



# MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF Natural Resources

CARING FOR MICHIGAN'S OUTDOOR PLACES AND STORIES SINCE 1921

The DNR helps take care of the state's natural and cultural resources so that residents and visitors can use and enjoy them for years to come. Our work ensures plentiful, safe outdoor recreation opportunities and healthy fish and wildlife populations, while supporting education and tourism and industries that provide many jobs and contribute billions of dollars to Michigan's economy. Under normal circumstances, it's a big responsibility, but there was nothing about 2020 that qualified as "normal."

The COVID-19 pandemic required rapid response to public health and safety restrictions and creative, new ways to operate. People turned to Michigan's outdoors like never before. Some were first-time hunters. Others enjoyed virtual races and learning opportunities. Most everyone sought space to clear their minds and connect with nature. Though much of the information we've shared here refers to what our programs normally deliver in a given year, COVID challenged us to do even more, even better.

## Parks and recreation

- Michigan's 103 diverse state parks hosted 35 million\*\* visitors and over 1 million camping/lodging nights in 2020. The state's parks and recreation system serves as a "Big Green Gym" promoting healthy lifestyles.
- More than 30% of Michigan-registered vehicles have access to state parks, boating access sites, state forest campgrounds and state trail parking via the Recreation Passport, with proceeds supporting state parks and providing grants to local parks.
- The DNR supports more than 1,300 state-sponsored boating access sites, 19 state-managed harbors and 63 local state-sponsored harbors of refuge along the Great Lakes.
- Michigan ranks second in the nation for number of registered boats (over 800,000). The boating industry helps fuel the state's economy, with a \$7 billion impact annually.
- The Michigan state parks system protects more than 17% of the state's exemplary natural features.

\*\*Visitation data for 2020 is an estimation based on preliminary information.

## Law enforcement

- Conservation officers contacted more than 452,000 people during 2020, delivering education and safety tips and general law enforcement services and ensuring the responsible enjoyment of Michigan's natural resources.
- Located in every county of the state, COs are equipped with a range of skills, tools and equipment, making them a critical part of the law enforcement network. COs often are the first emergency responders to arrive at life-threatening situations.
- New technology has allowed people to electronically submit tips and complaints to the Report All Poaching hotline (800-292-7800), representing 20% of all complaints in 2020.
- The DNR's law enforcement communication center received more than 41,000 total calls for service from the public in 2020 – a 27% increase from 2019.





## Education

- The DNR manages Michigan's hunter education program, training and a network of 2,600 volunteer instructors, and also coordinates safety education programs for boaters, snowmobile and ORV riders.
- Each year more than 17,000 students are certified for hunter safety and nearly 20,000 students are certified for boater safety, along with more than 7,000 students for ORV safety and snowmobile safety combined.
- In a given year, more than 475,000 people come through one of the 10 DNR visitor centers around the state, and almost 200,000 people participate in our hands-on nature education programs at state parks and schools.
- Annually, 1,300 teachers and educators participate in DNR-sponsored professional development programs.
- More than 90,000 people visit the Outdoor Adventure Center in Detroit – where visitors can learn about outdoor recreation and how the DNR manages natural resources through activities, exhibits and simulators – each year. The OAC also hosts thousands of students with more than 400 field trips annually.

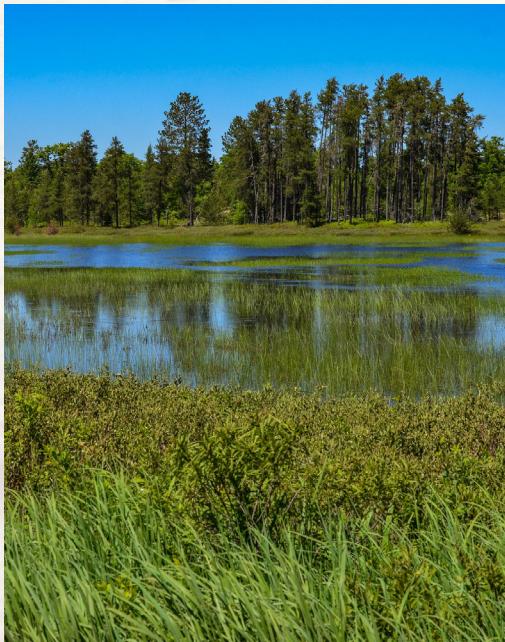


## Fishing

- Fishing contributes more than \$2 billion a year to the state's economy, making Michigan one of the top three states in the nation for fishing-related expenditures.
- Our six state fish hatcheries annually produce more than 25 million fish for stocking in more than 1,000 locations across both peninsulas; 40% of all recreational fishing in Michigan depends on stocked fish.
- Almost a quarter of Michigan's state-record fish have been caught in the last decade, evidence that the state is working hard to sustain and grow healthy fish populations.
- Excise taxes paid by anglers contribute over \$11 million a year in federal funds to fish and aquatic habitat conservation in Michigan.

## Wildlife recreation

- The DNR helps conserve more than 400 species of animals, including the birds and mammals that sustain Michigan's proud hunting heritage and watchable wildlife opportunities.
- Surveys show that 90% of Michigan residents support keeping wildlife healthy.
- Michigan ranks third in the nation for hunter participation. Hunting-related expenditures contribute more than \$8.9 billion to the state's economy and more than \$40 million in annual license sales that pay for wildlife and habitat conservation.
- Wildlife watching contributes more than \$1 billion to Michigan's economy annually. More than 60% of Michigan residents say they are actively involved in viewing and photographing wildlife.
- Hunters and wildlife watchers can explore seven managed waterfowl areas, 19 grouse management sites (known as GEMS) that allow walk-in hunting, and more than 180 state game and wildlife areas.



## Public lands and waters

- Michigan offers more than 10 million acres (including 4.5 million acres managed by the DNR) of land open to the public for hunting, and more bodies of fresh water for fishing than any place in the world – four Great Lakes, 11,000 inland lakes and tens of thousands of miles of rivers and streams.
- Michigan's public land includes nearly 4 million acres of state forests, 352,000 acres of state parks and 360,000 acres of state game areas.
- Contributing to the state's energy potential, Michigan has the greatest volume of natural gas storage capacity of any state in the nation – more than 1 trillion cubic feet.
- The DNR manages 6.4 million acres of state-owned mineral resources, including leasing mineral rights to optimize state revenues and to provide materials that meet citizen and industry needs. We work to ensure that companies using these mineral resources return land to acceptable use. The department also handles requests to unify mineral rights that have been severed from surface rights.

## Forestry and firefighting

- Michigan has nearly 4 million acres of world-class state forest land, taken care of under the standards set by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® and the Forest Stewardship Council®. Michigan's forests have been certified as responsibly managed since 2005.
- The forest products industry adds more than \$20 billion a year to Michigan's economy and supports more than 91,000 jobs. The industry makes up more than a third of manufacturing jobs in the Upper Peninsula and 6% of all manufacturing jobs statewide.
- The DNR plants on average 6 million tree seedlings a year on state-managed forest land. Hundreds of millions of additional trees regenerate naturally.
- Over the past 10 years, the DNR responded annually to an average of 380 wildfires on more than 4,500 acres of public and private lands. Firefighters saved forests, grasslands and an average of 470 structures per year including homes, cabins and businesses.

## Museums, cultural resources and public records

- In a given year, more than 480,000 people visit the Michigan History Center's 11 museums and historic sites, including the Michigan History Museum in Lansing and the Michigan Iron Industry Museum in Negaunee. Roughly 80,000 schoolchildren annually take part in Michigan History Center education programs on state heritage.
- The Archives of Michigan preserves the records of state and local governments, organizations and individuals. Ten million records, including documents, photographs and maps used by genealogists, researchers and educators, are available online.
- The Michigan Historical Marker Program was established by the Legislature and governor in 1955. More than 1,700 have since been placed across the state – and in several other states and Europe – making Michigan's one of the nation's premier marker programs.
- In addition to Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, comanaged by the MHC and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Michigan has 13 underwater preserves that protect its historic shipwrecks.

- One million people a year visit the Mackinac State Historic Parks family of living-history museums and parks in northern Michigan's Straits of Mackinac; more than 360,000 of those visitors buy tickets to enjoy the sites' programs and exhibits.
- Mackinac State Historic Parks hosts over 35,000 students on group visits, while also presenting more than 100 educational outreach programs in classrooms throughout the state, reaching thousands more students.



## Grants

- The DNR oversees two dozen state and federal grant programs that provide critical support for outdoor recreation, aquatic and wildlife habitat development, forestry and firefighting efforts, and recreation safety.
- Each year, the DNR offers up to approximately \$80 million in available grant funding to local units of government, state agencies and nonprofit partners.
- Perhaps the most unique grant program in the country, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund uses revenues from oil, mineral and gas leases to support efforts to conserve natural resources and improve public access to quality outdoor recreation. Since 1976, the Trust Fund has awarded more than \$1.2 billion to local and state units of government to conserve and improve high-quality, public outdoor recreation opportunities in all 83 counties..
- The Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program, introduced in 2014, is vital to the state's commitment to prevent, control and eradicate invasive plants and animals and diseases in our waters and on land. The program annually offers \$3.6 million in funding.



## Trails

- Earning its role as the Trails State, Michigan boasts 13,000-plus miles of state-managed trails. Some serve multiple uses, meaning a collective 7,932 miles of motorized trails and 4,668 miles of nonmotorized trails, and many are supported by volunteers and clubs.
- These public trails offer social, economic and health benefits, help anchor local communities and cater to a variety of interests, including biking, hiking, snowmobiling, ORV, paddling and horseback riding.
- With the help of many key partners, the DNR oversees Michigan's Iron Belle Trail – a showcase trail stretching from the westernmost Upper Peninsula to Belle Isle in Detroit. It offers separate hiking and biking routes that pass through 48 counties along more than 2,000 miles.
- Michigan leads the nation with 2,600 rail-trail miles, built along old railway tracks. These unused corridors are turned into multiuse pathways, typically for walking, cross-country skiing, mountain and fat-tire biking, horseback riding and snowmobiling.
- The department's Heritage Trails Program has installed informational kiosks and panels along several state trails, including at Kal-Haven Trail State Park in the Lower Peninsula and the Haywire Grade Trail in the U.P.

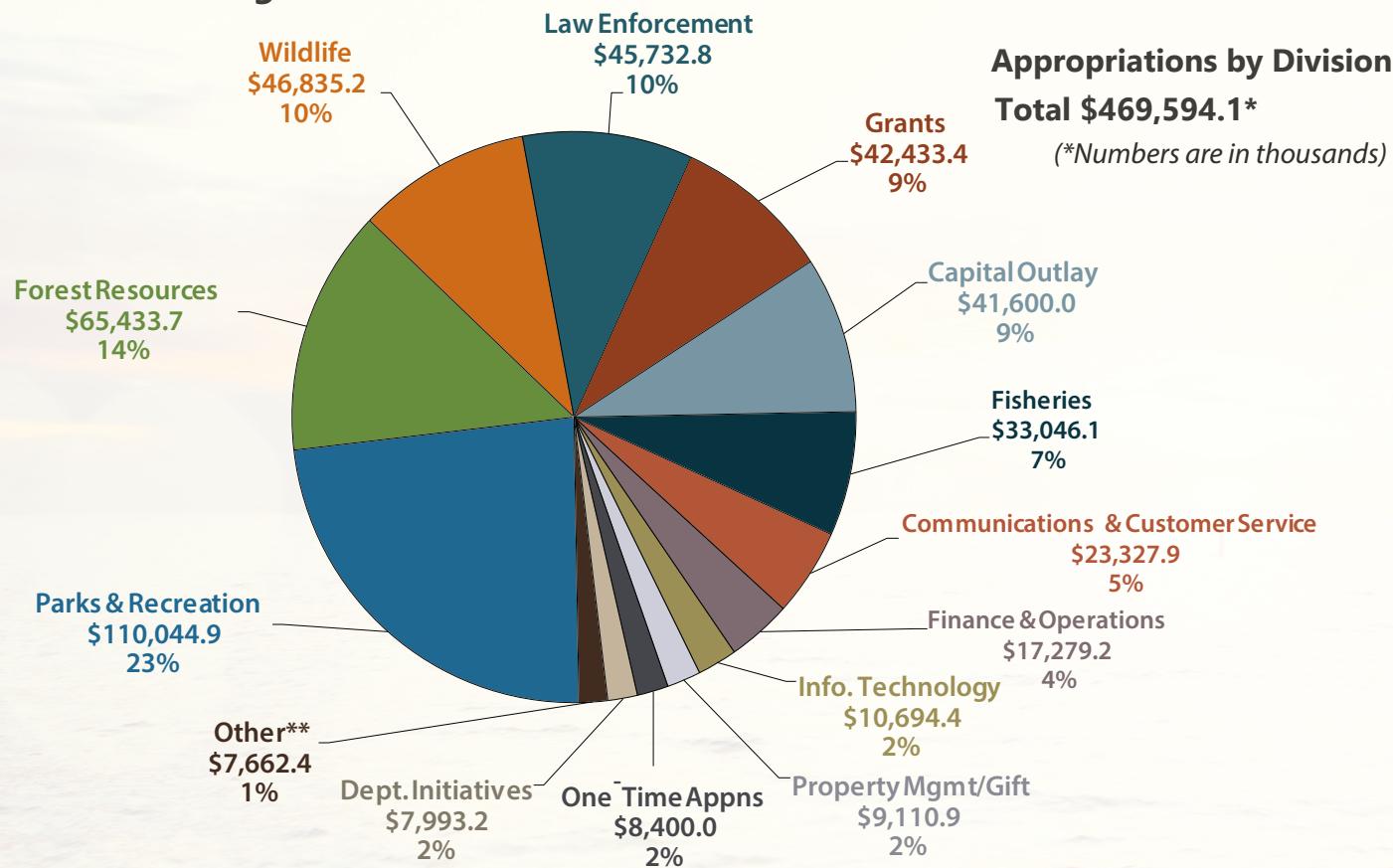


## Michigan Natural Resources Commission

The Michigan Natural Resources Commission is a seven-member public body with members appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. Through Proposal G in 1996 and the enactment of PA 21 of 2013, the NRC has exclusive authority to regulate the taking of game and sportfish. It, along with the Legislature, also is authorized to designate game species and establish the first open season for animals through the issuance of orders.

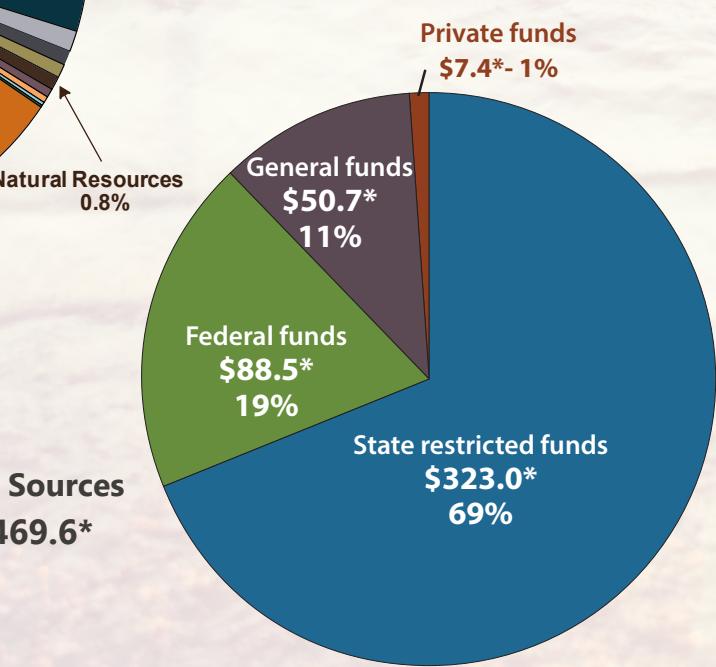
Commission members work closely with the department and have a keen interest in promoting and protecting Michigan's strong outdoor recreation identity and heritage. The NRC conducts monthly, public meetings throughout Michigan – though, during COVID-19 restrictions those meetings were hosted virtually – and the DNR encourages residents to actively participate in these public forums.

## FY 2021 Funding Sources



Health & Human Services: 45.4%  
 Education: 28.8%  
 General Government: 9.6%  
 Transportation: 8.1%  
 Corrections: 3.3%  
 State Police: 1.2%  
 Environment, Great Lakes & Energy: 0.8%  
 Licensing & Regulatory Affairs: 0.8%  
 Natural Resources: 0.8%  
 Judiciary: 0.5%  
 Military & Veterans Affairs: 0.4%  
 Agriculture & Rural Development: 0.2%  
 Insurance & Financial Services: 0.1%

**Major Funding Sources**  
**Total \$469.6\***



## **Need more information?**

Explore more about these topics on the DNR website at [Michigan.gov/DNR](http://Michigan.gov/DNR).  
Here are some helpful shortcuts:

**Accessible Public Outdoor Recreation** – Michigan.gov/DNRAccessibility  
**Boards, Committees and Councils** – Michigan.gov/DNRMeetings  
**Boating** – Michigan.gov/Boating  
**Education** – Michigan.gov/DNREducation  
**Fishing** – Michigan.gov/Fishing  
**Forestry** – Michigan.gov/Forestry  
**Hunter education and recreation safety** – Michigan.gov/RecreationalSafety  
**Hunting** – Michigan.gov/Hunting  
**Law enforcement** – Michigan.gov/ConservationOfficers  
**Licensing** – MDNR-ELicense.com  
**Mackinac State Historic Parks** – MackinacParks.com  
**Michigan History Center** – Michigan.gov/MHC  
**Michigan Natural Resources Commission** – Michigan.gov/NRC  
**Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund** – Michigan.gov/MNRTF  
**Minerals** – Michigan.gov/Minerals  
**News and features** – Michigan.gov/DNRPressRoom  
**Outdoor Adventure Center** – Michigan.gov/OAC  
**Outdoor recreation industry** – Michigan.gov/Mi-OutdoorRec  
**State parks and camping** – Michigan.gov/StateParks  
**Trails** – Michigan.gov/DNRTrails  
**Wildlife** – Michigan.gov/Wildlife

## **Helping you tell Michigan's outdoor story**

Additionally, we can help you give your constituents more information about the natural and heritage resources and outdoor recreation opportunities available to them. Visit [Michigan.gov/DNRPressRoom](http://Michigan.gov/DNRPressRoom) and sign up (in the Email Updates section) to receive news about topics – hunting, fishing, forestry, trails, camping, education, invasive species and more – that most interest you. For assistance in creating brief articles or longer stories for your district newsletters or other communications, please contact the DNR Legislative and Legal Affairs Office at 517-284-6237.

**Thank you for your interest in and support of Michigan's world-class natural and cultural resources!**