

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

2017-19 BIENNIAL REPORT



Lost Creek Falls, Cornucopia, WI
Photograph courtesy of Sheri Erickson



October 2019

**Department of Natural Resources
2017-19 Biennial Report**

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October 15, 2019

Governor Evers and Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature,

I am pleased to provide you with the Department of Natural Resources 2017–2019 Biennial Report.

In accordance with s. 15.04 (1)(d) Wis. Stats., the report includes a review of performance and operations highlights and a summary of our agency's policy on flex-time and alternative work schedules.

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding this report or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Preston D. Cole". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'P' and 'C'.

 Preston D. Cole
Secretary

AGENCY DESCRIPTION

The Department is administered by a secretary who is appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Natural Resources Board establishes policy for the Department and consists of seven citizen members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Department is organized with a headquarters office in Madison, five regional offices and over 165 other field stations and offices.

The Department coordinates the preservation, protection and regulation of the natural environment for the benefit of the people of this state and its visitors. Included in its objectives are water and air quality maintenance; water supply regulations; solid and hazardous waste management; fish and wildlife management; forest management and protection; providing parks and recreation opportunities; lake management; wetland, shoreland and floodplain protection; and law enforcement.

The Department also coordinates federal, state and local aid programs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other federal agencies.

Fish, Wildlife & Parks Division

The Division of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (Division) plans and direct activities to protect, manage, conserve and wisely use the state's lands, plants, wildlife, fisheries, and recreational resources. Division goals are accomplished by establishing objectives which focus on the development and maintenance of game and nongame fish and wildlife populations; coordinating long-range programs for the protection and management of Natural Heritage Conservation. Division goals also include providing the public access, and opportunities, to enjoy recreational and conservation activities throughout Wisconsin's state parks; southern forests; wildlife habitat; public water bodies and fish lands; scientific areas; and state natural areas.

Division programs include:

Wildlife Management -- protects and manages Wisconsin's wildlife populations, their habitats, and promotes wildlife enjoyment and appreciation for the benefit of current and future generations.

Parks and Recreation Management (PRM) – seeks to provide a high-quality public recreation experience for the public through effective property and resource management. PRM uses the following criteria to assess a public recreation area which includes: its public use; scenery; plants and wildlife; or its historical, cultural, archaeological or geological interest. In addition to property management responsibilities for State Parks and Trails, PRM has property management responsibilities for other recreational public use facilities on other DNR properties such as State Forests, State Natural Areas, Wildlife Areas, State Wild Rivers, Flowages, and Fisheries Areas.

Natural Heritage Conservation works in collaboration with partners and stakeholders to: identify, protect, and manage native plants, animal species and natural communities; to enhance and restore populations and habitats; and promote greater knowledge, appreciation, and stewardship of Wisconsin's native species and ecosystems for current and future generations.

Fisheries Management manages fisheries activities in Wisconsin's 15,000 lakes; it's more than 84,500 miles of streams and rivers; two Great Lakes and a portion of the Mississippi River.

The **Office of Applied Science (OAS)** provides research and consultation services on statewide fish and wildlife priority issues and policy initiatives. OAS is an independent unit which reports directly to Division leadership. OAS is comprised of a fisheries research team and a wildlife research team.

The **Office of Business Services (OBS)** supports the work of the Division by providing centralized administrative services such as budget management, fiscal processing, IT support and communications.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2017 AND 2018 GOALS AND ACTUALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2017	Actual 2017	Goal 2018	Actual 2018
Number of visits to the Wisconsin State Parks System.	14,500,000	17,578,737	15,000,000	17,748,995
Processing time for endangered resource reviews.	10 days	4.2	10 days	4.0
Percentage of County Deer Advisory Committee (CDAC) members satisfied with CDAC implementation process.	90%	80%	90%	89%
Percentage of Deer Management Assistance Program members satisfied with department staff support.	90%	90%	90%	86%

2019, 2020 AND 2021 GOALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2019	Goal 2020	Goal 2021
Number of visits to the Wisconsin State Parks System.	15,100,000	15,200,000	15,300,000
Processing time for endangered resource reviews.	7 days	7 days	7 days
Percentage of County Deer Advisory Committee (CDAC) members satisfied with CDAC implementation process.	90%	90%	90%
Percentage of Deer Management Assistance Program members satisfied with department staff support.	90%	90%	90%

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Wildlife Management

Wildlife Species Work

- Completed a five-year wild elk translocation project which resulted in the translocation and release of 163 wild elk from Kentucky to Wisconsin. This successful project will augment the genetic diversity of the existing herd and establish a second herd in Jackson County.
- Continued Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) surveillance in CWD management areas.
 - In FY18, CWD surveillance was conducted in the Southern Farmland Zone located in southern Wisconsin, along with Washburn, Burnett, Polk, Barron, Eau Claire, Clark, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Portage, Adams, Waushara, and Juneau counties. The department also sampled wild deer around CWD positive captive deer facilities in Marathon, Eau Claire, Oneida, Shawano, Waupaca, and Oconto counties. Weighted surveillance primarily utilizing taxidermists took place in Sheboygan, Fond du Lac, Ozaukee, Dodge, and Washington counties.
 - In FY19, CWD surveillance was conducted within the Southern Farmland Zone and counties listed and above and expanded CWD surveillance to 19 counties in west-central and parts of northern Wisconsin.
- As part of our cooperative management agreement with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, in 2818, 35 DNR wildlife staff conducted a statewide spring breeding waterfowl survey. Survey results estimated an overall decline in the duck population of more than 25,000 ducks between 2018 and 2019 – a total duck population of 439,397 was estimated in 2018 while the 2019 population estimate of ducks was 413,662. The Wisconsin Canada goose breeding survey estimate saw an increase of more than 13,400 geese between 2018 and 2019 – 157,950 geese were estimated in 2018 and 171,407 geese were estimated in 2019.
- In May 2019, the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board approved the 2019 - 2029 Black Bear Management Plan. The ten-year plan will guide future management actions and provide to an interested public a concise, informative overview of black bear ecology and management in Wisconsin.

Wildlife Public Land and Habitat Management

- With \$500,000 in funding from the Wisconsin waterfowl stamp, the Division completed twenty-two projects statewide in 2017-19 biennium, focusing on wetland restoration and habitat management. The Department, along with twenty-one local conservation partners, successfully secured \$7,325,000 in federal grant funding through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. The grants will fund various wetland conservation projects throughout Wisconsin.

Hunting

- Both the statewide deer and buck harvest totals have steadily increased since 2016 with 1% year-over-year increases in 2017 for both does and bucks. In 2018, the statewide deer harvest increased by 4% to 336,206, while the statewide buck harvest total increased slightly over 2017 harvest totals.
- The Division raised and stocked 75,000 rooster pheasants annually on public hunting grounds; planted 63 dove food plots on wildlife areas; and created an on-line application to help waterfowl, woodcock, dove

and pheasant hunters more easily locate prime hunting areas.

Wildlife Damage

- In 2018, with the cooperation of participating counties, the Division provided wildlife damage abatement assistance to 1,003 agriculture producers who experienced damages to commercial agricultural crops caused by wild deer, elk, bear, geese, and/or turkey. In addition to providing damage abatement assistance, the Division provided nearly \$766,000 in compensation to agricultural producers for agriculture damages caused by deer, elk, bear, geese, and/or turkey.
- In 2018, awarded \$24,478 in Urban Wildlife Damage and Control Grants to seven municipalities for developing either an urban Canada goose/Whitetail-deer management plan or a Canada goose/Whitetail-deer removal program.

Customer Service

- Conducted wildlife education and outdoor skills programs for nearly 94,000 participants at DNR's wildlife conservation education centers.
- Provided wildlife conservation education hands-on activities during the biennium to more than 1,000 elementary school students during the Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo, which occurred at the Mackenzie Center.
- Keep Wildlife Wild: In 2018, Division staff and outside partners created and presented over 180 "Keep Wildlife Wild" themed educational outreach programs and activities for student, family, and youth groups across the state.

Parks and Recreation

- Set record attendance and recorded revenue of \$20.8 million and \$21.5 million in FY18 and FY19, respectively.
- Improved water quality throughout the parks system by upgrading including nearly 200 water fountains and replacing numerous vault toilet.
- Invested nearly \$2 million in property enhancement using funds allocated through the 2017-19 biennial budget (2017 Act 59). Enhancements included the electrification of over 150 camp sites.
- Began both the removal and redesign of the Peninsula State Park Eagle Tower, which will undergo construction in 2019-2021. The DNR received a generous \$750,000 private donation from the Friends of Peninsula State Park that will be dedicated to the construction project.
- The Division worked with local partners to secure nearly \$15 million for improvement projects at Peninsula State Park.
- Partnered with 40 Wisconsin State Park System Friends Groups and partners to implement \$500,000 of shared funding for property maintenance and enhancement projects. Project enhancements and included property wayfinding, informational kiosks, property signage improvements; 421 new picnic tables; 803 fire rings; 62 new grills; and 1 electronic pay station for 43 properties.

- Successfully implemented a new electronic payment system throughout the state with the installation of electronic payment kiosks. To date, 15 electronic kiosks are in operation around Wisconsin. These kiosks had processed over \$1 million in sales of daily and annual admissions by the end of FY 2019.

Natural Heritage Conservation (NHC)

- Completed 1,997 Endangered Resources Reviews for external customers which assisted our customer's projects avoid negative impacts to Wisconsin's endangered and threatened species.
- Assisted partner organizations in the acquisition of 1,127 acres of high-quality natural communities and habitats for State Natural Area properties; these acres are available for use by the public for hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching, among other activities.
- Constructed or maintained approximately 212 miles of prescribed fire breaks; 144 property parking lots; and 37 miles of wetland dikes and trails.
- Completed prescribed burns on 14,112 acres of prairie, grassland, oak savanna, and barrens habitats.
- Controlled terrestrial and aquatic invasive plant species on 12,837 acres of State Natural Area properties and other public lands.
- Coordinated over 350 volunteers who worked over 9,950 hours to improve and restore habitats on 43 State Natural Area properties. This volunteer effort improved the condition of 6,759 acres of public lands.
- In March 2018, Co-hosted the Wisconsin Summit for Natural Resources Volunteers in Eau Claire. The Summit celebrated the outstanding efforts of natural resources volunteers and project leaders, but also provided opportunities for the expansion and improvement of volunteer programs. These improvements were accomplished through training; talks, discussions and poster presentations; networking opportunities and a volunteer fair.

Fisheries Management

- Collaborated with muskellunge anglers to evaluate both the age and growth characteristics of muskellunge in northern Wisconsin. As part of this project, hatchery-raised (known as age-0 muskellunge) and adult muskellunge have been implanted with individually numbered passive integrated transponder tags for several years. Recapture of these individuals through routine field surveys by the WDNR staff and angler catches over time have provided critical information on known age-0 muskellunge, growth rates, and mortality rates this highly-prized sportfish in an almost exclusively catch-and-release fishery.
- Initiated a long-term project testing to determine whether the addition of trees to littoral zones of Wisconsin lakes will increase fish production.

Office of Applied Science (OAS)

- Initiated the largest and most comprehensive deer research project ever undertaken in Wisconsin: *The Southwest Wisconsin CWD, Deer and Predator Study*. The project goal is to comprehensively examine factors which potentially impact deer survival and deer population growth in southern Wisconsin. These factors include CWD, predation, habitat suitability and hunter harvest.

- Launched Phase 2 of *Snapshot Wisconsin*—This project utilizes a statewide network of trail cameras to monitor wildlife year-round. Project success relies on the help of more than 1,500 volunteers and focuses on developing a cost-effective way to monitor all species of Wisconsin wildlife. Data collected through this project supports wildlife management decision-making at the WDNR and is already being used in fawn-to-doe ratio studies; wolf-tracking efforts; and monitoring the reintroduction of elk herds in Wisconsin's. In August 2018, volunteer enrollment in the program was expanded to all 72 counties on both public and private Wisconsin land.
- Launched a study in July 2018 to examine the extent to which beavers affect coldwater streams and trout populations in ecoregions and beaver management zones across the state. Study results will better inform both beaver and trout management strategies.
- Initiated several projects aimed at improving our understanding of CWD in Wisconsin and investigating best management practices as far as controlling spread and disposing of infected carcasses.

Forestry Division

The Division of Forestry (Division) is responsible for developing and implementing programs which protect and sustainably manage the state's forest resources. The sixteen million acres of forest land and millions of urban trees provide a significant contribution to our quality of life in Wisconsin. Through careful planning and coordination, the Division administers both current and long-range programs for the protection; improvement; perpetuation and sustainable use of Wisconsin's forests; as well as the protection of life, property and resources from wild fire.

The Division's primary mission is to work in partnership to protect and sustainably manage Wisconsin's forest ecosystems to supply a wide range of ecological, economic and social benefits for present and future generations. The Division accomplishes its purpose through a decentralized organizational structure (less than 10% of Division staff are located in the WDNR central office) which reflects the importance of being in close proximity to the state's sixteen million acres of forest land.

Division bureaus and programs include:

Bureau of Applied Forestry – The Bureau's primary function is to provide scientific support and services to internal and external partners dedicated to protect and sustainably manage Wisconsin's forests. The Bureau also provides statewide coordination, planning, and policy development for insects and disease; invasive forest species; diseases and plants; forest hydrology; forest nurseries; tree improvement; forest research; forest ecology including ecological classification systems; and silvicultural programs.

Bureau of Forestry Business Services – Supports the Division of by providing internal coordination, service delivery, and policy development for statewide forest assessment and planning; workforce management; internal and external communications; IT/GIS applications development and maintenance; IT procurement and support; budget/finance planning and management; and administrative services. The Bureau provides leadership, direction and manages the Department's aviation and radio communication programs. The Bureau also administers, evaluates and implements the research, development and fabrication of the statewide fleet of wildfire suppression equipment and the fire equipment warehouse at the LeMay Forestry Center in Tomahawk.

Bureau of Forestry Field Operations – The Bureau's primary mission is to protect human life, property and natural resources from wildfire. The Bureau is responsible for the statewide coordination, administration and policy implementation of the Managed Forest Law (MFL) and Forest Crop Law (FCL) programs; and administers a myriad of forestry assistance programs for state lands forestry, county forest, national forest and private forests. The Bureau provides leadership and overall direction regarding management, planning and policy development for forest protection, forest fire operations, forest fire suppression, and forest fire prevention.

Forestry Operations – Provides uniformity across the Division's three distinct geographic districts in the implementation of all aspects of the forestry operations program, including fire prevention and suppression, state forest and state land management, private forestry assistance, urban forestry, forest health, nurseries, county forest assistance, and outreach and education.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2017 AND 2018 GOALS AND ACTUALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2017	Actual 2017	Goal 2018	Actual 2018
Total number acres enrolled in Managed Forest Law program.	3,343,400 acres	3,348,659 acres	3,358,400 acres	3,378,563 acres
Processing time for timber cutting notices.	<30 days	13.6 days	<30 days	7.8 days
Wildland fire response time.	<30 minutes	13.3 minutes	<30 minutes	13.8 minutes

2019, 2020 AND 2021 GOALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2019	Goal 2020	Goal 2021
Total number acres enrolled in Managed Forest Law program.	3,373,400 acres	3,388,400 acres	3,403,400 acres
Number of acres of private forestry outreach to previously unengaged forest land owners	200,000 acres	200,000 acres	200,000 acres
Wildland fire response time.	<30 minutes	<30 minutes	<30 minutes

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **LeMay Forestry Center**

The LeMay Forestry Center (Center) replaced aging equipment by fabricating and modifying heavy duty trucks and vehicles to build thirty-seven new fire engines to address fire suppression and prescribed burning needs. The Center also modified and fabricated nineteen new squad vehicles and added mobile radios to thirty-two fire control bulldozers for the WDNR's Bureau of Law Enforcement. The Center also provided fire control engines and equipment to other states for requested assistance.

- **Aeronautics**

The Aeronautics Team supported various programs within the WDNR by flying a total of 2,208 flight hours in FY19, which equates to 1,235 different flights. These flights were conducted for wildfire detection and suppression purposes; prescribed burning; wildlife and fish surveys; and storm damage assessment. In addition to WDNR program specific flights, the Aeronautics Team supported flights for the University of Wisconsin System, Wisconsin Emergency Management/Air Coordination Group, county governmental Emergency Management Teams and Law Enforcement, tribal governments, and other state agencies.

- **Prescribed Burning Technology Integration**

A DNR strategic alignment change in 2017 resulted in the Prescribed Burn (Rx Burn) program moving to the Division of Forestry. Modifications to the WisFIRS Public Lands application and the Individual Forest Fire Reporting System (IFFRS) resulted in the entire department now using the same systems for creating Rx Burn plans, dispatching resources, and fire reporting. These applications work in conjunction to let the public know when they can use their burning permit, when Rx burns and wildfires are happening, assessing habitat after a Rx burn, etc. In 2018 and 2019, the Division coordinated 295 Rx burns on nearly 50,000 acres.

- **Managed Forest Law (MFL)**

The Division saw increased participation by private forest landowners in the state's MFL Program over the past biennium. During 2018 and 2019, more than 54,000 acres were enrolled, thereby becoming sustainably managed forest lands. Research into the impact of MFL enrollment on harvest yields show that small account MFL harvests generate 33% more wood per acre than individually or family owned lands not enrolled in MFL.

- **Good Neighbor Authority (GNA)**

The GNA is a collaborative project between the U.S. Forest Service, DNR and county forest managers that allows counties to perform forest management activities in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF). The primary goals of the project are to improve the health and resiliency of the CNNF, provide forest products to the local economy, and improve collaboration between federal, state and county forest managers. During FY18 and FY19, the Division established and sold 38 timber sales covering nearly 7,000 acres in the national forest as part of this project.

- **Good Health Grows on Trees Conference**

In May 2019, the WDNR urban forestry program hosted the first-ever ["Good Health Grows on Trees: The Influence of Nearby Nature on Public Health" Conference](#). The Conference was designed to attract attendees from the fields of public health; landscape architecture; urban and regional planning; and urban and community forestry to further the discussion about the health benefits that trees and nature provide to Wisconsin communities.

Bureau of Law Enforcement

The mission of the Bureau of Law Enforcement (BLE) is to provide public safety, resource protection and promotion of the safe and wise use of Wisconsin's natural resources. BLE's primary objective is to achieve voluntary compliance by the public through a three-pronged approach of enforcement, education and community-based warden practices to ensure fair and equal treatment.

BLEs responsibilities include:

- Public engagement through directed patrols and complaint response to address specific issues and problematic activities. BLE directed patrols (vehicle and foot patrols) emphasize observations of a specific activity or issue and encourages contacts (warden initiated) with the user public. Patrol efforts are directed to the following: sport fishing (trout, walleye, sturgeon and fish runs); commercial fishing on the Great Lakes and Mississippi River; hunting (deer, turkey, waterfowl, small game, bear); night hunting; safe firearm use; boating; snowmobiling; off-highway vehicle use; state lands, state parks, and state forest use; habitat protection; environmental protection; and forest protection.
- Support of department-wide law enforcement regulatory and managerial activities.
- Administration of safety education programs for hunting, boating, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and snowmobiles in partnership with volunteer instructors and web-based learning.
- Outreach and educational presentations to the public on the responsible use and the application of both environmental and natural resource recreational laws and regulations.
- Timely investigation of all violation complaints received, and if warranted, brings the matter to the attention of the judicial system.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2017 AND 2018 GOALS AND ACTUALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2017	Actual 2017	Goal 2018	Actual 2018
Maintain or reduce the average number of snowmobile fatalities with existing enforcement hours.	Less than 20 fatalities	16 fatalities	Less than 20 fatalities	14 fatalities

2019, 2020 AND 2021 GOALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2019	Goal 2020	Goal 2021
Maintain or reduce the average number of recreational fatalities; off-highway vehicle (snowmobile, motorcycle and UTV/ATV), and boating and hunting related fatalities per 100,000 combined users.	4.3 per 100,000	4.3 per 100,000	4.3 per 100,000

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Environmental Protection** – Staff continued to ensure public health and safety by resolving environmental complaints and violations through the stepped enforcement civil process, which is a series of incremental actions designed to resolve violations at the lowest level appropriate for the circumstances.

Environmental Enforcement Statistics	FY 2018	FY 2019
Notices of Violation (NOVs)	260	225
Enforcement Conferences	232	178
Compliance Orders Issued	25	16
Referrals sent to DOJ	11	25

- **Recreational Incidents** – Through a combination of enforcement activities, education (outreach and safety programs) and community-based warden practices, Wisconsin’s combined annual recreational fatalities (hunting, boating, snowmobile, and ATV/UTV) have been trending slightly downward, averaging just under 4.4 per 100,000 participants over the last 11 years.
- **Parks and Forest Enforcement** – Continued implementation of a two-year project to migrate law enforcement services to state park, state forest and forest properties in to provide a consistent level of law enforcement services to the public by standardizing the hiring, training, and supervision of law enforcement professionals across the WDNR.
- **Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3)** – Awarded grants to promote R3 partnership opportunities – Shooting Range Grant Program (12 grants = \$348,100), Angler Grant Program (10 grants = \$63,200) and Hunter Grant Program (16 grants = \$223,000). In addition, the R3 program implemented an email marketing campaign to re-engage lapsed hunters and anglers.
- **Call For Service (CFS)** – In partnership with the Wisconsin State Patrol, BLE implemented an electronic CFS system to document “in-field” complaints and statewide search capabilities of the complaint information. CFS also includes documentation of actions taken and allows for the creation of backside data pulls and reports. In 2018, 24,000 CFS were documented.
- **Emergency Response** – During the biennium, BLE staff provided search, rescue and general emergency response services for several significant statewide or regional weather events, including floods, wind storms and snow events.
- **New Staff** – Hired and trained thirty-five permanent, credentialed staff during the biennium to replace retiring staff and as part of the Parks and Forest Enforcement Project described above.
- **Fleet Cost Reduction** – Implemented several strategies to reduce fleet operation costs and maximize efficiencies – including the purchase and use of more fuel-efficient vehicles based on geographic or specific job duties and the task-specific assignment of BLE vehicles. Based on these strategies, fleet rates stabilized, preventable fleet accidents have decreased, and the program is achieving an overall operational savings.

Environmental Management Division

The Environmental Management Division (Division) protects human health, safety and the environment by working in partnership with citizens, communities, businesses and advocacy groups. The Division recognizes the interrelationships between air, land and water resources, and relies on environmental indicators, feedback from others, and self-evaluation to continually improve services.

The Division's programs include:

Drinking Water and Groundwater – Protects the quality and quantity of the state's groundwater resources and ensures the safety of drinking water.

Water Quality – Manages activities and land uses that affect water quality and both public health and safety. The program's primary objective is to provide an integrated watershed approach to managing these activities, such as policy development; watershed planning; point source regulation; water quality assessment; and water resource protection and restoration.

The **Office of Great Waters** – Implements a comprehensive program to protect Lake Michigan, Lake Superior and their watersheds, identify problems and solutions and serve as a contact point for the Great Lakes community in Wisconsin.

Air Management – Protects human health and the environment while accommodating economic growth by developing air quality implementation plans and collaborating with local, state, regional and international partners to meet state and federal air quality standards.

Waste & Materials Management – Protects public health and the environment by encouraging recycling; waste minimization; pollution prevention; the proper management of solid and hazardous wastes and mining activities; and voluntary compliance and participation in preferred waste management practices.

Remediation and Redevelopment -- Supports the remediation and beneficial reuse of contaminated sites across Wisconsin.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2017 AND 2018 GOALS AND ACTUALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2017	Actual 2017	Goal 2018	Actual 2018
Processing time to issue an individual air construction permit (from completed application to permit decision).	58 days	58 days	58 days	48 days
Acres of abandoned/contaminated property cleaned and made available for redevelopment.	800 acres	1,486 Acres	800 acres	1,421 Acres
Maintain Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination System (majors) water permit backlog at under 10 percent.	20%	16.4%	15%	13.7%
Number of wells inspected during construction.	850	1138	1,000	972
Percentage of community public drinking water systems inspected at least once in the past three years.	100%	99%	100%	99%
Percentage of noncommunity public drinking water systems inspected at least once in the past five years.	100%	99%	100%	99%

2019, 2020 AND 2021 GOALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2019	Goal 2020	Goal 2021
Processing time to issue an individual air construction permit (from completed application to permit decision).	58 days	58 days	58 days
Acres of abandoned/contaminated property cleaned and made available for redevelopment.	800 acres	800 acres	800 acres
Maintain Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination System (majors) water permit backlog at under 10 percent.	<10%	<10%	<10%
Number of wells inspected during construction.	1,000	1,000	1,000
Percentage of community public drinking water systems inspected at least once in the past three calendar years.	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of noncommunity public drinking water systems inspected at least once in the past five calendar years.	100%	100%	100%

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Drinking Water & Groundwater

- In 2018, 99.1%, or 11,488 of 11,589 public water systems, met federal drinking water standards set to protect public health. These systems had no water samples exceeding health-based standards for regulated contaminants.
- WDNR and its partners conducted 2,531 sanitary survey inspections of public water systems to ensure compliance with construction, operation and maintenance requirements.
- Launched two new technology tools for drillers and pump installers. The [Well Driller Viewer](#) is an internet-based map tool that provides well construction reports and contamination-related data to help well professionals plan construction projects and meet regulatory requirements. [Online WCR](#) is a new system providing for the online submission of Well Construction Reports (WCR). Online WCR allows drillers to enter reports; print both reports and sampling forms; and search all reports in the well construction database. The system checks for common errors to ensure the final WCR is complete. The database is updated daily and uploaded to the WDNR electronically, eliminating the need for a paper report.
- Began implementation of a four-year Central Sands Lakes Study (2017 Wisconsin Act 10) to define, and study the relationship between groundwater withdrawals, lake levels, and its impact on three Central Sands lakes.

Water Quality

- Reduced the wastewater permitting backlog to 9.1%, which is less than the 10% national goal set by EPA and the goal that was established by the Department following the June 2016 audit of the wastewater program.
- Developed a Best Management Practices (BMP) Tracking System that will allow DNR's external partners to easily report the BMPs they have constructed to improve water quality.
- Completed two Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plans to restore water quality in the Milwaukee River (completed in FY 2018) and Wisconsin River (completed in FY 2019) basins. Once implemented, these restoration plans will address phosphorus impairments in a large portion of Wisconsin rivers, lakes and streams.
- Published five science-based water quality management papers in water quantity journals over the course of the 2017-19 biennium. The papers: (1) Present refinements to measurement technology for detecting algal blooms; (2) provide insights into environmental controls on rates of evaporation and evapotranspiration from lakes and wetlands; and (3) provide insights into factors controlling lake productivity based on embedded high-frequency, remote sensing technology.
- Partnered with Drinking Water & Groundwater Program on the Central Sands Lake Study to evaluate historical and potential impacts of groundwater withdrawals in the area.
- Began monitoring surface waters and fish for PFAS compounds and collected first round of samples in summer of 2019.

- Awarded over \$11.5 million totaling 459 cost-sharing grants to assist local communities to plan and manage lake and river water quality, aquatic habitat and aquatic invasive species prevention and control.
- Issued 2,985 permits to control invasive and problematic aquatic plants and other nuisances. Ninety-eight percent of permits were issued within 10 to 15 days of receipt. All permits – and treatment records – are now submitted electronically through a central intake system.

Office of Great Waters

- Great Lakes Area of Concern (AOC) Accomplishments:
 - Lower Menominee River AOC – Removed “Restrictions on Fish and Wildlife Consumption” in June 2018; the “Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations”; and the “Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat” impairments in February 2019. Initiated a process to delist the AOC.
 - St. Louis River AOC – Removed “Fish Tumor and Deformities” impairment. Began and/or completed the following projects: Barker’s Island Beach Restoration, Wisconsin Point Dune Restoration, Piping Plover Habitat Restoration, Wild Rice Restoration and Little Balsam Creek Fish Passage.
 - Milwaukee River Estuary AOC – Removed barriers to fish passage in the Milwaukee River Estuary.
- Beneficial use of dredge materials:
 - Worked with permits staff and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to advance beneficial use of dredge materials from Kenosha Harbor for nourishing shoreline sediments. As a result of this project, Kenosha was able to host, for the first time, The Tall Ships Festival in August 2019.
 - Launched additional beneficial use projects to improve beach nourishment in Two Rivers and Port Wing and restored Piping Plover habitat on the St. Louis River estuary.
- Fox River:
 - Removed and disposed 45,000 tons of contaminated sediment linked to a shuttered Green Bay manufactured gas plant.
- Portage Canal:
 - Assisted in Portage Canal remediation efforts to remove approximately 1,000 cubic yards of metals contaminated sediment and coordinated with Columbia County to redevelop the surrounding area with a skywalk and pedestrian bridges.
- Mississippi River:
 - Through a federal-state partnership with five Upper Mississippi River (UMR) states through the UMR Basin Association, developed a systemic plan to address the inter-related threats of flood, drought, and sediment management. The partnership will also develop a plan to address the adverse impacts of floods and drought on commercial navigation, river communities, and habitat because of increasingly volatile weather and climate conditions.

Air Management

- Air Quality Improvements:
 - Ninety-four percent of Wisconsin's population lives in areas meeting all federal air quality standards.
 - Emissions of ozone-forming pollutants such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) have decreased by 50% since the early 2000's.
 - All counties in Wisconsin now monitor concentrations of fine particles well below the federal air quality standards and are "in attainment", according to EPA – which represents a significant reduction in fine particle pollution.

Waste & Materials Management

- Launched the "Can I burn?" online tool in spring 2018 to guide Wisconsin residents through a series of questions to determine whether a specific burn is allowed under state air, forestry and waste regulations. Since its launch, the tool has been used more than 5,000 times.
- Launched an online sharps collection registration portal, "Wisconsin Registered Sharps Collection Stations" which has an interactive map to help residents find nearby sharps collection stations.
- Launched a "Hazardous Waste Decoded" webinar series to help hazardous waste generators better understand regulations. Over 190 registrants signed up for each webinar which covered topics such as common hazardous waste violations; hazardous waste management at healthcare facilities; and an overview of upcoming administrative rule changes.
- Held four workshops across Wisconsin for local governments and others involved with electronics collection, storm debris cleanup and local recycling programs. The workshops helped participants understand recycling, solid waste and hazardous waste requirements and gave local governments the opportunity to learn and network. In total, 280 attendees participated in the workshops.

Remediation & Redevelopment

- Completed cleanups at 657 contaminated sites.
- A total of 2,903 spills were reported to WDNR between January 2016, and June 2018, with WDNR responding to and closing 2,299 of these spills. Nineteen of these hazardous substance spills and 21 abandoned container sites were addressed utilizing the Emergency Response Zone Contract.
- On April 26, 2018, an explosion and fire occurred at Husky Energy's Superior Refinery. WDNR staff from across the state assisted officials from the City of Superior, Douglas County and Superior Refinery with response efforts during and after the explosion and subsequent fire. The response team also supported public outreach efforts including weekly calls with stakeholders; periodic calls with the larger state government response team; and creation of a website to share project information with the public.
- Brownfield Redevelopment:
 - Two high-profile brownfields redevelopments held groundbreaking events in the spring of 2018. In April 2018, Royster Corners, formerly the Royster-Clark agricultural site, broke ground on what is

now a mixed-use development that will house the new \$10.2 million Pinney Library in Madison. In May 2018, the City of Monona announced the kickoff for the Monona Riverfront Redevelopment Project. The \$40 million phased redevelopment project encompasses about six acres. Both projects benefited from the Wisconsin Assessment Monies Program (WAM) and input from Remediation and Redevelopment staff and the Land Recycling Team.

Internal Services Division

The Division of Internal Services (Division) provides support and services to WDNR staff throughout the state to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

The Division's programs include:

Facilities & Lands – Provides professional technical services related to planning, development, and maintenance of WDNR facilities, with responsibility for the acquisition, disposal and maintenance of most of the Department's vehicles and heavy equipment.

Finance – Administers and manages the Department's fiscal and procurement functions.

Human Resources (HR) – Recruits, develops, and maintains a diverse, qualified and productive workforce. HR also coordinates payroll and benefits functions.

Technology Services – Provides information management consulting, systems development and computer processing to best meet the Department's business needs.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2017 AND 2018 GOALS AND ACTUALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2017	Actual 2017	Goal 2018	Actual 2018
Percent of simple open records requests fulfilled within 10 business days.	95%	93.7% ¹	95%	96.3% ²
Number of lost workdays per 100 employees resulting from worker's compensation claims.	3	3	3	2.5
Percent of department-managed property under an approved master plan.	60%	61.6%	65%	66.2%
Complete groundwater studies for Great Lakes hatchery facilities and initiate the scope of work and conceptual engineering for Kettle Moraine Springs Hatchery and Les Voigt Hatchery.	Complete conceptual engineering for Kettle Moraine Springs Hatchery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kettle Moraine Springs groundwater study completed. • Les Voigt groundwater work completed 	Initiate substantial construction at the Kettle Moraine Springs Hatchery	Final design work began after approval from Jt. Finance Committee.

2019, 2020 AND 2021 GOALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2019	Goal 2020	Goal 2021
Percent of simple open records requests fulfilled within 10 business days.	95%	95%	95%
Number of lost workdays per 100 employees resulting from worker's compensation claims.	2.5	2.5	2.5
Percent of department-managed property under an approved master plan.	70%	75%	80%
Renovate and rebuild the Kettle Moraine Spring Hatchery.	Complete final design of the renovated building and new structures and break ground by end of the fiscal year	Commission renovated and new buildings for use by the end of the 2020 fiscal year.	Resolve any ongoing facility issues by end of the fiscal year.

¹ "Actual 2017" information reported on a calendar year basis (01/01/2017 – 12/31/2017).

² "Actual 2018" information reported on a calendar year basis as of August 1, 2018 (01/01/2018 – 08/01/2018).

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Facilities & Lands

- Completed design and began construction of the Kettle Moraine Springs Fish Hatchery. Upon completion in FY20, the \$26M hatchery will address much of the cold-water stocking gap in the Great Lakes while meeting new phosphorus discharge requirements in the Milwaukee River watershed. Additionally, the design of the facility allows for the continued and expanded delivery of fry (juvenile fish) to private growers and includes a modular design concept that allows for private partnership expansion and use of the facility.
- Coordinated with other WDNR programs to facilitate planning processes for department-managed lands. This included the preparation of final master plan documents for the following ecological regions: Northern Lake Michigan Coastal, Northwest Lowlands, Northwest Sands, and Superior Coastal Plain. All plans were developed through an extensive public input process.
- Completed the acquisition of a forest legacy easement in Iron County. This conservation easement establishes a working forest while providing vehicle and public access to over 14,000 acres of forested land, multiple lakes and over seventeen miles of trout streams.
- Deployed engineering resources to historic storm events in northwest Wisconsin. Engaged with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide immediate engineered solutions to damaged structures and established funding reimbursement justification for over \$4 million of repairs.

Finance

- Developed a new tool to simplify & streamline the processing of utility payments & invoices.
- Reduced the number of days to process requisitions from 19 days to 10 days.

Human Resources

- Streamlined LTE rehiring by cutting the approval process from an average of 7.1 to 3.3 days.
- Established a DNR Wellness Program, including a web page to communicate all initiatives.

Technology Services

- Increased staff mobility by adding telepresence sites and implementing “BadgerNet” to improve Wi-Fi bandwidth at five WDNR locations across the state.
- Improved the technological capacity of 13 shared conference rooms by installing new audio/visual equipment.
- Deployed a WDNR-specific “App Store” to allow staff access to more than 266 DNR-approved apps for their smartphones.

External Services Division

The Division of External Services (Division) serves as a primary entry point to DNR for the public, businesses, and local government; facilitates cross-divisional integration and project management; and invests in sustainable infrastructure projects.

The Division's programs include:

Watershed Management – Manages activities and land uses that affect water quality and public health and safety. Its primary objective is to provide an integrated watershed approach which encompasses policy development, watershed planning and regulation, habitat protection, and water quality assessment.

Community Financial Assistance – Administers grant and loan programs and works closely with local governments and interested organizations to develop and support projects that protect public health; natural resources; the environment; and outdoor recreational opportunities.

Environmental Analysis and Sustainability (EAS) – Provides a single point of contact service to businesses and governmental agencies and enhances their ability to meet and exceed environmental and economic objectives. EAS facilitates cross-agency coordination on important project and policy proposals; leads social science research for internal programs; provides laboratory services and certification; which ensures proactive and clear WDNR engagement and communication with business, internal and government customers.

Customer and Outreach Services (COS) – Serves as a first point of contact for many public inquiries; manages natural resource licenses/permit sales; species harvest reporting; and registration services for snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicle, utility terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles and boats. COS delivers services via WDNR Service Centers, a statewide call center, and an online presence. COS is also responsible for the development and implementation of *Go Wild* a customer-oriented service delivery information system. Finally, COS manages business outreach services with all WDNR authorized sales agents.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2017 AND 2018 GOALS AND ACTUALS

Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2017	Actual 2017	Goal 2018	Actual 2018
9.	Number of small business contacts made through Small Business Environmental Assistance Program.	63,000	80,857	66,500	110,600
9.	Number of high-risk dams inspected per year.	85	71 ³	81	11 ⁴
9.	Processing time to issue waterway individual permit decisions (measured from the date of receipt of a completed permit application to issuance of the permit decision).	70 days	45.1 days	70 days	44.5 days
9.	Processing time to issue wetland individual permit decisions (measured from the date of receipt of a completed permit application to issuance of the permit decision).	70 days	78.7 days	70 days	73.5 days
9.	Processing time to issue stormwater construction site permit decisions.	30 days	16.3 days	30 days	16.4 days
9.	Percent of hunting, fishing and trapping licenses purchases on-line.	17%	27%	19%	42%

2019, 2020 AND 2021 GOALS

Performance Measure	Goal 2019	Goal 2020	Goal 2021
Number of small business contacts made through Small Business Environmental Assistance Program.	85,000	85,000	85,000
Processing time to issue waterway individual permit decisions (measured from the date of receipt of a completed permit application to issuance of the permit decision).	70 days	70 days	70 days
Processing time to issue wetland individual permit decisions (measured from the date of receipt of a completed permit application to issuance of the permit decision).	70 days	70 days	70 days
Processing time to issue storm water construction site permit decisions.	30 days	30 days	30 days
Percent of hunting, fishing and trapping licenses purchases on-line.	45%	50%	50%

³ Calendar Year Total – By law, the owner can have the required inspection performed any time during the calendar year; most of the inspections are done in the fall.

⁴ Calendar Year Total – By law, the owner can have the required inspection performed any time during the calendar year; most of the inspections are done in the fall.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Watershed Management

- E-Permitting System – Continued implementation of an electronic permitting system to provide customers the ability to apply for permits on-line and check permit application status. The system features the following improvements:
 - Electronic payment;
 - Electronic signature;
 - Improved online application and clearer understanding of required attachments;
 - Dashboard features to search and track the status of permits and public notices; and
 - Mapping features to improve identification of project areas.

Annual E-Permitting Activity Summary	
Year	Permits Submitted Electronically
2015	2,500
2016	5,000
2017	6,488
2018	9,253
2019 (to date)	8,873

- Wetland Mitigation – Scheduled seven wetland mitigation sites for construction in 2019 as part of the Wetland In Lieu Fee Program.
- Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) Program – Utilized E-Permitting System to collect permit applications; plans; specifications; evaluations for designed structures; annual reports and Nutrient Management Plan updates.
- Dam Safety and Floodplain Zoning:
 - Completed development of flood inundation maps for two stream gauges on Cedar Creek and the Milwaukee River in southeastern Wisconsin. The maps allow emergency managers, local officials and citizens to have a visual representation of the physical extent and depth of flooding correlating to the National Weather Service prediction of events.
 - As a result of two Presidential flooding declarations in Wisconsin in 2018, WDNR staff provided technical assistance through workshops, site visits, inspections with community staff, and attended public meetings and recovery meetings in at least seven counties. Staff also assisted several communities enroll in the National Flood Insurance Program and provided technical assistance and emergency response during the 2018 floods (including the Lewiston and Caledonia Levees and numerous dam failures).

Community Financial Assistance

- Awarded a total of 7,038 grants to local governments, tribes, lake districts, lake and river associations, fire departments, dry cleaners, nonprofit conservation organizations, and individuals through forty-one distinct grant programs totaling over \$165 million.

- Disbursed sixty-five Clean Water Fund loans totaling over \$268 million and eighty-three Safe Drinking Water loans totaling nearly \$115 million to 108 Wisconsin communities.

Environmental Analysis and Sustainability

- Flood Response – Assisted county highway and county emergency managers in northern and western Wisconsin by serving as primary contacts for local government, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Emergency Management, and Federal Emergency Management Agency relating to flood impacts on road and bridge infrastructure repairs.
- Transportation Policy – Signed an updated interagency cooperative agreement with the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), reaffirming the DOA’s collaboration to minimizing environmental impacts of constructing and maintaining highways, roads, bridges, culverts, airports, railways and harbors.
- 2018 State Parks Visitor Study – Conducted a study for the Bureau of Parks and Recreation Management to broadly characterize Wisconsin state park visitors, document state park visitor activities, assess overall visitor satisfaction, and obtain visitor opinions regarding public expenditure priorities.
- Hunter & Angler Surveys:
 - Surveyed Wisconsin residents regarding their awareness and attitudes toward black bears. The survey examined the public’s tolerance for various bear behaviors and preferences for management actions in response to three different black bear–human interaction scenarios.
 - Surveyed 1,800 Wisconsin bear harvest permit applicants to determine their current satisfaction and preferences for black bear hunting opportunities in the state. The survey results informed the Bureau of Wildlife Management’s work on an updated black bear management plan.
- Small Business Environmental Assistance Program – Conducted conferences, webinars, and supported the small business assistance help-line for an estimated 100,000 small business owners across the state.

Customer & Outreach Services

- Improved and enhanced the statewide automated license issuance system, known as *Go Wild*, which processed over \$365 million in sales in FY 2017.
- Integrated online and phone-based harvest registration into the *Go Wild* system to provide real-time access to harvest reports for wildlife managers and law enforcement staff.
- Implemented the sale of permit applications and conducted a permit drawing for the WDNR’s inaugural elk hunt. Over 38,000 permit applications were processed in a 30-day period.

Policy On Flexible Work Schedules

(in accordance with s. 230.215(4), Wis. Stats.)

The Department of Natural Resources is dedicated to our employees as well as to the natural resources we serve. We are committed to attracting, developing and maintaining a multicultural workforce in an array of professions such as law enforcement, information technology, water resource management, research scientists, administrative services, engineering, and many more. We strive to make our customers the focus of everything we do and recognize that our people are our greatest asset. One way we have strengthened our workforce is through flexible-time schedules.

Flex scheduling allows the Department to accommodate employees with varying scheduling needs and provides an incentive to employees, yet it still allows the Department to maximize efficiency of agency operations, maintain its level of services to the public, and facilitate energy conservation and employee productivity. Flexible-time schedules include required days or hours during which an employee subject to the work schedule must be present for work; however, an employee, with the approval of his or her supervisor, may elect a time of arrival to and departure from work. Some of our employees on a flexible schedule may work a condensed work week (e.g., four 10-hour days) or may work a regular work week through less traditional hours.