterns, such as along shorelands, in cities, and on farmlands, impact land and water conditions. Accelerating shifts in climate are anticipated to have significant impacts on Minnesota's lands and waters and are likely to intensify the negative effects of wildfires, invasive species, and disease on the state's resources.

Significant shifts in traditional sources of conservation funding influence how the department accomplishes its work. If current budget trends continue, the state's general fund will increasingly be dedicated to health and human services, education, and public safety to meet the needs of a changing population. DNR is adapting to these shifts in funding by better integrating our work, being innovative and entrepreneurial in our business, improving efficiencies in our operations, and reducing staffing levels over the past several years.

Social and demographic changes have implications both for how public services are provided by state government and how the public interacts with Minnesota's environment. The department is engaged in research to better understand recreation participation trends and is working closely with diverse partners on promoting strategies that encourage Minnesotans to participate and engage in the outdoors in new ways.

Within this context, DNR is focusing its resources and leadership in four areas that, when combined, provide the optimal approach for the department to achieve its mission-critical work while being a part of the state's budget solution:

- ***DNR integrates our natural resources work to be better positioned for the future***  
Integrated resource management allows the department to be flexible to address new challenges and take on new opportunities, to be adaptive and adjust our approaches when needed, and to work collaboratively with others. Organizational transformations, such as the formation of the new Division of Parks and Trails, aligns department resources to enable market development around better connecting people to the outdoors through a 21<sup>st</sup> century state park and trail system. The formation of a new Division of Ecological and Water

Resources allows DNR to more comprehensively address biological diversity and water management issues, recognizing the key role Minnesota's water resources have in supporting a strong economy.

- ***DNR is innovative in our business***

Building on successful business improvements that have increased the efficiency of department operations, DNR is identifying critical leverage points that, with minimal public investment, provide significant cost-savings. DNR's fleet is considered one of the best in the nation, with a reliable, energy-efficient fleet that costs the department much less than the industry standard. With a large workforce stationed at more than 180 locations across the state, the department is improving the energy performance of its buildings and working across units of government to determine opportunities for co-locating facilities to reduce operational costs. Likewise, DNR has made significant improvements in safety performance, saving more than \$4 million in safety claims over the last 10 years.

- ***DNR works in close partnership with Minnesotans to achieve our goals***

DNR recognizes that no one organization is responsible for the health of Minnesota's natural resources. The department depends on strong public and private partnerships and the active participation of citizens to achieve conservation goals. Innovative partnerships (such as with the Minnesota Twins, Best Buy Co., and REI, Inc.) enable DNR to engage new customers and measurably increasing attendance at Minnesota state parks, which serve as a gateway to other outdoor adventures. These partnerships have greatly enhanced DNR's outreach efforts and contribute to building and sustaining a robust recreation tourism industry in the state. Likewise, DNR works closely with private landowners and conservation partners through partnerships such as the Minnesota Forests for the Future Program and the Working Lands Initiative, which leverage state investments with non-state dollars, achieving conservation goals at the lowest possible cost to the state.

- ***DNR is transparent and accountable in our work, communicating results meaningful to the public***

Today's society demands a greater focus on measuring and communicating the results of public investments. Over the past eight years, DNR has built an integrated performance management system to ensure we are meeting the needs of our customers, a diverse and changing public. Charting strategic direction, measuring performance, and making course corrections to improve results are also essential to cost-effectively managing natural resources and achieving conservation outcomes in today's budget climate. DNR continues to increase the transparency and accountability of its operations through efforts such as implementing a new game and fish fund reporting structure, internal control standards, statewide grants management policies, and other business processes that comply with federal and state standards.

## Operations

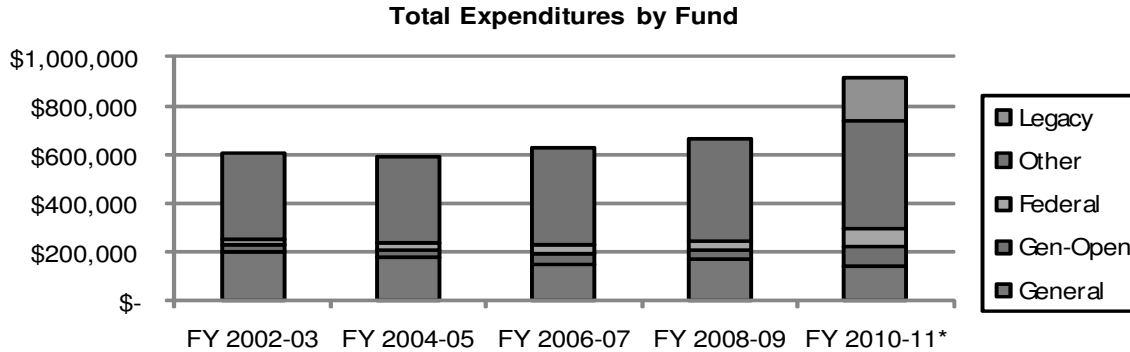
DNR is responsible for conserving the diversity of natural lands, waters, and fish and wildlife that provide the foundation for Minnesota's outdoor recreation heritage and natural resource-based economies (M.S. 84, M.S. 97A). DNR preserves the state's unique natural heritage by protecting rare plant and animal communities throughout the state. DNR manages the state's water resources, sustaining healthy waterways and ground water resources (M.S. 103). DNR provides enriching outdoor recreational opportunities and ensures public access to these resources, including hunting, fishing, wildlife-watching, camping, skiing, hiking, biking, motorized recreation, and conservation education through a state outdoor recreation system that includes parks, trails, wildlife management areas, scientific and natural areas, canoe and boating routes, and other facilities (M.S. 86A). DNR supports natural resource-based economies, managing state forest lands for multiple forest values (M.S. 89), ensuring the maximum long-term economic return from school trust lands (M.S. 127A), and managing the state's 12 million acres of mineral rights (M.S. 93).

DNR is organized into four geographic regions, six operating divisions, and operations support. DNR staff work out of 180 field offices located statewide.

- **Division of Ecological and Water Resources** works to ensure the long-term health of watersheds across the state that support water quality and maintain water quantity, biodiversity, and vital ecosystem services.
- **Division of Enforcement** enforces laws related to game and fish, wetlands, aquatic plants, and the operation of watercraft, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, and other recreational vehicles, and provides conservation and safety education programs.
- **Division of Fish and Wildlife** conserves and enhances the state's fish and wildlife populations and their supporting habitats through regulation, restoration, research, monitoring, and education.
- **Division of Forestry** protects citizens and property from wildfire and strives for the sustainable yield of timber resources for forest products while managing state forests for wildlife habitat and recreation.

- **Division of Lands and Minerals** manages agency real estate transactions and promotes, regulates, and provides expertise on mineral exploration, mining, and mine land reclamation.
- **Division of Parks and Trails** operates a system of state park and state forest campgrounds that conserves natural, scenic, and cultural resources; maintains a statewide network of recreational trails; provides public access to lakes, rivers, and streams; and offers education opportunities.
- **Operations Support** provides direction and coordination of DNR programs and operations, provides local services to the public across the state through regional operations, manages pass-through grants, and directs the management of school and university trust fund lands and mineral rights.

**Budget Trends**



*\*FY 2010-11 is budgeted expenditures  
Source data: May 2010 Consolidated Fund Statement (end of 2010 legislative session).*

The budget trends graph shows that the general fund open appropriation expenditures increased from FY 2008-09 to FY 2010-11. This is the result of the following factors:

- DNR Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) appropriation is a transfer to the Department of Revenue, so the expenditures are not included in the DNR’s expenditure history. However, since the FY10-11 figures are budgeted, the PILT dollars (estimated at \$43.4 million) are included.
- The emergency fire appropriation shows actual dollars spent in FY 2008-09, which was \$2.4 million higher than the budgeted \$22.0 million represented in FY 2010-11.

Federal funding increased from FY 2008-09 to FY 2010-11. FY2010-11 represents the DNRs spending authority (budget), approved through the Legislative Advisory Commission (LAC). Spending authority is always higher than actual spending because:

- Spending authority may be requested for grants at any time during the grant application process. If the grant is not awarded, spending will not occur. For instance, the FY 2010-11 figure includes approximately \$3 million in ARRA grants that were not awarded.
- Most federal grants are available for more than one biennium. Spending authority received in one biennium is not always spent in that biennium.

The FY 2010-11 budget includes approximately \$10 million in spending authority for **new** grants awarded.

Other funding sources include the natural resources fund accounts, game and fish fund accounts, environment and natural resources trust fund.

**Contact**

Office of the Commissioner  
 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
 500 Lafayette Road  
 Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155  
 Phone: (651) 259-5555  
 Fax: (651) 296-4799  
 website: <http://www.mndnr.gov/>