



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

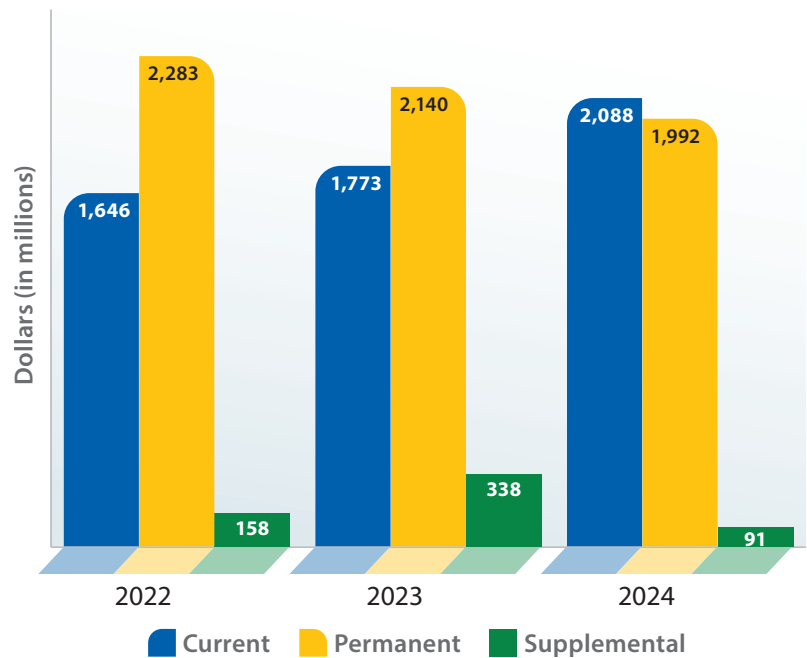
Mission

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is to work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

Budget Overview

The 2024 President's Budget for FWS totals \$4.1 billion, \$314.9 million above 2023 enacted, including current appropriations of \$2.1 billion, and \$2.0 billion available under permanent appropriations, most of which is provided directly to States for fish and wildlife restoration and conservation. In total, FWS estimates the budget request will support 9,407 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The budget for the principal FWS operating account, Resource Management, is \$1.9 billion, an increase of \$299.4 million. The budget proposes to expand authority for Federal agencies to transfer funds provided under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) to FWS to accelerate and improve environmental reviews in support of responsible development of priority infrastructure projects and energy solutions. The budget also improves customer service through a consolidated, modernized ePermitting program. The 2024 budget promotes investments to address climate change effects on FWS trust resources, implement the America the Beautiful initiative, reconnect Americans with the outdoors, enable economic development, and create good-paying job opportunities. In

FWS Funding



addition to those important efforts, the budget proposes to transfer the Office of Subsistence Management to the Office of the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs to strengthen support for the subsistence way of life for rural Alaskans and provides FWS new resources for co-management of species with Alaska Native Tribes and increased representation in public lands.

Resource Management

For Ecological Services, the budget includes \$384.5 million to conserve, protect, and enhance listed and at-risk fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats. The budget supports the Administration's efforts to responsibly site, permit, and deploy clean energy solutions, including \$171.4 million, \$50.5 million more than 2023 enacted, for FWS planning and consultation activities. The request advances proactive, cooperative conservation with investments in programs aimed at preventing the listing of species under the Endangered Species Act and promoting the recovery of imperiled species. The request provides \$52.7 million, \$15.1 million above the 2023 enacted level, to support conservation of at-risk species and

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE Facts



- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) originated in 1871 when Congress established the U.S. Fish Commission to study why the Nation's food fish populations were decreasing and recommend ways to reverse that decline.
- Through the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, more than 50,000 landowners have cooperated with FWS to complete more than 60,000 habitat restoration projects spanning more than 7 million acres.
- The National Wildlife Refuge System's more than 830 million acres of lands and waters include 568 wildlife refuges, 7 national monuments, and waterfowl production areas in 212 counties managed within 38 wetland management districts and 49 coordination areas.
- Since 1937, FWS has delivered more than \$25 billion to State and Tribal fish and wildlife agencies for hunting and fishing education, fish and wildlife management, scientific research, habitat restoration and conservation, and hunting and boating access.

their habitats and \$27.1 million, \$3.7 million above 2023 enacted, to accelerate completion of 5-year species status reviews. Within the \$133.3 million provided for recovery, an increase of \$19.2 million from 2023 enacted will support delisting and downlisting efforts and catalyze the conservation of imperiled species.

The 2024 budget for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is \$79.7 million, \$19.5 million more than 2023 enacted, and the Coastal Program request is \$20.4 million, \$6.5 million more than 2023 enacted, in recognition of the importance of cooperative conservation of private lands to habitat adaptation and resilience and a healthy economy. These citizen-centric programs work collaboratively with private landowners and partners through voluntary efforts to restore, enhance, and protect habitat for priority Federal trust species. The projects provide other benefits to the local communities, such as enhancing drought resistance through water conservation projects, creating resilience to wildfire, and supporting habitat connectivity and migration corridors for game and other plants and animals of cultural significance.

The National Wildlife Refuge System is a model for conservation around the world. The 2024 budget for the refuge system is \$624.9 million, \$83.3 million above the 2023 enacted level. Funding for operations—including wildlife and habitat management, visitor services, refuge law enforcement, and planning—is \$454.3 million to

support the FWS core mission to increase adaptive management, habitat resilience, and the use of science-driven decision making for conserving America's rich fish and wildlife heritage. The budget for those programs is \$63.0 million more than 2023 enacted, including \$4.0 million to increase representation in public lands, as part of a \$6.1 million increase overall for conservation planning. The effort to increase representation in public lands supports new and recently designated units that preserve and tell the stories of those who have been historically underrepresented. The request for Refuge Maintenance is \$170.5 million, an increase of \$20.3 million from 2023 enacted.

The refuges are a focal point for youth corps programs, which offer work opportunities to improve America's lands, waters, and infrastructure. The FWS budget includes \$8.0 million within Refuge Visitor Services and \$2.0 million in the request for the National Conservation Training Center in General Operations to develop the next generation of conservation leaders and create a new pathway to good-paying jobs.

The budget includes \$78.5 million for Migratory Bird Management, \$24.6 million more than 2023 enacted. Within that amount is funding to modernize the permitting process to enable the use of the latest scientific information and energy production technologies when evaluating development proposals. The Joint Venture program will support grants to improve the

resilience of important habitats—and nearby communities—across the Nation’s four migratory bird flyways. The program’s Urban Bird Treaties grants support partnerships to conserve birds in urban environments by creating parks and restoring nearby wetlands—all while engaging local communities.

The launch of the ePermitting system in 2021 was a major step in improving FWS’s customer service focus. Since the launch, FWS has continued to improve how customers apply for and receive permits, while bringing greater efficiency and consistency to the work FWS does to process those applications. This budget consolidates \$13.5 million, \$6.0 million more than 2023 enacted, for ePermit system operations and enhancements into a single program, supporting the transition of more permit types to fully online, self-service processes that will improve the customer experience.

Law Enforcement programs are funded at \$104.4 million in the budget, an increase of \$12.3 million

from the 2023 enacted level. This program investigates wildlife crimes and enforces the laws that govern the Nation’s wildlife trade. FWS continues to work with the State Department, other Federal agencies, and foreign governments to address the threat to conservation and global security posed by illegal wildlife trade and trafficking. The budget supports law enforcement efforts to stop illegal trade; ensure sustainable legal trade through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; reduce the demand for illegal wildlife products; and provide technical assistance and grants to other nations to build local enforcement capabilities.

FWS provides international conservation grants and technical support to assist other countries’ conservation and climate change adaptation and resilience efforts. The budget includes \$26.7 million, \$5.1 million more than 2023 enacted, for International Affairs to support expanded conservation capacity for iconic species such



A heron in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge.

DOI Photo.

as elephants and rhinos and to support climate adaptation and resiliency efforts. The program complements FWS Law Enforcement efforts to reduce illegal wildlife trafficking and develops innovative conservation activities that target market and consumer demand for illegal products driving a rapid increase in the poaching of species such as tigers and pangolins.

The budget requests \$259.8 million to support the National Fish Hatchery System, aquatic habitat conservation and restoration, and the prevention and control of aquatic invasive species. That amount includes \$79.9 million for operation of the National Fish Hatchery System and \$49.7 million for National Fish Hatchery maintenance, \$3.6 million and \$23.3 million more than 2023 enacted, respectively. The

Hatchery System is an international leader in the propagation of imperiled aquatic species, and the budget expands capabilities to ensure the health of aquatic species. Advancing aquatic conservation requires modernizing and maintaining hatchery infrastructure, which is not eligible for funding under the Great American Outdoors Act. The budget also includes \$130.2 million for Aquatic Habitat and Species Conservation. The request expands aquatic invasive species prevention, fully funds the National Fish Habitat Action Plan at the authorized level, and provides for aquatic species assessments and cooperative management to enhance habitat adaptation and resilience.

Subsistence practices are vital to Alaskan rural communities, especially Alaska Natives who depend



Manatee mother and calf in the warm waters of Three Sisters Springs, Florida.

USFWS Photo by Gregory Sweeney.

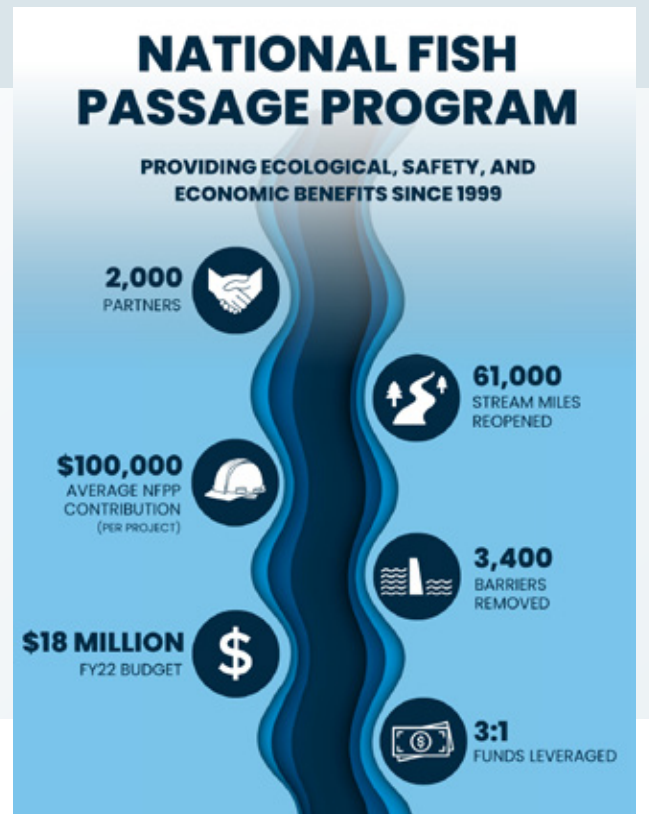
Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Fish Passage Improvements

Clean, free-flowing waterways are vital components of functioning ecosystems and improve their resilience to drought and flooding. Across the country, barriers that fragment rivers are blocking fish migration, putting communities at risk, and destroying recreational opportunities. The BIL provides \$200 million to FWS for technical assistance and project funding to restore these passages.

Such projects often are foundational to improving habitat for terrestrial species and birds. In Arizona, the Apache Trout Recovery project will reopen 50 miles of habitat and remove barriers, most of which are on Tribal lands. Across Florida, projects in streams on the Apalachicola, Myakka, and Econlockhatchee Rivers benefit endangered mussels, Gulf sturgeon, and Florida manatees. And in Alaska, the Tyonek Creek Culvert Replacement project will restore access to 10 miles of coho salmon spawning and rearing habitat on one of the largest and most important salmon streams near the village of Tyonek, AK.

heavily on subsistence practices for their nutritional, social, economic, and cultural needs. The 2024 budget proposes to shift the Office of Subsistence Management from FWS to Indian Affairs. The office provides administrative support to the Federal Subsistence Board and the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils and supports the subsistence regulatory process and the Fisheries Resource Monitoring program. The shift of the office will facilitate expanded Tribal co-management partnerships and the incorporation of indigenous knowledge into subsistence management. Most of the funding associated with this transfer will shift from the Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation activity, with additional funding from the National Wildlife Refuge System, into the Operation of Indian Programs account within Indian Affairs. Separately, additional funding is requested to strengthen FWS resource management activities supporting subsistence management.

The 2024 request for Science Applications is \$55.5 million, \$20.1 million above the 2023 enacted level. The program supports science partnerships with States, Tribes, industry, local communities, and other stakeholders to design and implement conservation and habitat management strategies that support the development of landscape conservation objectives such as biodiversity,



adaptation, and resilience. By weaving together conservation design principles and local conservation blueprints, the collaborations increase coastal resilience, mitigate desertification, control invasive species, and reduce the impacts of wildfires.

The General Operations budget totals \$206.2 million, an increase of \$39.9 million from 2023 enacted, including \$9.0 million to support the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Across multiple programs in FWS, the budget provides \$15.5 million to accelerate the transition to zero-emission vehicles as part of a coordinated effort across DOI.

The budget includes proposed authority for FWS to seek and retain compensation from responsible parties who injure or destroy resources managed by FWS. Like authority of the National Park Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), damages recovered will be used to reimburse assessment costs; prevent or minimize the risk of loss; monitor ongoing effects; and restore, replace, or acquire resources equivalent to those injured or destroyed.

The budget also proposes to enable other agencies to transfer funds provided under the BIL to FWS and NOAA Fisheries. These transfers would improve efficiencies and increase capacity for environmental planning and consultation. Along with existing authorities, this effort will accelerate reviews supporting responsible infrastructure development.

Construction

The 2024 Construction budget totals \$51.0 million, \$21.0 million more than 2023 enacted, including \$42.0 million for line-item construction projects. The budget includes \$9.3 million to modernize critical field communication tools for users in the Southeastern United States, Hawaii and the Pacific Insular Areas, and Alaska.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund

The budget requests \$23.7 million for the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund to support State and local efforts to recover listed species. The budget also proposes funding for Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants to States through the permanent Land and Water Conservation Fund.

North American Wetlands Conservation Fund

The 2024 budget is \$50.0 million, unchanged from 2023 enacted, for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund. Conservation grants from the fund are leveraged more than one-to-one with partners for wetlands and waterfowl conservation, supporting climate adaptation and resiliency and important outdoor activities for sportsmen and sportswomen.

Multinational Species Conservation Fund

The 2024 budget includes \$22.0 million, \$1.0 million more than 2023 enacted, for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund. These grants support the conservation and protection of African and Asian elephants, rhinoceroses, tigers, great apes, and marine turtles and leverage funds from partners to nearly triple the available funding for those species, which will foster improved species management and reduce human–animal conflicts.

Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

The 2024 request includes \$9.9 million for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, a \$4.8 million increase from 2023 enacted. Populations of neotropical birds, such as the goldfinch, have declined due to climate change and habitat loss. These grants for the conservation of migratory birds are matched at least 3:1 by partners throughout the western hemisphere.

State and Tribal Wildlife Grants

The request for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants is \$76.6 million, \$2.8 million more than 2023 enacted, and includes \$9.0 million for the Tribal Competitive Grants Program. These grants support and leverage State management of non-game species and improve the resiliency of State and Tribal natural resources in the face of stressors, such as rising temperatures and changing weather patterns. This investment recognizes the important partnership between State and Tribal fish and wildlife managers and FWS.

Fixed Costs

Fixed cost increases of \$58.8 million are fully funded.

SUMMARY OF BUREAU APPROPRIATIONS ^{1/}

(dollar amounts in thousands)

Comparison of 2024 Request with 2023 Enacted

	2023 Enacted		2024 Request		Change	
	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount
Current						
Resource Management	6,558	1,646,229	7,375	1,945,603	+817	+299,374
Construction	64	276,904	64	50,951	0	-225,953
National Wildlife Refuge Fund	0	13,228	0	0	0	-13,228
Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund	14	24,564	14	23,702	0	-862
North American Wetlands Conservation Fund	6	50,000	6	50,000	0	0
Multinational Species Conservation Fund	5	21,000	5	22,000	0	+1,000
Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation	1	5,100	1	9,910	0	+4,810
State Wildlife Grants	16	73,812	16	76,612	0	+2,800
Subtotal, Current	6,664	2,110,837	7,481	2,178,778	+817	+67,941
Permanent						
Resource Management	79	0	108	0	+29	0
Land Acquisition	73	114,017	73	118,952	0	+4,935
National Wildlife Refuge Fund	3	8,055	3	8,000	0	-55
Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration	50	1,259,333	50	1,091,696	0	-167,637
Sport Fish Restoration	56	517,616	56	535,058	0	+17,442
Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund	0	133,041	0	134,552	0	+1,511
North American Wetlands Conservation Fund	1	1,866	1	141	0	-1,725
Migratory Bird Conservation Account	81	88,818	81	87,000	0	-1,818
Recreation Enhancement Fee Program, FWS	25	7,000	25	7,000	0	0
Miscellaneous Permanent Appropriations	1	4,775	1	4,275	0	-500
Contributed Funds	15	5,000	15	5,000	0	0
Subtotal, Permanent	384	2,139,521	413	1,991,674	+29	-147,847
Allocation and Reimbursable						
Allocation	627	0	652	0	+25	0
Reimbursable	861	0	861	0	0	0
Subtotal, Allocation and Reimbursable	1,488	0	1,513	0	+25	0
TOTAL, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE	8,536	4,250,358	9,407	4,170,452	+871	-79,906

^{1/} Current funding amounts include supplemental appropriations and transfers. For further details see Highlights of Budget Changes tables for each account.

HIGHLIGHTS OF BUDGET CHANGES

By Appropriation Activity/Subactivity

APPROPRIATION: Resource Management

	2022 Actual	2023 Enacted	2024 Request	Change
Ecological Services				
Listing	21,279	23,398	27,064	+3,666
Planning and Consultation	112,092	120,858	171,374	+50,516
Conservation and Restoration	35,666	37,653	52,744	+15,091
Recovery	108,372	114,124	133,305	+19,181
Subtotal, Ecological Services	277,409	296,033	384,487	+88,454
Habitat Conservation				
Partners for Fish and Wildlife	57,715	60,267	79,717	+19,450
Coastal Programs	13,616	13,957	20,422	+6,465
Subtotal, Habitat Conservation	71,331	74,224	100,139	+25,915
National Wildlife Refuge System				
Wildlife and Habitat Management	249,517	260,529	290,988	+30,459
Visitor Services	77,237	80,859	101,111	+20,252
Refuge Law Enforcement	41,915	46,272	52,399	+6,127
Conservation Planning	2,594	3,684	9,821	+6,137
Refuge Maintenance	147,498	150,211	170,548	+20,337
Subtotal, National Wildlife Refuge System	518,761	541,555	624,867	+83,312
Conservation and Enforcement				
Migratory Bird Management	49,568	53,860	78,499	+24,639
ePermitting	0	0	13,500	+13,500
Law Enforcement	89,788	92,099	104,444	+12,345
International Affairs	25,365	29,079	26,715	-2,364
Subtotal, Conservation and Enforcement	164,721	175,038	223,158	+48,120
Fish and Aquatic Conservation				
National Fish Hatchery Operations	71,776	76,356	79,946	+3,590
Maintenance and Equipment	26,046	26,314	49,651	+23,337
Aquatic Habitat and Species Conservation	123,004	138,901	130,187	-8,714
Subtotal, Fish and Aquatic Conservation	220,826	241,571	259,784	+18,213
Cooperative Landscape Conservation				
Landscape Conservation Cooperatives	12,802	0	0	0
Subtotal, Cooperative Landscape Conservation	12,802	0	0	0
Science Applications				
Science Partnerships	0	26,400	39,900	+13,500
Adaptive Science	16,400	0	0	0
Service Science	6,833	8,972	15,552	+6,580
Subtotal, Science Applications	23,233	35,372	55,452	+20,080
General Operations				
Central Office Operations	26,766	31,077	37,404	+6,327
Management and Administration	47,484	51,249	74,774	+23,525
Aviation Management	3,255	3,296	3,372	+76

APPROPRIATION: Resource Management *(continued)*

	2022 Actual	2023 Enacted	2024 Request	Change
Servicewide Bill Paying	44,667	46,581	48,727	+2,146
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	7,022	7,032	9,042	+2,010
National Conservation Training Center	26,455	27,015	32,852	+5,837
Subtotal, General Operations	155,649	166,250	206,171	+39,921
Stewardship Priorities	6,813	25,641	0	-25,641
Resource Damage Cost Recovery	0	0	1,000	+1,000
TOTAL APPROPRIATION <i>(w/o supplemental and transfers)</i>	1,451,545	1,555,684	1,855,058	+299,374
Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (P.L. 117-58)	+91,000	+91,000	+91,000	0
Transfer to OIG (P.L. 117-58)	-455	-455	-455	0
Transfer from OWF (P.L. 117-58)	+2,100	0	0	0
Transfer from USFS (P.L. 117-58)	+7,499	0	0	0
TOTAL APPROPRIATION <i>(w/ supplemental and transfers)</i>	1,551,689	1,646,229	1,945,603	+299,374

APPROPRIATION: Construction

	2022 Actual	2023 Enacted	2024 Request	Change
Nationwide Engineering Services	5,537	5,821	6,522	+701
Dam, Bridge, and Seismic Safety	2,427	2,427	2,427	0
Line-Item Construction Projects	4,883	21,656	42,002	+20,346
TOTAL APPROPRIATION <i>(w/o supplementals and rescission)</i>	12,847	29,904	50,951	+21,047
Disaster Relief Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-43)	+58,227	0	0	0
Disaster Relief Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328)	0	+247,000	0	-247,000
Rescission of Prior Year BA	-1,240	0	0	0
TOTAL APPROPRIATION <i>(w/ supplementals and rescission)</i>	69,834	276,904	50,951	-225,953

APPROPRIATION: National Wildlife Refuge Fund

	2022 Actual	2023 Enacted	2024 Request	Change
TOTAL APPROPRIATION	13,228	13,228	0	-13,228

APPROPRIATION: Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund

	2022 Actual	2023 Enacted	2024 Request	Change
Grants and Administration				
Conservation Grants	13,000	13,500	12,638	-862
HCP Assistance Grants	8,362	8,362	8,362	0
Administration	2,702	2,702	2,702	0
Subtotal, Grants and Administration	24,064	24,564	23,702	-862
TOTAL APPROPRIATION (w/o rescission)	24,064	24,564	23,702	-862
Rescission of Prior-Year BA	-945	0	0	0
TOTAL APPROPRIATION (w/ rescission)	23,119	24,564	23,702	-862

APPROPRIATION: North American Wetlands Conservation Fund

	2022 Actual	2023 Enacted	2024 Request	Change
TOTAL APPROPRIATION	48,500	50,000	50,000	0

APPROPRIATION: Multinational Species Conservation Fund

	2022 Actual	2023 Enacted	2024 Request	Change
African Elephant Conservation Fund	4,610	4,796	4,996	+200
Asian Elephant Conservation Fund	2,800	3,017	3,217	+200
Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund	6,210	6,388	6,588	+200
Great Ape Conservation Fund	3,600	3,802	4,002	+200
Marine Turtle Conservation Fund	2,780	2,997	3,197	+200
TOTAL APPROPRIATION	20,000	21,000	22,000	+1,000

APPROPRIATION: Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

	2022 Actual	2023 Enacted	2024 Request	Change
TOTAL APPROPRIATION	5,000	5,100	9,910	+4,810

APPROPRIATION: State Wildlife Grants

	2022 Actual	2023 Enacted	2024 Request	Change
TOTAL APPROPRIATION	72,612	73,812	76,612	+2,800