

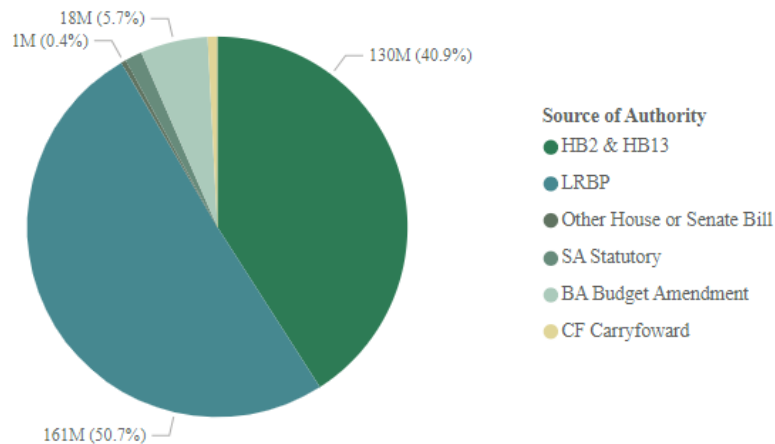
DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PARKS

Interim Budget Committee Report for June 2024

TOTAL APPROPRIATION AUTHORITY

The total appropriation authority for the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks is shown in the pie chart below. HB 2 and HB 13 provide 40.9% of the total authority for this agency. All types of appropriation authority for this agency are described below, including total budget and the percent expended by source of authority.

Total Modified Budget by Source of Authority



Source of Authority	Modified Budget	Expended Budget	% Expended
HB2 & HB13	129,664,832	105,156,329	81.1%
BA Budget Amendment	18,151,127	4,126,015	22.7%
CF Carryforward	2,577,575	1,094,995	42.5%
LRBP	160,500,929	16,443,225	10.2%
Other House or Senate Bill	1,238,493	676,693	54.6%
SA Statutory	4,662,332	3,598,725	77.2%
Total	316,795,287	131,095,982	41.4%

Long Range Building and Planning

Long range building and planning (LRBP) accounts for slightly more than half of the authority for the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks. The agency has budgeted \$91.1 million in state special revenue, \$69.2 million in federal revenue, and \$230,900 in capital projects funds. Programs funded in this way include:

- Upland Game Bird Program
- Wildlife Management Area Maintenance and Habitat Protection Program
- Migratory Bird and Wetland Protection Program
- Future Fisheries Program
- Hatcheries Major Maintenance Program

- Fish Connectivity, Passage and Habitat Program
- Statewide Administration Major Maintenance
- Statewide Signage and Wayfinding System Upgrade
- Erosion Control
- Community Ponds
- Shooting Range Development
- Public Outdoor Recreation Grant Programs
- Public Access Land Agreement Access Program

A detailed description of the agencies LRBP can be found at following links:

[Long Range Building Program Fiscal Report, Section F](#)

[Interactive LRBP map tool that lists the projects by bill and program](#)

Budget Amendments

Statute allows agencies to amend the budget to access additional federal revenues (17-7-402(1)(a)(i), MCA). Budget amendment authority is unchanged since the last report in March, total authority is \$18.2 million.

The total budget amendments for the year are summarized in the table below.

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Budget Amendment Authority			
As Of May FY 2024			
Federal Grants	Budgeted	Expended	% Expended
Wildlife enhancement grants	5,976,309	2,057,775	34.4%
Wildlife Programs Operating Expense	5,342,799	1,288,970	24.1%
Wildlife Programs Personal Services Expense	3,489,003	535,825	15.4%
Wildlife Programs Capital Outlay and Equipment	311,815	7,066	2.3%
Trout Fisheries Evaluation	2,540,358	5,127	0.2%
Administration, Parks, and Enforcement	290,354	131,207	45.2%
Aquatic Invasive Species Education	100,000	48,991	49.0%
Upper Missouri Pallid Sturgeon	100,488	51,053	50.8%
Total Federal Budget Amendments	18,151,127	4,126,015	22.7%

Statutory

Expenditure of statutory appropriations for the agency totaled approximately \$3.3 million in state special revenue and \$308,500 in federal revenue.

The Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks receives 6.5% of the revenue from the lodging facility use tax which is statutorily appropriated for maintenance of state park facilities. Statutory authority for payments in lieu of

taxes (PILT), funded with state and federal special revenue, provides payments to counties and other local governments to offset losses in tax revenues due to the presence of substantial acreage of state or federal land in their jurisdictions.

Carry Forward

After each fiscal year, 30% of the unexpended and unencumbered HB 2 appropriations from the prior fiscal year for personal services, operating expenses, and equipment, may be re-appropriated in the two fiscal years following (17-7-304(4)(a), MCA).

The agency had \$2.6 million in state and federal special revenue or 0.8% of total authority carried forward from FY 2022 and FY 2023. All carryforward authority was in the administration division. The carryforward authority consists of \$1.1 million in state special revenue and \$1.5 million in federal revenue. The agency has expended \$1.1 million or 42.5% of this authority.

Other Bills

Other bills approved by the legislature include HB 521, HB 5, and HB 10 which support 0.4% or \$1.2 million of the agency's budget.

HB 521 altered the licensing obligation for individuals utilizing state lands for recreational activities excluding hunting or fishing. Previously, those engaging in such activities needed to acquire a state lands recreational use permit. However, HB 521 has substituted this requirement with the requirement to obtain a conservation license, which is obtainable through the FWP licensing system. Additionally, HB 521 allocates \$670,000 annually to the FWP throughout the 2025 biennium to reimburse the Department of Natural Resources for the recreational utilization of state lands.

HB 5 Operation and Maintenance for new facilities. If construction of a new facility requires an immediate or future increase in state funding for operations and maintenance, the legislature may not authorize the new facility unless it also appropriates funds for the increase for the operations and maintenance of the new facility. HB 5 includes state special revenue appropriations for maintenance and operations of the following:

- Havre Area Office - \$26,300
- Beartooth Wildlife Management Area Facilities Upgrade - \$80,000
- Agency Staff Housing - \$225,000
- Central Services Site Upgrades - \$128,800
- Miles City Train Depot Operations and Maintenance - \$73,000

HB 10 funds long range state information technology and infrastructure projects.

The table on the following page summarizes funding and expenditures for authority under other bills.

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
Appropriation Through Other House or Senate Bills

<u>State Special Revenue</u>	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>% Expended</u>
HB 521 Revising laws related to conservation licenses on state lands	General License Account	\$670,000	\$670,000	100.0%
HB 5 Operation and Maintenance	General License Account	460,023	6,693	1.5%
HB 5 Operation and Maintenance	State Parks Miscellaneous	73,000	-	0.0%
HB 10 Long-range information technology financings and appropriations	General License Account	7,808	-	0.0%
	Total State Special	\$1,210,831	\$676,693	55.9%
<u>Federal Special Revenue</u>	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>% Expended</u>
HB 10 Long-range information technology financings and appropriations	Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act	\$23,513	\$0	0.0%
HB 10 Long-range information technology financings and appropriations	Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act	4,149	-	0.0%
	Total Federal Special	\$27,662	\$0	0.0%
Total Other House and Senate Bills	Total Funding	\$1,238,493	\$676,693	54.6%

Non-budgeted Proprietary Fund Authority

Non-budgeted proprietary revenues are anticipated to be \$19.1 million for FY 2024. The executive must report on all enterprise funds and internal service funds, and the legislature approves a maximum rate that programs funded with internal service funds can charge for their services.

Internal service funds are used to account for operations that provide goods or services to other agencies or programs of state government on a cost-reimbursement basis. Enterprise funds are used to account for operations that generate revenue by providing goods or services to the public for a fee.

The agency anticipates \$19.1 million in proprietary revenues as follows:

Internal Services - \$18.5 million budgeted revenues

- Maintenance – \$8.0 million budgeted revenues, \$5.9 million expended
- Fleet Equipment - \$7.3 million budgeted revenues, \$7.2 million expended
- Aircraft - \$3.1 million budgeted revenues, \$2.7 million expended
- Warehouse Inventory - \$104,100 budgeted revenues, unexpended

Enterprise Funds - \$539,300 budgeted revenues

- Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Visitor – \$539,300 budgeted revenues, \$408,600 expended

HB2 BUDGET MODIFICATIONS

The following chart shows the HB 2 budget as passed by the legislature, including the pay plan, and the HB 2 modified budget from July 1, 2023 through May 31, 2024. Net modifications to the budget include operating plan changes from one expenditure account to another, program transfers, reorganizations, and agency transfers of authority. The **positive modifications** and **negative modifications** are shown by program, expenditure account, and fund type.

Legislative Budget Compared to Modified Budget - HB 2 Only

Agency Name	HB 2 Budget	Modified Budget	Net Modifications
Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks	129,664,832	129,664,832	0
01 TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION	8,709,721	8,709,721	0
03 FISHERIES DIVISION	23,747,065	23,747,065	0
04 ENFORCEMENT DIVISION	15,175,589	15,175,589	0
05 WILDLIFE DIVISION	19,622,447	20,404,473	782,026
06 PARKS & OUTDOOR REC DIV	33,240,068	32,368,042	-872,026
08 COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION DIV	5,401,396	5,401,396	0
09 ADMINISTRATION	23,768,545	23,858,545	90,000
Total	129,664,832	129,664,832	0

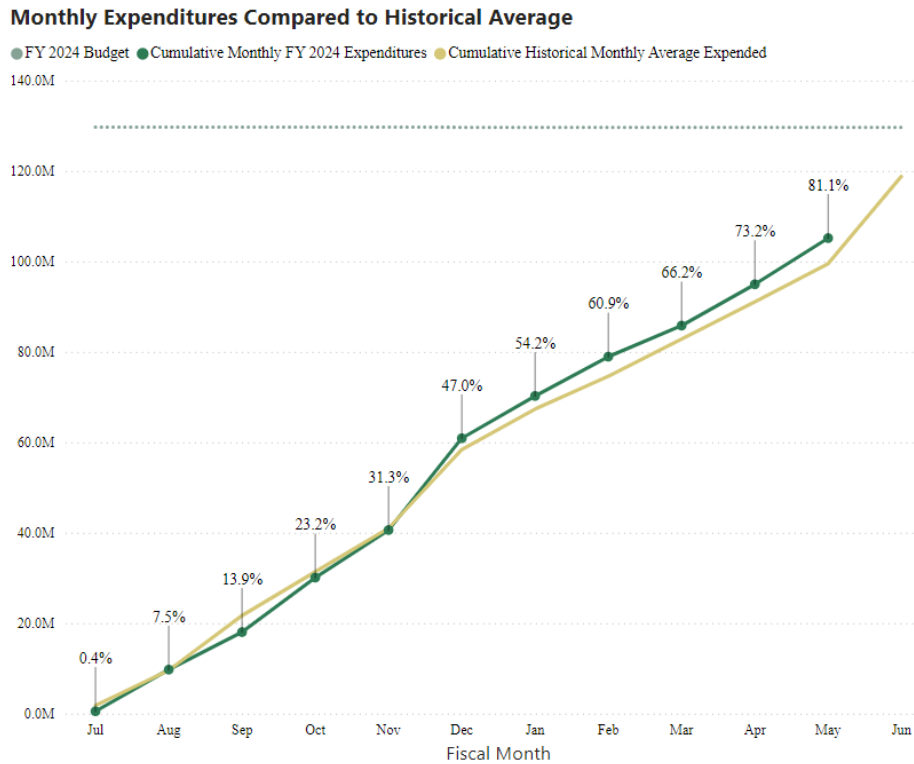
Expenditure Type	HB 2 Budget	Modified Budget	Net Modifications
61000 Personal Services	60,169,359	60,108,258	-61,101
62000 Operating Expenses	62,675,960	62,771,434	95,474
63000 Equipment & Intangible Assets	1,270,054	1,270,054	0
66000 Grants	1,789,279	1,760,678	-28,601
67000 Benefits & Claims	18,800	18,800	0
68000 Transfers-out	3,100,037	3,094,265	-5,772
69000 Debt Service	641,343	641,343	0
Total	129,664,832	129,664,832	0

Fund Type	HB 2 Budget	Modified Budget	Net Modifications
02 State/Other Spec Rev	95,983,375	95,983,375	0
03 Fed/Other Spec Rev	33,681,457	33,681,457	0
Total	129,664,832	129,664,832	0

Department budget modifications reclassified \$61,100 from personal services, grants, and transfers to operating expense. Program transfers moved \$872,026 from the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division to the Wildlife and Administration Divisions. The overall budget was not changed.

HB2 APPROPRIATION AUTHORITY

The following chart shows the appropriated budget for the agency compared to expenditures through May 2024 compared to expenditure rates over the previous five years for the same time periods.



The following table summarizes expenditures by program, expenditure type, and funding source.

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Expenditures through May 2024				
Program Name	Modified Budget	Expended Budget	Percent Expended	
			FY 2024	Last 5 Years
Technical Services	\$8,709,721	\$6,927,266	79.5%	70.9%
Fisheries	23,747,065	18,277,314	77.0%	74.6%
Enforcement	15,175,589	12,462,881	82.1%	81.3%
Wildlife	20,404,473	17,586,295	86.2%	73.2%
Parks & Outdoor Recreation	32,368,042	26,317,574	81.3%	79.7%
Communications & Education	5,401,396	4,559,028	84.4%	71.8%
Administration	23,858,545	19,025,970	79.7%	82.2%
Total	\$129,664,832	\$105,156,329	81.1%	76.7%
Accounting Classification	Modified Budget	Expended Budget	Percent Expended	
			FY 2024	Last 5 Years
Personal Services	\$60,108,258	\$56,640,291	94.2%	88.5%
Operating Expenses	62,771,434	45,564,871	72.6%	65.1%
Equipment & Intangible Assets	1,270,054	1,102,630	86.8%	53.6%
Grants	1,760,678	1,453,385	82.5%	51.2%
Benefits & Claims	18,800	11,500	61.2%	54.3%
Transfers-out	3,094,265	355,577	11.5%	17.4%
Debt Service	641,343	28,075	4.4%	66.1%
Total	\$129,664,832	\$105,156,329	81.1%	76.7%
Funding Source	Modified Budget	Expended Budget	Percent Expended	
			FY 2024	Last 5 Years
State Special Revenue	\$95,983,375	\$76,303,538	79.5%	77.5%
Federal Special Revenue	33,681,457	28,852,790	85.7%	76.6%
Total	\$129,664,832	\$105,156,329	81.1%	76.7%

The Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks expended 81.1% of its \$129.7 million HB 2 modified budget through May 31, 2024. The agency expended \$5.7 million more than would be expected based on average expenditure rates in the previous five years of 76.7%.

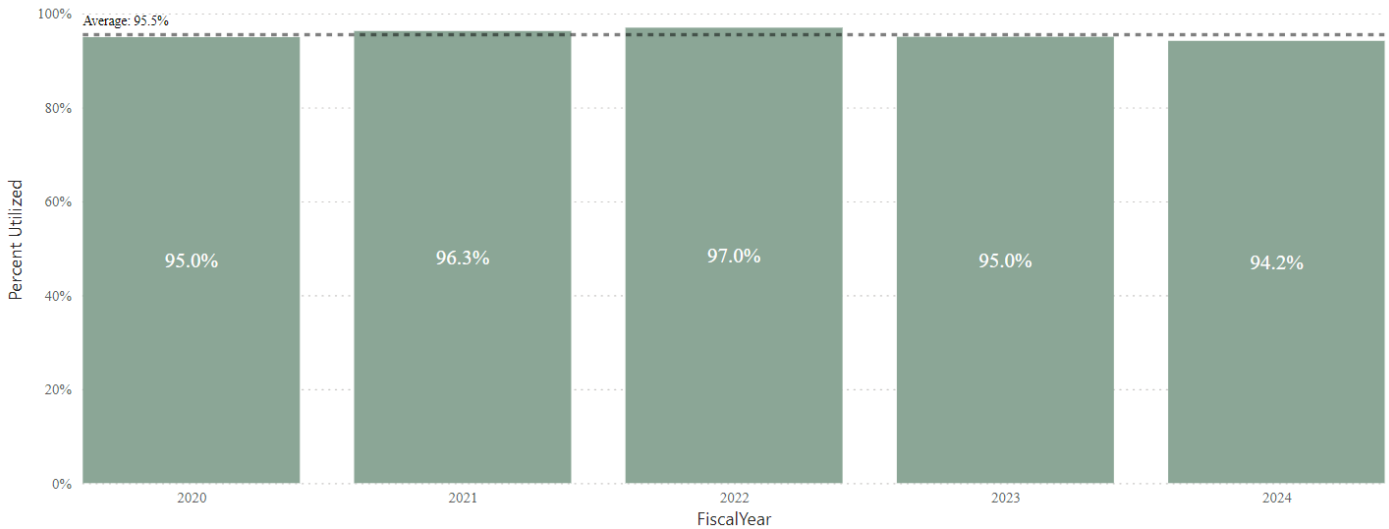
Combined, personal services and operating expenses account for 94.8% of the total budget and were 83.2% expended which was about 4.6% higher than the expenditure rate over the previous five years.

About 61.0% of this increase in expenditure is funded by federal funds, with the remainder funded by state special revenue. Federal revenues were expended at a rate 9.0% higher than historical averages; state special revenue was expended at a rate about 2.0% higher than historical averages.

Personal Services

Appropriations for personal services in the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks total \$60.1 million and are 94.2% expended through May 31, 2024. The department has 711.91 HB 2 FTE and 89.1% of these positions were filled as of May 1, 2024, which compares to 90.3% of positions filled in March 2024.

The chart below shows the hourly utilization percentage, hours utilized divided by hours budgeted, for the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks between July 1 and May 1 for each fiscal year.



Overall, the department has utilized 94.2% of the hours budgeted through May 1 compared to an average of 95.5% of budgeted hours through the same period in the previous four years. The lower utilization rate is primarily due to the transfer of maintenance positions totaling 50.73 FTE from HB 2 to proprietary non-budgeted funding.

On average, open positions have been open for about nine months. The Fisheries Division has the greatest number of vacancies at 23.90 FTE. Most of the vacant positions in the Fisheries Division are fisheries technicians and seasonal workers that staff aquatic invasive species check stations. Since July 1, 2023, 51.00 FTE left state employment, 14.00 FTE have retired, and 12.00 FTE have transferred to a new agency.

The chart on the next page shows the vacant FTE in each division and the number of months each position has been vacant.

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Vacancies
As of May 1, 2024

<u>Division</u>	<u>FTE</u>	<u>Months Vacant</u>	<u>Midpoint Pay Rate</u>		<u>FTE</u>	<u>Months Vacant</u>	<u>Midpoint Pay Rate</u>
Technical Services Division				Fisheries Division			
Information Systems Specialist	1.00	7.2	\$37.85	Fisheries Technician 4	1.00	9.9	\$19.34
GIS Programmer	1.00	10.0	45.80	Fisheries Technician 5	1.00	0.4	29.58
Application Dev Bureau Chief	1.00	1.7	43.39	Fisheries Management Biologist	0.40	18.7	34.12
Technology Strategist	1.00	8.6	46.04	Fish Management Bureau Chief	1.00	0.8	56.47
Computer Systems Analyst	1.00	0.4	34.19	Fisheries Technician 4	1.00	2.0	19.34
GIS Technician	1.00	3.8	36.64	Fish Culture Specialist	1.00	3.9	25.90
GIS Technician	1.00	5.4	36.64	Fish Culture Specialist	1.00	3.0	25.90
Division Total / Average¹	7.00	5.3	\$40.08	Fisheries Technician 5	0.52	3.1	29.58
Enforcement				Fisheries Technician 5	0.48	11.0	29.58
Game Warden	1.00	10.0	\$28.14	Fisheries Technician 3	0.58	1.2	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	0.8	28.14	Fisheries Tech 3	0.50	12.1	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	8.2	28.14	Fisheries Technician 3	1.13	22.4	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	8.9	28.14	AIS Watercraft Inspector	1.90	30.2	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	6.8	28.14	Fisheries Technician 3	0.40	54.8	15.47
Warden Captain	1.00	3.6	39.66	AIS Watercraft Inspector	1.08	26.0	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	7.1	28.14	Fish Tech 3	1.00	3.1	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	4.0	28.14	AIS Site Lead Worker	1.42	30.2	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	2.2	28.14	AIS Watercraft Inspector	3.32	30.2	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	1.0	28.14	AIS Watercraft Inspector	1.27	25.6	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	3.6	28.14	AIS Site Lead Worker	0.66	25.1	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	6.8	28.14	AIS Inspectors	0.25	26.5	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	6.8	28.14	AIS Watercraft Inspector	0.22	30.6	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	6.8	28.14	AIS Watercraft Inspector	0.04	19.2	15.47
Game Warden 1	1.00	14.1	28.14	AIS Watercraft Inspector	0.89	10.9	15.47
Division Total / Average¹	14.00	6.0	\$28.96	AIS Watercraft Inspector	1.64	28.8	15.47
Wildlife Division				Fisheries Technician 3	0.10	12.8	15.47
Wildlife Management Biologist	1.00	0.4	\$34.12	Fisheries Technician 3	0.10	31.0	15.47
Wildlife Technician 4	1.00	7.7	19.34	Division Total / Average¹	23.90	18.6	\$19.87
Wildlife Management Biologist	1.00	2.8	34.12	Parks Division			
Wolf Plan Coordinator	1.00	2.4	34.12	Recreation Manager	1.00	10.0	\$37.53
WL Statewide Program Coordinat	1.00	4.4	40.31	Recreation Site Technician	1.00	10.0	18.85
Wildlife Technician 5	1.00	1.2	29.58	RMU Supervisor	1.00	3.1	36.25
Wildlife Technician 4	0.10	3.1	19.34	Regional Access Manager	1.00	1.3	36.25
Wildlife Technician 3	0.18	8.8	15.47	Recreation Manager	1.00	0.8	37.53
Wildlife Management Biologist	1.00	3.0	34.12	Recreation Ranger	0.50	10.4	30.02
WHP Lab Tech	0.20	7.7	20.33	Access Technician	0.07	32.5	15.47
Division Total / Average¹	7.48	3.4	\$31.35	Parks Planner	0.5	9.2	43.30
Administration				Parks Administrative Clerk	0.3	5.0	15.17
Regional Admin Support	1.00	0.6	\$21.48	Recreation Site Technician	0.24	0.6	18.85
Spl Project & Consumer Outrch	1.00	3.6	43.40	Recreation Ranger	0.45	6.8	30.02
Landscape Architect	1.00	5.0	24.65	Recreation Site Technician	0.42	6.8	18.85
Construction Project Manager	1.00	0.3	54.39	Recreation Site Technician	0.42	2.6	18.85
Federal Grant Manager	1.00	4.1	31.98	Recreation Site Technician	0.4	6.3	18.85
Front Desk Admin Assistant	0.50	0.9	17.28	Parks Administrative Clerk	0.98	3.5	15.17
Human Resources Assistant	1.00	3.1	20.60	Business All Other	0.15	7.4	18.85
Budget Analyst 2	1.00	9.5	33.52	Division Total / Average¹	9.43	5.6	\$28.40
Strategic Communication Manage	1.00	10.0	38.19	Grand Total¹			
Fleet Program Supervisor	0.10	6.8	36.25		75.36	9.4	\$27.45
Accounting Manager	1.00	8.2	34.56				
Grant Accountant	1.00	2.7	29.57				
License Permit Technician 1	1.00	0.8	15.12				
Budget Analyst 2	1.00	4.0	33.52				
HR Intern Coordinator	0.95	15.9	12.44				
Division Total / Average¹	13.55	5.0	\$29.89				

¹ Averages for months vacant and pay rate are weighted by FTE

OTHER ISSUES

Information Technology Project Expenditures.

Large Information Technology Projects Original and Revised Budgets						
Project	Start Date	Status	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Expended	Percent Expended
Explore MT	4/2/2021	Executing	10,000,000	10,000,000	972,453	9.7%

The 2019 Legislature approved HB 10 (Long-Range Information Technology), which appropriated \$2.5 million in state special revenue and \$7.5 million in federal revenue to develop a new automated licensing system to replace the current system that has been in place for 20 years. The project has expended about \$972,500 in federal special revenue and a small amount of state special revenue.

Status of Line-Itemed Decision Packages, 2023 Legislature

The table below summarizes the agency's expenditures against legislative appropriations for decision packages that appear as line items in HB 2. A detailed discussion of each decision package is provided below. All funds are biennial and will be available still in FY 2025.

The Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks Legislative Appropriation and Expenditures for the 2025 Biennium FY 2024					
Decision Package	Legislative Appropriation	Budgeted	Expended	Percent Expended	
DP - 402 Culvert Bear Traps (Bien/OTO)	\$130,000	\$130,000	\$0	0.0%	
DP 910 - Instream Flow (RST/BIEN)	100,000	200,000	-	0.0%	
DP 920 - Angling Economic Impact Analysis (RST/BIEN/OTO)	100,000	100,000	-	0.0%	
DP 6307 - Fishing and Water Access Sites (RST/BIEN/OTO)	200,000	200,000	1,355	0.7%	
DP 6308 - Fishing Access Weed Control & Riparian Habitat (RST/BIEN/OTO)	150,000	150,000	35,802	23.9%	
Total of HB 2 Line Itemed Decision Packages	\$680,000	\$780,000	\$37,157	5.5%	

DP - 402 Culvert Bear Traps (Bien/OTO) FY 2024 – \$130,000 State Special Revenue

The legislature approved one-time-only funding to purchase up to 10 modern culvert bear traps to replace aging and unsafe equipment and to supplement the current inventory of traps requested.

DP 910 - Instream Flow (RST/BIEN)

FY 2024 – \$100,000 State Special Revenue

FY 2025 – \$100,000 State Special Revenue

The legislature approved an appropriation of state special revenue to support the leasing water rights to benefit instream flow pursuant to programs and policy of the Department's existing Water Leasing Program.

This appropriation was designated as biennial; the agency may budget all or part of the appropriation in either year of the biennium.

DP 920 - Angling Economic Impact Analysis (RST/BIEN/OTO)

FY 2024 – \$100,000 State Special Revenue

FY 2025 – \$100,000 State Special Revenue

The legislature approved a one-time-only appropriation of state special revenue to fund an economic impact analysis on cold and warm-water angling activity in Montana. It is the intent of the legislature that the agency contract with the University of Montana or other institution of higher learning to complete the analysis.

The following language was included in HB 2: "Fish, Wildlife, and Parks will provide the completed Angling Economic Impact Analysis to the Environmental Quality Council, and the Joint Interim Budget Committee for Natural Resources and Transportation by the last day of September 2025."

DP 6307 - Fishing and Water Access Sites (RST/BIEN/OTO)

FY 2024 – \$200,000 State Special Revenue

FY 2025 – \$200,000 State Special Revenue

The legislature approved a one-time-only increase in appropriation of state special revenue to address increases in recreational use of fishing and water access sites. The legislature intends that the agency seeks outside contractors should there not be sufficient resources within the agency to complete the task. It is the intent of the legislature that the agency will not use more than 5.0% of the funds to administer contracts.

DP 6308 - Fishing Access Weed Control & Riparian Habitat (RST/BIEN/OTO)

FY 2024 – \$150,000 State Special Revenue

FY 2025 – \$150,000 State Special Revenue

The legislature approved a one-time-only increase of state special revenue to improve riparian habitat and increase weed control at fishing access sites.

Where available, the legislature intends that the agency contracts with conservation districts or other contractors for the weed spraying activities.

It is the intention of the legislature that the agency will not use more than 5.0% of the funds to administer contracts.

The following language will be included in HB 2: " For Fishing Access, Weed Control, and Riparian Habitat, the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks will report to the Environmental Quality Council and the Joint Interim Budget Committee for Natural Resources and Transportation by the first day of December of each year of the 2025 biennium on the actual habitat enhanced and the actual areas treated for weeds."