



# **Joint Committee on Appropriations**

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**South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks**

January 27, 2025



# PRESENTATION OVERVIEW



**Operations -  
Who We Are**



**Agency  
Information  
IT & Efficiencies**



**Vision and  
Mission**



**Workforce  
FTE & Turnover**



**Budget Structure  
& Adjustments**



**2025 Fee  
Package**

# OUR VISION AND MISSION

## Mission

We serve and connect people and families to the outdoors through effective management of our state's parks, fisheries, and wildlife resources.

## Vision

We will conserve our state's outdoor heritage to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

**SERVE.  
CONNECT.  
MANAGE.**





# DEPARTMENT PRIORITIES



## **Habitat & Access**

Expand habitat acres across South Dakota.

Create new partnerships with landowners and conservation groups.

Enhance South Dakota's strong outdoor heritage by providing additional public access to privately owned lands while continuously improving access to existing public lands.



## **Asset Management**

Provide superior outdoor recreational experiences by showcasing South Dakota's natural landscapes and world class state park system.

Ensure sustainability of the resource and actively recruit, retain, and reactivate outdoor enthusiasts.



## **Customer Service**

Deliver excellent customer service and meet our customers where they are.

Foster a culture of continuous improvement, focusing on employee training, proactive issue resolution, and utilizing customer feedback to enhance overall customer satisfaction.



## **Operational Excellence**

Focus on growing employee engagement through enhanced internal communications, increased skills training, effective recruitment, and onboarding tactics to maximize Team GFP's productivity.

# OUR DIVISIONS

## Administration

- Office of Secretary
- GFP Commission
- Legal Counsel
- Engineering
- Communications & Marketing
- Finance & Budget

## Wildlife

- Fisheries Management
- 3 Fish Hatcheries
- Wildlife Management
- 725 Game Production Areas
  - 286,975 Acres
- Habitat & Access Programs
- Wildlife Damage Management
- Law Enforcement
- Licensing & Education Services
- Environmental Review & Heritage Program

## Parks & Recreation

- 102,418 Acres
  - 13 State Parks
  - 43 Recreation Areas
  - 5 Nature Areas
  - 1 Historic Prairie
  - 70 Lakeside Use Areas
- 4,524 Camp Sites
- 10 Marina/Resorts
- 240 Public Water Access Areas
- Mickelson Trail
- Snowmobile Trail Program

**464** PERMANENT STAFF ACROSS THE DEPARTMENT







# AGENCY BUDGETARY STRUCTURE

Game, Fish & Parks has 6 programs provided within the annual general appropriations bill and the Governor's budget book.

## BUDGETED

0601 Div. of Administration

0620 Div. of Parks & Recreation-  
Maintenance & Operations

0621 Div. of Parks & Recreation-Capital  
Development & Improvement (2-year  
authority)

## INFORMATIONAL

0610 Div. of Wildlife-Operations

0612 Div. of Wildlife-Capital Development  
& Improvement (2-year authority)

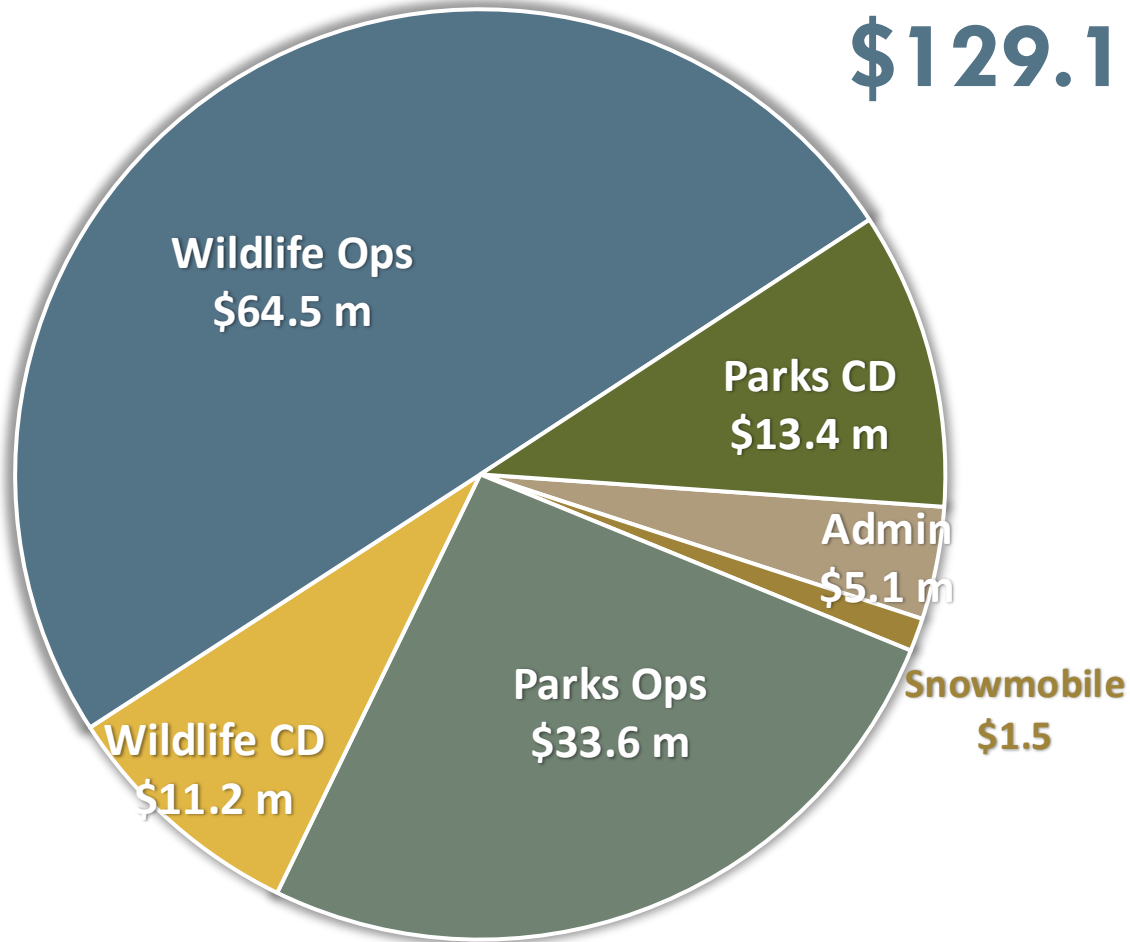
0622 Snowmobile Trails



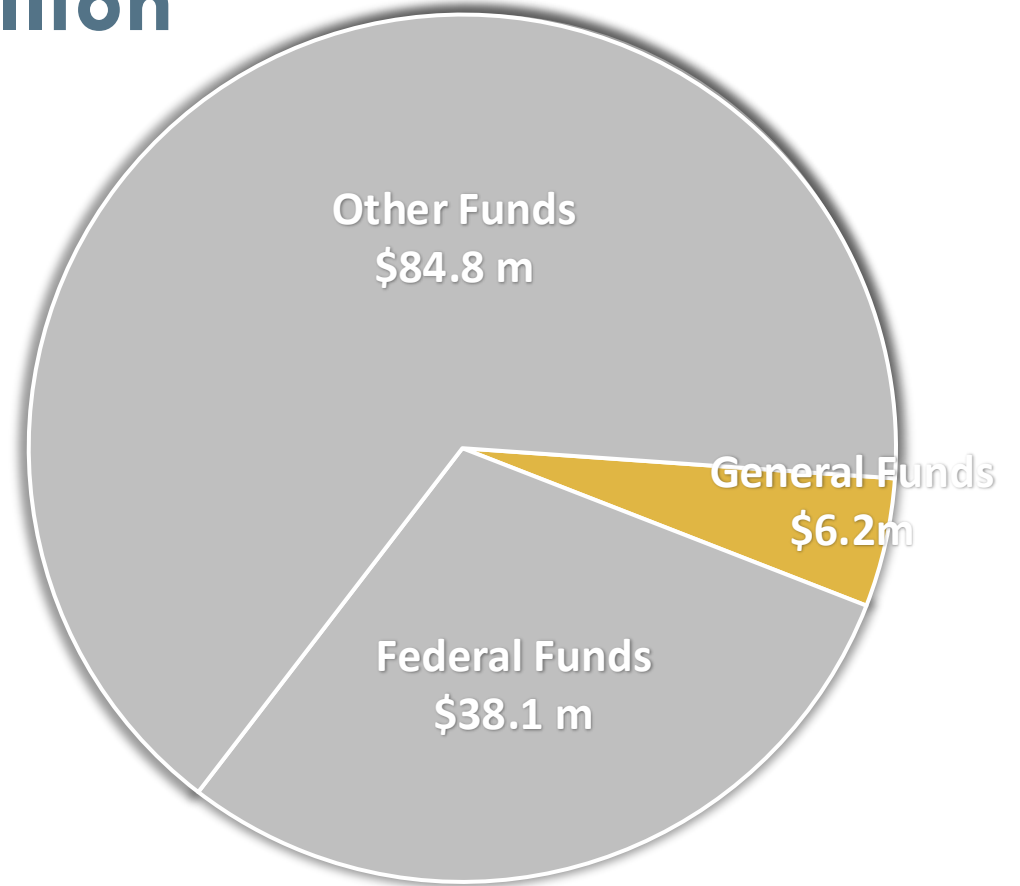
# FY2026 PROGRAM BUDGETS & FUNDING SOURCES

## FY26 Program Budgets

**\$129.1 Million**



## FY26 Fund Sources





# FY2026 GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

Fish Hatchery Renovations	<del>\$ 793,655</del>
Custer State Park Facilities	\$1,922,233
Custer State Park Visitor Center	\$ 125,321
Good Earth State Park	\$ 62,567
Cedar Shores Shoreline Stabilization	\$ 224,010
Angostura Sewer Infrastructure	\$ 112,005
<b>Total General Funds for Bond Payments</b>	<b>\$2,446,136</b>
Division of Administration Operations	\$ 226,970
Division of Parks & Recreation Operations	\$3,512,285
<b>Total General Funds for Operations</b>	<b>\$3,793,255</b>

**\$6.2 Million in  
General Funds**





# 06 GFP TOTAL RECOMMENDED BUDGET

## FY26 RECOMMENDED BUDGET= \$129.1 MILLION

Budget	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
FY2025 Base Budget	583.9	7,481,021	38,302,285	83,520,809	129,304,115
FY2026 Recommended Budget	<u>583.9</u>	<u>6,185,011</u>	<u>38,137,785</u>	<u>84,815,809</u>	<u>129,138,605</u>
Change	0.0	(\$1,296,010)	(\$164,500)	\$1,295,000	(\$165,510)

Recommended Changes	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
Bond Payment Adjustments – Regular		(2,355)			(2,355)
Bond Payment Adjustments – Early Payoff	0.0	(793,655)			(793,655)
Div. of Parks & Rec - Seasonal Employees	0.0	(500,000)		500,000	0
Div. of Parks & Rec Capital Projects	<u>0.0</u>		(164,500)	<u>795,000</u>	<u>630,500</u>
Total Recommended Changes	0.0	(\$1,296,010)	(164,500)	\$1,295,000	(\$165,510)



# DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION



# 0601 DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

## FY26 RECOMMENDED BUDGET = \$5.1 MILLION

Budget	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
FY2025 Base Budget	23.3	1,020,625	0	4,041,698	5,062,323
FY2026 Recommended Budget	<u>23.3</u>	<u>1,020,245</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,041,698</u>	<u>5,061,943</u>
Change	0.0	(\$380)	\$0	\$0	(\$380)

Recommended Changes	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
Bond Payment Adjustments		(380)			(380)
Total Recommended Changes		(\$380)	\$0	\$0	(\$380)



# DIVISION OF WILDLIFE





# 0610 DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

**FY26 RECOMMENDED BUDGET = \$64.5 MILLION**

Budget	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
FY2025 Base Budget	297.5	0	23,934,606	40,543,161	64,477,767
FY2026 Recommended Budget	<u>297.5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>23,934,606</u>	<u>40,543,161</u>	<u>64,477,767</u>
Change	0.0	0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Recommended Changes	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
Total Recommended Changes		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0



# 0612 DIVISION OF WILDLIFE DEVELOPMENT/IMPROVEMENTS (INFO)

**FY26 RECOMMENDED BUDGET = \$11.2 MILLION**

Budget	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
FY2025 Base Budget	0.0	0	6,712,500	4,462,500	11,175,000
FY2026 Recommended Budget	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6,712,500</u>	<u>4,462,500</u>	<u>11,175,000</u>
Change	0.0	0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Recommended Changes	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
Total Recommended Changes		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

- *Itemized list of FY26 projects included on page 12 of LRC Budget Brief Detail Document*





# DIVISION OF PARKS & RECREATION



# 0620 DIVISION OF PARKS & RECREATION

## FY26 RECOMMENDED BUDGET = \$33.6 MILLION

Budget	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
FY2025 Base Budget	254.0	6,460,396	3,740,679	24,186,887	34,387,962
FY2026 Recommended Budget	<u>254.0</u>	<u>5,164,766</u>	<u>3,740,679</u>	<u>24,686,887</u>	<u>33,592,332</u>
Change	0.0	(\$1,295,630)	\$0	\$500,000	\$795,630

Recommended Changes	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
Bond Payment Adjustment <i>(Needs Correction as outlined in Budget Brief)</i>	0.0	(795,630)	0	0	(795,630)
Seasonal Empl. Funding Shift	<u>0.0</u>	<u>(500,000)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>500,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Recommended Changes	0.0	(\$1,295,630)	\$0	\$500,000	(\$795,630)



# 0621 DIVISION OF PARKS & RECREATION DEVELOPMENT/IMPROVEMENT

## FY26 RECOMMENDED BUDGET = \$12.7 MILLION

Budget	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
FY2024 Base Budget	0.0	0	3,914,500	8,800,000	12,714,500
FY2025 Recommended Budget	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,750,000</u>	<u>9,595,000</u>	<u>13,345,000</u>
Change	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(\$164,500)</b>	<b>\$795,000</b>	<b>\$630,500</b>

Recommended Changes	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
New Development Projects	0.0	0	(775,000)	(753,000)	(1,528,000)
Preventative Maint. Projects		0	1,295,000	1,501,000	2,796,000
Water Based Rec. Projects	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(684,500)</u>	<u>47,000</u>	<u>(637,500)</u>
Total Recommended Changes	<b>0.0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$164,500)</b>	<b>\$795,000</b>	<b>\$630,500</b>

- Itemized list of FY26 projects included on page 23 of LRC Budget Brief Detail Document





# SNOWMOBILE TRAILS PROGRAM

## Dedicated Funding Sources

- Snowmobile Licenses
- Snowmobile Gas Tax
- Snowmobile Excise Tax



# 0622 SNOWMOBILE TRAILS PROGRAM

## (INFO)

**FY26 RECOMMENDED BUDGET = \$1.5 MILLION**

Budget	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
FY2025 Base Budget	9.1	0	0	1,486,563	1,486,563
FY2026 Recommended Budget	<u>9.1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,486,563</u>	<u>1,486,563</u>
Change	0.0	0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Recommended Changes	FTE	General	Federal	Other	Total
Total Recommended Changes		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0



# MORE EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT GFP

## Virtual Meetings For GFP Staff

- Saves time for other work duties.
- Reduces travel costs.

## GFP Offers Remote Duty Stations

- Reduces staff travel time.
- Increased efficiency through virtual TEAMS options.

## In-house Construction Projects & Staff Skill Development

- Internal training over past 3 years to build “trade skills” for staff. (54 trained)
- Department staff constructed Pickerel Lake cabin.
- Hatchery staff constructing RAS systems.

## Virtual GFP Commission Meetings

- Since 2020, all GFP Commission Meetings include both in-person and livestream audio & video options with full public participation.





# LEGISLATIVE ONE-TIME BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

## Senate Bill 56: Payment of Lease Rental Obligations

- Section 4 of SB56 appropriates one-time general funds of \$1,589,341 to cover the final 2 years of GFP fish hatchery bond payment obligations.
- The early bond payoff allows for a \$793,655 reduction of on-going general funds from the department's base budget.
- The department will be providing an equal \$1,589,341 payment to the state general fund to offset this special appropriation.
- The "Net" fiscal impact to the state general fund is \$0.
- The one-time payment to the state general fund will come from the Division of Wildlife.

# GO OUTDOORS SOUTH DAKOTA

- Processed nearly 300,000 total applications in 2024
  - Nearly 42,000 first draw elk applications
  - Over 60,000 first draw deer applications
  - Over 193,000 preference points sold
- Over 3.5 million transactions completed since inception (Dec. 2021)
- Work continues to make this system more efficient and customer-friendly





# GFP's Workforce 2024

**583.9 Total FTE with 464+ Full-Time Employees**

**Over 1,000 Employees on Payroll from May to August**

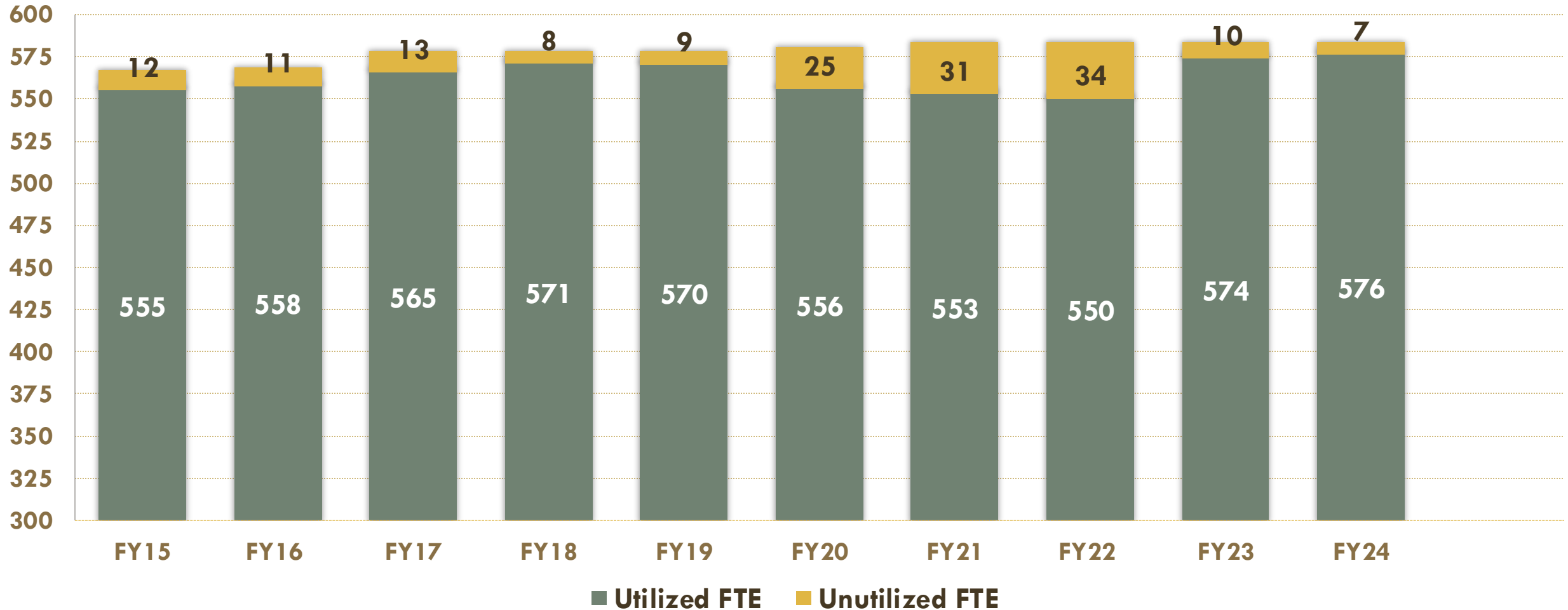
- FY21 Utilization 552.6 FTE / (Unutilized 31.3 FTE = 5.4%)
- FY22 Utilization 550.0 FTE / (Unutilized 33.9 FTE = 5.8%)
- FY23 Utilization 573.9 FTE / (Unutilized 10.0 FTE = 1.7%)
- FY24 Utilization 576.4 FTE / (Unutilized 7.4 FTE = 1.3%)

## **Staff Turnover Rate**

- 2021 GFP 10.2%
- 2022 GFP 6.5%
- 2023 GFP 7.7%
- 2024 GFP 7.4% (Statewide Rate = 12.8%)

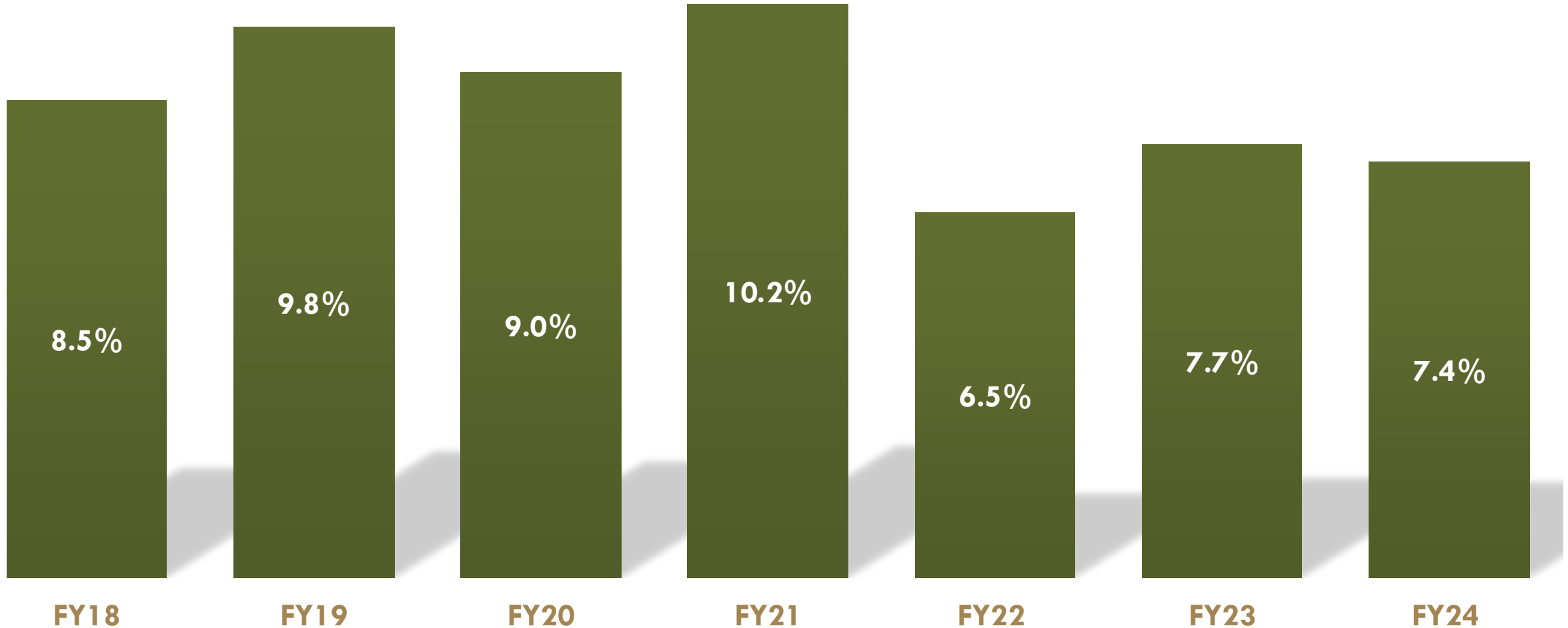


# GFP FTE UTILIZATION PAST TEN YEARS





# GFP EMPLOYEE TURNOVER RATE





# WORKFORCE VACANCIES & OVERTIME

## LONG TERM VACANCIES

Wildlife Division -1 open licensing office support staff position (Pierre)  
1 open R3 (Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation) specialist position (Pierre)

State Parks Division -  
1 open building engineer assistant (Pierre) 1 open conservation tech (Aberdeen)

July 2020: GFP had 20 vacant conservation officer positions

Today: 1 open conservation officer position (Webster)

## OVERTIME HOURS

FY2022: 12,150 hours

FY2023: 13,198 hours

FY2024: 5,740 hours





# WORKFORCE SUCCESSES & CHALLENGES

## SUCCESSES

- Amazing Volunteer Support
  - Average 105,000 hours (+50 FTE) annually
- Continued Project Collaborations Using NGO Resources
  - Examples: Conservation Districts, Pheasants Forever, Rocky Mt. Elk, National Wild Turkey
- Duty Station Flexibility
- Leadership Development Training
- Retention
  - Conservation Officer Retention

## CHALLENGES

- Seasonal Staffing Recruitment
- Retirement Eligibility
  - 56 employees eligible today (12%)
  - Eligibility Increases to 109 employees (20%) by 2029



# METHODS TO INCREASE REVENUE



- GFP last adjusted park entrance and camping fees in 2019, hunting and fishing license fees in 2014.
- 2024 package was designed to address inflation, employee salaries and increased demand for services/programs.
- Fee Packages
  - June-December 2024 - Public process of increasing hunting, fishing, park entrance license and camping fees.
  - Unanimously approved by the GFP Commission & Legislative Interim Rules Review Committee.
- Fee package allows GFP to continue successfully implementing strategic goals for up to five years.
- Increased participation funds future growth of services/programs.
- GFP Operates with a User Pay, Public Benefit System.



**GET OUT AND  
ENJOY THE  
OUTDOORS!**

