



South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division FY 2017

Oversight Committee received
from DNR via email on 8.30.17

Purpose: Monitor and protect wildlife species and inland aquatic species and their habitats throughout the state and provide recreational hunting and fishing opportunities to the public.

- Stocked 11,006,142 hatchery reared fish into South Carolina public waters: includes fingerlings returned to SC from fry we provided to federal hatcheries for grow out to stocking size. Species stocked include American shad, bluegill, brown trout, brook trout, channel catfish, largemouth bass, redbreast sunfish, rainbow trout, redear sunfish, smallmouth bass, striped bass, striped bass x white bass hybrids, threadfin shad and robust redhorse. This required 359 trips to 130 separate water bodies.
- Completed repair and enhancement of Lake Oliphant in Chester County and reopened the lake to public fishing on July 1.
- Completed replacement of the water control structure at Sunrise Lake in Lancaster County and initiated restocking of the fish population. The lake should reopen for public fishing in July, 2018.
- Provided recreational fishing opportunities on 14 of 18 state lakes. Two lakes were closed for population renovation and enhancement. Two lakes remained closed due to storm damages.
- Conducted fish habitat enhancement in the following lakes and reservoirs: Lake Brown, Lake Murray, Lake Keowee, Lake Hartwell, Lake Russell, Lake Thurmond, Lake Greenwood, Lake Session, Lake Issaquena, Lake Johnson, Jonesville Reservoir, Lake Rabin, Lake Moultrie, Lake Marion, Lake Wateree, Mountain Lakes 1 and 2, Lake Oliphant and Sunrise Lake.
- Monitored the population of federally endangered Atlantic sturgeon and shortnose sturgeon in the Savannah River, Edisto River, Cooper River, Santee River system and the Winyah Bay system. Data from these efforts was incorporated in the Sturgeon Stock Assessment being conducted by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.
- Monitored the population status and fisheries of American shad, blueback herring and American eel. Data from these monitoring efforts was incorporated into provided to and incorporated into management plan compliance evaluation by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission in order to demonstrate sustainability and keep these fisheries open.
- Completed infrastructure development to allow SCDNR to propagate Carolina Heelsplitters at Cohen Campbell Fish Hatchery. This will enhance restoration efforts for this federally endangered mussel. Testing of the facility with a surrogate mussel species has been done, and adjustments

are currently being made to the process.

- Recovery efforts following Hurricane Matthew required the removal of 4,261 trees from 470 miles of roads. In addition, rapid response by Wildlife Section staff following the storm prevented multiple potential breaches to waterfowl impoundment dikes.
- Prepared and maintained 44 Public Dove Fields, encompassing over 1,672 acres throughout 27 counties. These fields provided opportunity for over 3,293 adult hunters and over 206 youth hunters on opening day of dove season.
- Management and maintenance activities on WMAs and Heritage Preserves include
 - planting of 2,356 acres of annuals
 - planting of 25 acres of perennials
 - mowing or disking of over 11,311 acres
 - prescribed burning of 15,330 acres
 - maintenance of 760 miles of firebreaks
 - mowing of 451 miles of dikes
 - re-topping of 18 miles of dikes
 - mowing of 768 miles of roads
 - grading of 627 miles of roads
 - re-topping of 54 miles of road with gravel
 - maintenance of 513 miles of trails
 - maintenance of 237 miles of WMA boundary with posting of 2,086 signs.
- Staff handled 4,099 nuisance wildlife complaints including 620 alligator calls and 515 bear calls and delivered 194 programs to a combined audience of over 11,745 people.

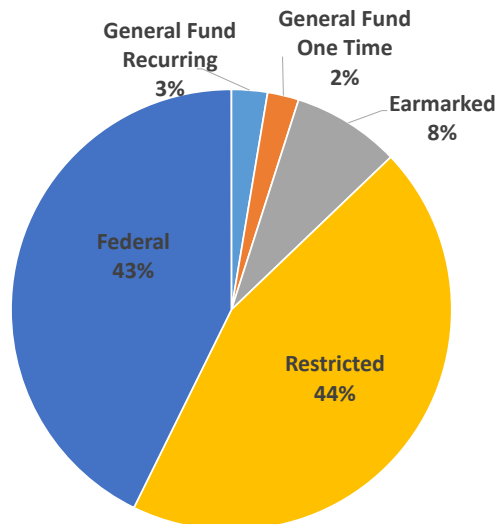


- Special hunt opportunities provided on WMAs included 16 Special Youth Dove Hunts accommodating 264 youth hunters, 45 Special Youth Deer Hunts accommodating 295 youth hunters, and 7 mobility impaired hunts accommodating 205 hunters
- Botany Bay Plantation WMA/HP accommodated 43,728 visitors and 12,101 vehicles.
- Five Northern long-eared bats have been captured in two new counties on the South Carolina's Coastal Plain: Charleston and Berkeley counties. These records are the first for Charleston and Berkeley counties for this federally threatened species, the first documented breeding individuals on the coastal plain of SC, and probably the first ever summer roosts recorded for this species on ANY coastal plain.
- Bird banding efforts resulted in over 2,200 birds banded, including 259 wood ducks, 39 mottled ducks, 29 RCWs, and 1158 doves.
- Control efforts and hog hunts on WMAs resulted in the removal of over 534 hogs.

- SCDNR acquired 5 separate tracts totaling 2,905 acres of wildlife habitat that will be open to the public for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities.
- Monitoring efforts for the federally endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers covered 101 clusters total: 93 are active, 91% attempted nests (85). The population goal is at 78% capacity of current occupied properties. FY16 to FY17 experienced an 18% growth rate of active clusters on SCDNR lands due to current breeding success, finding new clusters and the Donnelley translocation project. The population has effectively doubled in ten years.
- During 2017, 2,480 wood stork nests were counted. The five year average for the state is now 2,496 nests per year. The consistently high numbers of wood storks nesting in South Carolina contributed to the downlisting decision from federally Endangered to Threatened status during 2013.

Expenses	Amount
General Fund Recurring	\$681,599
General Fund One Time	595,718
Earmarked	\$2,042,434
Restricted	\$11,491,461
Federal	\$11,043,762
Total Expenses	\$25,854,974

WFF spent \$9,493,172 in capital projects in addition to the annual expenditures.



Employees	Count
FTEs	186
Temporary Grant/Time Limited	38
Hourly	72
Total	296

WFF averages approximately 50 hourlies at any given time. This number varies slightly throughout the year based on seasonal employment needs.

