
BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2026

Fiscal Services Division

July 1, 2025



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

Fish and Game Protection Fund

Purpose and History

The Fish and Game Protection Fund (Trust Fund), often referred to as the Fish and Wildlife Protection Fund, was established in 1937 to regulate and manage the wildlife and fish resources in Iowa. In 1996, an amendment to the Iowa Constitution was approved to ensure the moneys could only be used for intended activities and not for other operations at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or for other State budget expenditures. Intended activities include the regulation or advancement of fishing, hunting, and trapping in Iowa. In addition, the DNR can use the funds to administer programs that protect, restore, and manage fish or wildlife. Funding sources include:

- License fees from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses.
- Federal funds.
- Income from the sale of agricultural products, equipment, real estate, and other related items.
- Income tax check-off funds.
- Interest and other sources of revenue.

Expenditures from the Fish and Game Protection Fund are for fish- and wildlife-related research, education, management, and expansion. Also included are expenditures for the regulation of hunting, fishing, and trapping in Iowa.

Each year, the DNR submits a budget request for the dollar amount needed for operations within the Fish and Game Protection Fund, and the Governor makes a budget recommendation. The Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee determines the amount that will be appropriated to the DNR for operations for the next fiscal year. In addition, if moneys remain in the Fish and Game Protection Fund after the appropriation is transferred for operations, the balance can be used for capital project expenditures.

Funding

The revenue in the Fish and Game Protection Fund varies from year to year, as does the amount appropriated to the DNR for activities related to the Fish and Game Protection Fund.

Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code section [456A.17](#)
Iowa Administrative Code [571—22](#)
Iowa Constitution article [VII.9](#)

More Information

Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Bureau: www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Iowas-Wildlife
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