

2025-2030

2025-2030 NH FISH AND GAME

STRATEGIC PLAN



New Hampshire
FISH AND GAME
DEPARTMENT





STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
Governor Kelly A. Ayotte

**NEW HAMPSHIRE
FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT**
Executive Director
Stephanie L. Simek, Ph.D.

COMMISSIONERS:

Belknap County	Patrick McGonagle
Carroll County	Gene Chandler
Cheshire County	John Caveney
Coastal	Jim Titone
Coos County	Eric Stohl
Grafton County	Dave Poole
Hillsborough County	Ray Green
Merrimack County	Christopher Hodgdon
Rockingham County	Vacant
Strafford County	Albert J. DeRosa
Sullivan County	Bruce Temple

DIVISION CHIEFS:

Business	Kathy Ann LaBonte
Facilities & Lands	Vacant
Inland Fisheries	Dianne Timmins
Law Enforcement	Colonel Kevin Jordan
Marine Fisheries	Cheri Patterson
Public Affairs	Nicola Whitley
Wildlife	Daniel Bergeron

REGIONAL OFFICES:

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New Hampton, NH 03256

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Durham, NH 03824

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Table of CONTENTS

New Hampshire Fish and Game Funding 4

Mission 5

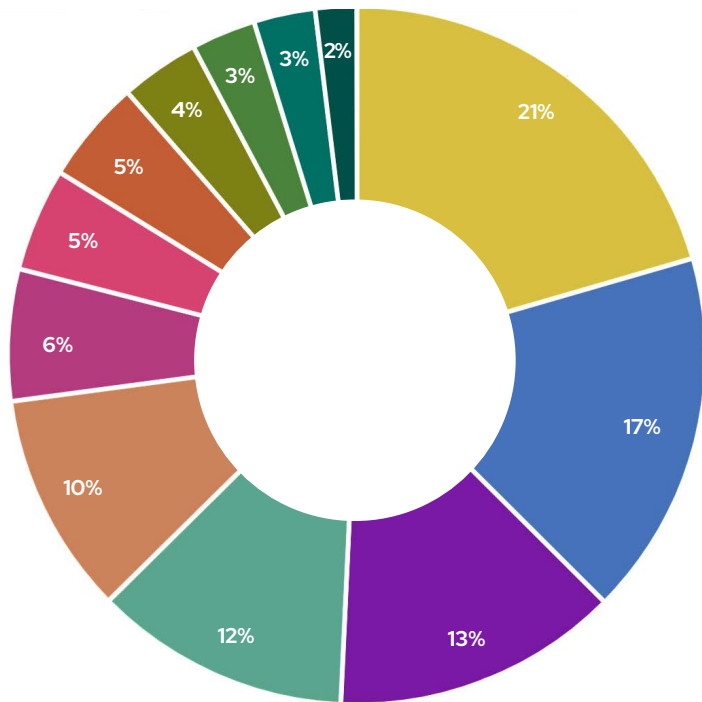
Core Tenets 6

Focus Areas and Successes 8

By the Numbers 14

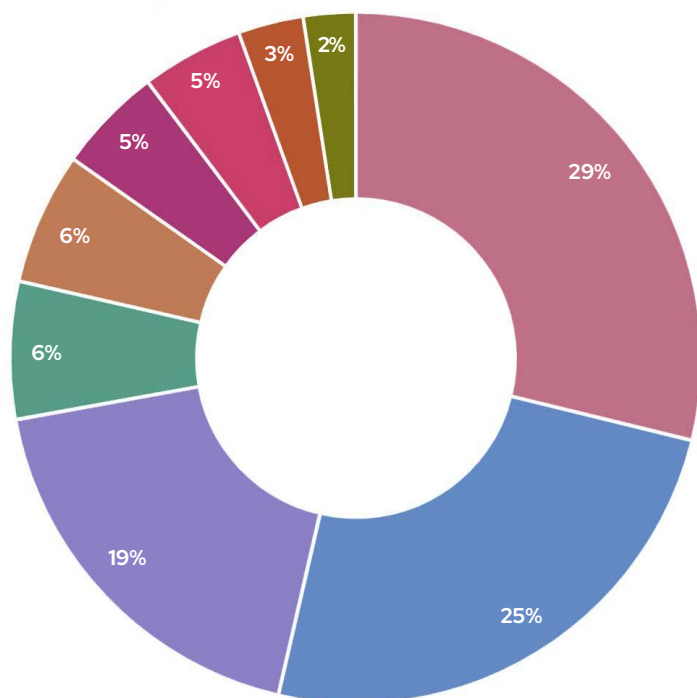
New Hampshire Fish and Game

FUNDING



FY 2024 Expenditures

- Law Enforcement, Search & Rescue, OHRV - 21%
- Wildlife and Habitat Management - 17%
- OHRV Transfer to DNCR - 13%
- Inland Fisheries Management & Hatcheries - 12%
- Administration, Finance & Fleet Management - 10%
- Marine Fisheries & Estuarine Reserve - 6%
- Public Affairs & Conservation Education - 5%
- ARPA/GOFERR Funding - 5%
- Maintenance, Construction & Public Boat Access - 4%
- Nongame Program & Conservation License Plate - 3%
- Office of Information Technology - 3%
- Retirees' Health Insurance - 2%



FY 2024 Revenues

- Federal Funds - 29%
- License Fee Revenues - 25%
- OHRV Funds - 19%
- Other Agency Income - 6%
- Other Miscellaneous Unrestricted Revenues - 6%
- Unrefunded Gas Tax Transfers (Marine & OHRV) - 5%
- ARPA/GOFERR Funding - 5%
- Dedicated License Revenue - 3%
- General Funds - 2%



OUR MISSION

As the guardian of the state's fish, wildlife and marine resources, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department works in partnership with the public to:

- Conserve, manage and protect these resources and their habitats;
- Inform and educate the public about these resources; and
- Provide the public with opportunities to use and appreciate these resources.



New Hampshire
**FISH AND GAME
DEPARTMENT**

CORE TENETS:

Simplicity

Through its interactions with the public at all levels, the Department strives for simplicity in its processes, rules and policies.

Transparency

At all levels of the Department, communications with the public, policies and decisions must be made with an emphasis on accountability and transparency. Broad public acceptance of agency policies is dependent on confidence in the process which is borne from accountability and transparency.

Education

The Department must serve as a source of knowledge and information to further foster the public's enjoyment of New Hampshire's wildlife and habitat and develop a strong conservation ethic to become good stewards and advocates for our resources.

Recruitment

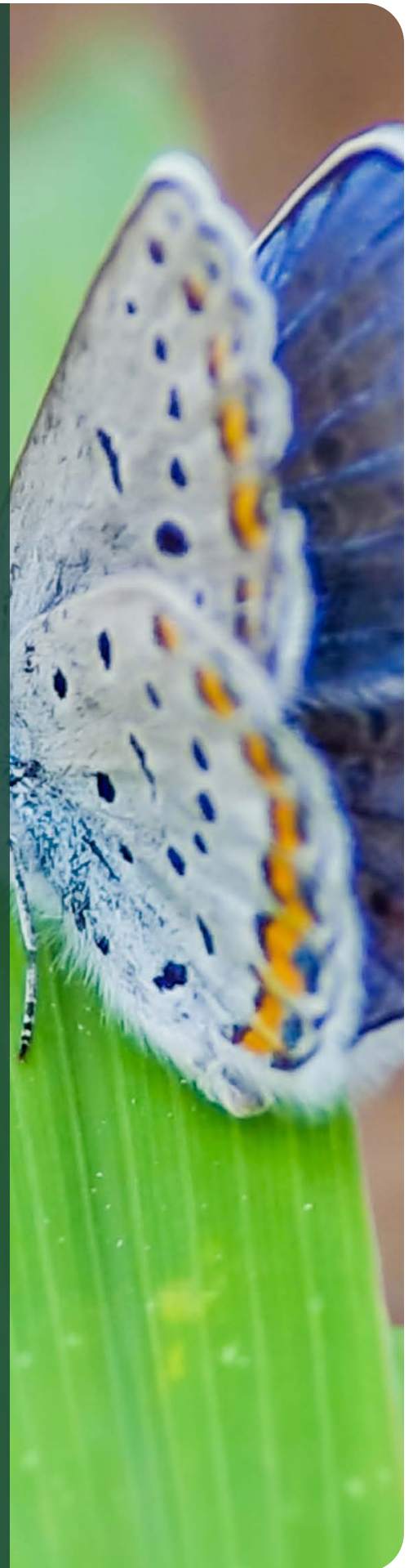
Continued recruitment of hunters, anglers and trappers is an imperative, keeping alive venerable American traditions while ensuring needed resources for ongoing conservation and management activities. Equally important, recruitment of other users of New Hampshire's wildlife and habitat will broaden support for the Department's work, ensuring a better informed and educated citizenry and strengthen the Department's finances.

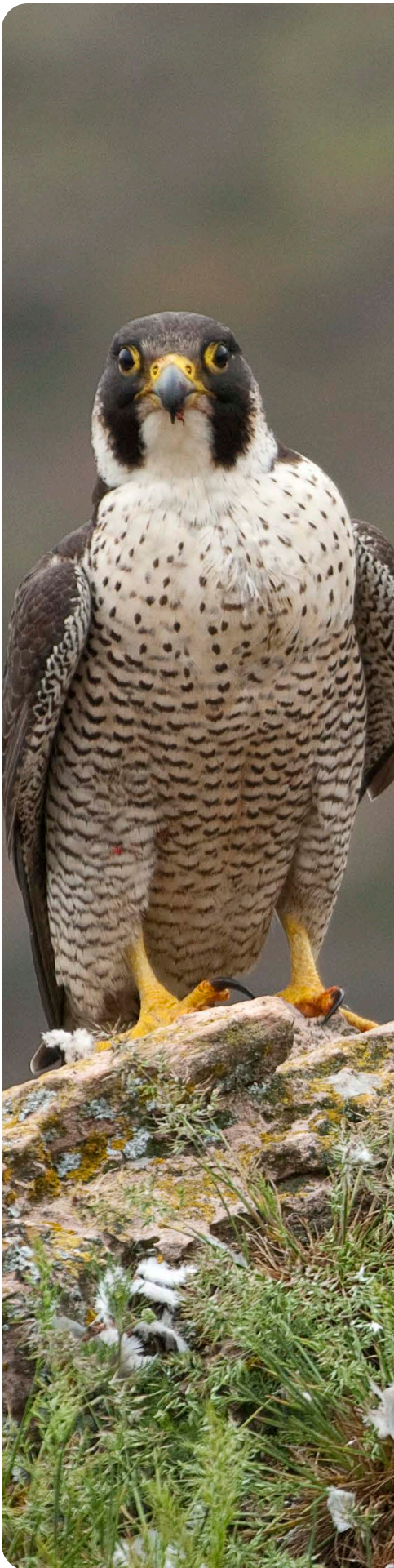
Opportunity

The Department must adopt an opportunity mindset focused on looking towards the future in a regulated and sustainable manner and embracing the value of opportunity, meaning that the Department will seek to provide opportunities for consumptive and non-consumptive users to enjoy New Hampshire's fish, wildlife, and marine resources. Fostering a focus on opportunity is central to the success of the Department and engagement by the public to promote the Department and New Hampshire's fish, wildlife, and marine resources.

Access

Continued access to New Hampshire's public and private land and water resources for a wide range of activities by all members of





the public is central to the Department's mission. A willingness by landowners to open private lands to public use must be a key focus area for the Department as existing public lands can't meet public demand.

Responsible and Sustainable Use of the Resource

The Department must manage and protect New Hampshire's land and water resources through a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while conserving the state's wildlife and habitat so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but in the indefinite future.

Stakeholder Engagement

The public's interest in New Hampshire's wildlife and habitat resource management is diverse and at times contradictory. The Department's duty is to always respect the opinions expressed by the many diverse interests while implementing policy that is consistent with its mission.

Strategic Partnerships

The Department must view strategic partnerships with other government and nongovernmental organizations, and dedicated individuals as a means to align available resources with public demand for services.

Wise Use of Resources

The Department has traditionally been a self-sustaining agency serving all New Hampshire citizens and visitors. This model is under stress as policy makers and the public's expectations have grown while funding has not kept pace with costs. The Department must be committed to investments and services that relate rationally to its funding sources. It is imperative that as an agency substantially funded by user fees, the Department must maintain a focus on delivering quality services to maintain a high degree of cost acceptance by the public while being open to new funding sources.

Protection, Conservation, and Responsible Management

Per its mission, the Department uses current science-based practices to conserve, protect, and manage the wildlife resources of the state and their habitat in perpetuity for current users and future generations.

Adaptability

The Department is adaptable and flexible in its duties in order to meet any challenges and changes such as human population growth, species decline, development, technology and changing environmental conditions.



Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources

Sustain and enhance New Hampshire's abundant fish, wildlife and marine resources through active and passive management. Create, restore, maintain, or adapt habitat to address changing environmental conditions through conservation. Conserve fish, wildlife, and marine resources for their long-term viability and for the traditions of hunting, fishing, trapping and outdoor enjoyment.

Success Strategies:

- Use best available science as the basis for maintenance of fish, wildlife, marine and habitat resources.
- Sustain ongoing efforts to create, improve, or conserve interconnected landscape-level connectivity between habitats whenever possible. This strategy may include conserving or creating new habitat through fee ownership or conservation easement when practical and with a focus on the best use of finite financial resources.
- Recognize the importance of private lands in achieving the state's habitat goals. Identify, develop, and promote actions to foster collaboration with private landowners to manage for quality habitat and public access.
- Ensure public's access to Department staff by utilizing outreach, education, and information sharing, developing communication plans for the purpose of engaging with diverse constituencies.
- Reestablish NHF&G dispatch to ensure timely response and effective public access to Department staff.
- Manage NHF&G lands using best practices informed by the best available science in land use management, habitat conservation, habitat creation, and species conservation. Promote adoption of such practices to serve as real world examples for landowners, managers, and the public to model on their properties and better understand the value of habitat management.



- Incorporate the State's Wildlife Action Plan as well as species and habitat specific plans into Department decision making.
- Continuously review and pursue simplification of Fish and Game laws and rules regarding hunting, angling and trapping while ensuring that management, conservation objectives and diverse methods are utilized.

Sustainable Funding

Ensure the Department has the necessary personnel, infrastructure and resources to meet the expected and unexpected needs. Diversify, enhance and modernize funding sources while seeking to better align revenue sources with costs in a sustainable manner.

Success Strategies:

- Identify best practices that successfully increase new or renewed license or permit sales. Identify if there are resource needs, external communications, and sales process improvements necessary to implement best performing tactics to ensure continual revenue.
- Identify current F&G duties that are not adequately funded by license and permit revenue and seek revenue, including from the State's General Fund to sustain agency

functions and obligations.

- Ensure that services and functions relative to the agency’s core mission and available resources are prioritized to core mission functions and identify revenue growth opportunities from users who don’t currently contribute funding.
- Continue to inform and educate policy makers on the cost to the agency of fulfilling its statutory duties and ensure that new mandates include necessary funding.
- Strengthen partnerships with non-profit organizations and government agencies whose mission supports the Department’s mission and funding needs.
- Review current grant acquisition capabilities and pursue additional resources to secure public and private grants if it is determined that current resources are not adequate to secure available funds.
- Identify new user and stakeholder groups and develop new revenue sources with these groups.

Our People

The Department strives to be the employer of choice by providing all employees with the training, equipment, workplace culture and resources to succeed and flourish. A defined and measurable people strategy will allow our people and the department to perform at its best.



Communication, among employees including the Director, divisions and the Commission will foster collaboration, respect and excellence.

Success Strategies:

- Continue efforts that encouraged collaboration across and within divisions and with the Commission focused on innovation, excellence, respect and constant improvement.
 - Consider implementation of a Career Ladder program Department wide for staff.
 - Advocate for compensation parity to ensure competitiveness with other agencies and similar private sector careers.
- Seek opportunities to develop management and leadership skills throughout the Department.
- Invest in technical training to ensure staff have access to best practices.
- Strengthen partnerships and collaboration with state and federal agencies, higher education, for profit and non-profit organizations to offer professional development growth and enrichment opportunities.
- Ensure Office of Information Technology at regional locations is up-to-date and connected to HQ to promote better communication with on-the-ground staff and better data sharing and education

Access

Access to New Hampshire’s wildlife and wild places on public and private land by anglers, hunters, trappers and those interested in other recreational pursuits is the foundation of the Department’s mission. The department will seek to expand incentives to encourage continued access to and understanding of private lands and seek partnerships and resources to expand access to public land and water and enhance outreach and education with respect to use of private lands.

Success Strategies:

- Continue coordination with Public Water Access Advisory Board to secure permanent public access to public waters currently lacking such access.
- Seek opportunities to enhance the public's access to information regarding available public water access locations and the extant of available infrastructure.
- Assess existing access to public waters including shoreside access to identify opportunities for expansion.
- Ensure state owned land is managed for statewide public access and that Department stocking occurs on water bodies with statewide public access while recognizing that permissible activities on lands with public access may vary depending upon the specific location.
- Seek to create a coalition of state agencies and business interests to advocate for increased financial resources for acquisition, maintenance, and enhancement of access to public water and lands.
- Consider and assess, for effectiveness, current access programs and develop new initiatives, where necessary to enhance responsible use of public and private lands for recreation.
- Enhance existing landowner relations programs to increase landowner participation and satisfaction while increasing public access.

Analytics

Data and the analytical systems used to inform management decisions are critical to the Department's ability to complete its mission. The expansion and development of analytical systems will allow the Department to accomplish its mission more effectively in such areas as science-based wildlife and habitat management, infrastructure investment, revenue enhancement, public access and public and license holder engagement.

Success Strategies:

- Prioritize modernization and integration of the Department's database(s) and IT infrastructure at the budget and staff resources level.
- Ensure that sound, science based, and data driven, decision making is the foundation of policy decisions.
- Develop analytic systems to improve and enhance license and permit sales and marketing.
- Explore ways to effectively engage the public and partners in viable data collection and analysis.

Technology

Investment in technology throughout every facet of Department operations will create





efficiencies, enhance effectiveness, and improve the public and license holders' access and appreciation for New Hampshire's wildlife and wild places. Technology and its useful application can better connect license holders and the public to the work of the Department while enhancing support for the mission. Efficiencies derived from its use are key to the Department maximizing available resources.

Success Strategies:

- Determine areas where technology will further enhance the Department's efficiency and effectiveness to meet Plan objectives.
- Initiate ways to enhance a digital transition to improve transparency and greater connectivity with New Hampshire's citizenry, stakeholders, and license holders. Identify and encourage opportunities to incorporate new technology into the collection of biological, enforcement, and public engagement data to inform management decisions

Infrastructure

The public, employees and license holders depend on modern, safe and well-maintained Department infrastructure including its facilities, lands and equipment. The Department should focus on planning to improve the allocation

of resources between new infrastructure projects and upgrading and maintaining existing infrastructure while aligning investment with utilization and revenue.

Success Strategies:

- Work to ensure capital improvement plans are implemented across the Department and integrated into budget requests, facility use planning, efforts to improve agency sustainability and service to the public.
- Review utilization and programming at Barry Conservation Camp, Great Bay Discovery Center, Glenn Cove WMA and Owl Brook Hunter Education Center to ensure programming continues to be relevant and serves New Hampshire's diverse outdoor users.

Communications and Engagement

The Department will sustain efforts to promote public engagement in the New Hampshire's wildlife and wild places. The Department will expand and focus efforts on recruitment, retention and reactivation of consumptive users and non-consumptive users in a coordinated fashion across divisions. It will focus on coordination and



communications, educational resources across skill levels, access and opportunity, outreach and experience and leveraging broad public support to grow participation to foster the next generation's engagement.

Success Strategies:

- Review current Fish and Game public education and communications initiatives to ensure that New Hampshire's diverse user groups have access to content that is appealing, relevant and appropriate.
- Ensure initiatives promote safety while enjoying New Hampshire's wildlife and wild places.
- Review of the Department's resources and organizational design to ensure it achieves optimized communications, education and revenue goals.
- Ensure that the availability of hunter, trapping and angling education programs are sustainable and promote participation for the next generation of outdoor enthusiast.
- Seek opportunities to expand existing partnerships and create new partnerships to develop and promote outreach and engagement that enhances the enjoyment of New Hampshire's outdoors.
- Explore opportunities to develop educational programs that allow participants to achieve introductory, intermediate and advanced levels of competency when enjoying the outdoors to create greater engagement with state fish and wildlife resources and the Department.
- Ensure efficient and diverse promotion and sale of licenses and permits by streamlining data flows within the Department and employing the most effective sales and marketing techniques.
- Consider solutions to enhance and expand current third-party sales channels
- Enable the public to communicate and provide feedback and input to the Department.
- Provide training and resources to New Hampshire schools to ensure state education efforts include knowledge of fish and wildlife habitat concepts and how to act on improving and supporting management of the state's fish and wildlife resources.
- Provide access to additional information about open areas, the importance of respect and the benefits of public access for users

Enforcement and Public Safety

The Department will protect the state fish, wildlife and marine resources from unlawful exploitation, provide enforcement, education, and search and rescue services to the public to ensure compliance of laws and regulations and promote the safety of outdoor recreationists.

Success Strategies:

- Ensure compliance with fish, wildlife, and marine resource related laws and regulations and off highway recreational vehicle and snow machine use.
- Ensure highly trained and professional search and rescue personnel and K-9 units through specialized teams and quality safety services are within the Department.
- Provide safety education opportunities for the public on hiking, off highway recreational vehicle use, snow machine use and other recreational activities.
- Continue to develop, improve and recommend laws and regulations that are easily understood by the public, enforceable, and allow for science-based management of the resources.



New Hampshire Fish and Game **BY THE NUMBERS**

183 permanent employees

Been in existence since **1865**

124 Wildlife Management Areas

Own nearly **60,000** acres

160 buildings including headquarters,
4 regional offices, and **6** fish hatcheries

7 divisions

135 Fish and Game boat access sites

Own **130** dams and **7** fish ladders

180 kids attend Barry Conservation Camp
every summer

8,000+ people attend Discover WILD New
Hampshire Day every year

11 members on the Fish and Game
Commission

Over **159,000** followers on our social media
platforms (Facebook, Instagram, X, and
YouTube)





Print **275,000** copies of our law digests every year (Hunting, Freshwater Fishing, Saltwater Fishing, and OHRV)

Work with over **660** volunteers to deliver our education programs

40 Conservation Officers enforce Fish and Game laws across the entire state

The Nongame Program works to protect over **400** species, **169** designated as Species of Greatest Conservation Need

New Hampshire is home to more than **500** different wildlife species

There are **28** types of habitat in the Granite State

Stock about **300,000** pounds of fish each year in the state's lakes and rivers

Register over **85,000** OHRVs each year

Work with federal and state partners to manage **62** marine species off our coast

8,000 visitors come to the exhibit room at the Great Bay Discovery Center in Greenland each year

Almost **3,000,000** visits to our website wildnh.com each year