

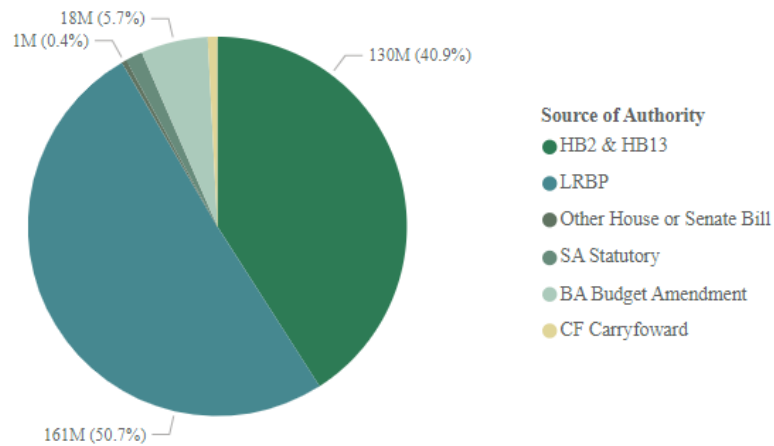
# DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PARKS

## Interim Budget Committee Report for March 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	78,938,971	60.9%
BA Budget Amendment	18,118,127	2,691,073	14.9%
CF Carryforward	2,577,575	0	0.0%
LRBP	160,500,929	12,758,183	7.9%
Other House or Senate Bill	1,238,493	867	0.1%
SA Statutory	4,642,332	3,086,909	66.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>316,742,287</b>	<b>97,476,004</b>	<b>30.8%</b>

### 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 \$90.0 million in state special revenue, \$70.3 million in federal revenue, and \$230,900 in capital projects funds.

- 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 modifications since the last report in December increased the agency budget by \$4.0 million to \$18.1 million.

Since December, the primary budget modification was an additional \$2.5 million allocated to research aimed at comprehending the spawning behaviors of fish within mainstem rivers. This research will also delve into assessing the mortality rates of adult trout and pinpointing the underlying causes. Furthermore, the agency aims to devise methodologies for gauging the scale and characteristics of recreational activities taking place on rivers.

The total budget amendments for the year include:

- Wildlife programs \$15.1 million
  - Wildlife enhancement grants \$6.0 million
  - Operating expense \$5.3 million
  - Personal services \$3.5 million
  - Capital outlay and equipment \$311,800
- Trout fisheries evaluation \$2.5 million
- Administration, Parks, and Enforcement were budgeted \$286,900
- Aquatic invasive species education programs \$100,000
- Fisheries programs upper Missouri Pallid Sturgeon \$100,500

## **Statutory**

Expenditure of statutory appropriations for the agency totaled approximately \$2.8 million in state special revenue and \$302,000 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 not expended any of this authority.

## **Other Bills**

Other bills approved by the legislature support 0.4% or \$1.2 million of the agency's budget.

HB 521 - \$670,000, Unexpended

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 - \$533,000 budgeted, \$867 expended

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

## **Non-budgeted Proprietary Fund Authority**

Non-budgeted proprietary revenues are anticipated to be \$13.6 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 \$13.6 million in proprietary revenues as follows:

Internal Services - \$13.0 million budgeted revenues

- Maintenance – \$6.5 million budgeted revenues, \$4.3 million expended
- Fleet Equipment - \$3.8 million budgeted revenues, \$3.3 million expended
- Aircraft - \$2.6 million budgeted revenues, \$2.5 million expended
- Warehouse Inventory - \$104,100 budgeted revenues, \$10,200 expended

Enterprise Funds - \$539,300 budgeted revenues

- Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Visitor – \$539,300 budgeted revenues, \$246,100 expended

## HB 2 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 February 29, 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
<b>Dept. of Fish, Wildlife &amp; Parks</b>	<b>129,714,832</b>	<b>129,664,832</b>	<b>-50,000</b>
01 TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION	8,709,721	8,709,721	
03 FISHERIES DIVISION	24,032,772	23,747,065	-285,707
04 ENFORCEMENT DIVISION	15,175,589	15,175,589	
05 WILDLIFE DIVISION	20,188,250	19,622,447	-565,803
06 PARKS & OUTDOOR REC DIV	33,382,001	33,240,068	-141,933
08 COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION DIV	5,395,734	5,401,396	5,662
09 ADMINISTRATION	22,830,765	23,768,545	937,780
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,714,832</b>	<b>129,664,832</b>	<b>-50,000</b>

Expenditure Type	HB 2 Budget	Modified Budget	Net Modifications
61000 Personal Services	60,169,221	60,169,359	138
62000 Operating Expenses	62,879,999	62,675,960	-204,039
63000 Equipment & Intangible Assets	1,270,054	1,270,054	
66000 Grants	1,782,658	1,789,279	6,621
67000 Benefits & Claims	18,800	18,800	
68000 Transfers-out	2,952,757	3,100,037	147,280
69000 Debt Service	641,343	641,343	
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,714,832</b>	<b>129,664,832</b>	<b>-50,000</b>

Fund Type	HB 2 Budget	Modified Budget	Net Modifications
02 State/Other Spec Rev	89,533,375	95,983,375	6,450,000
03 Fed/Other Spec Rev	40,181,457	33,681,457	-6,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,714,832</b>	<b>129,664,832</b>	<b>-50,000</b>

The Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks decreased the HB 2 budget by \$50,000. This decrease reflects a reversal of an accounting error in the budget related to Smith River corridor enhancements appropriated in HB 2 of the 2021 session.

The modifications include a \$6.5 million shift from federal special revenue to state special revenue. There has been a decline in federal revenue allocated to the hunting access program, necessitating a greater reliance on state special funds to meet program costs. The 2025 legislature, through the language approved in HB 2, has granted the agency the authority to adjust federal special revenue downward and raise state special revenue for Hunting Access by a like amount if federal funds designated for block management expansion are unavailable.

The agency is undergoing reorganizations by merging the Fisheries and Wildlife Research Units and relocating them to the Administration Division. This reorganization increases authority in the Administration Division by \$937,780 and decreases authority in the Fisheries, Wildlife, and Parks and Outdoor Recreation Divisions by a like amount.

The budget, along with 3.00 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for fisheries research and 6.00 FTE positions for wildlife research, were transferred to the Administrative Division. Concurrently, the budget and 2.00 FTE positions from the Administration Division are being reclassified as biologists and shifted to the Wildlife Division. Furthermore, a Program Specialist position (0.35 FTE) and its associated budget from the Parks and Recreation Division are being relocated to the Administrative Division and merged with an existing HR position.

The tables below summarize the movement of authority and FTE resulting from the reorganization.

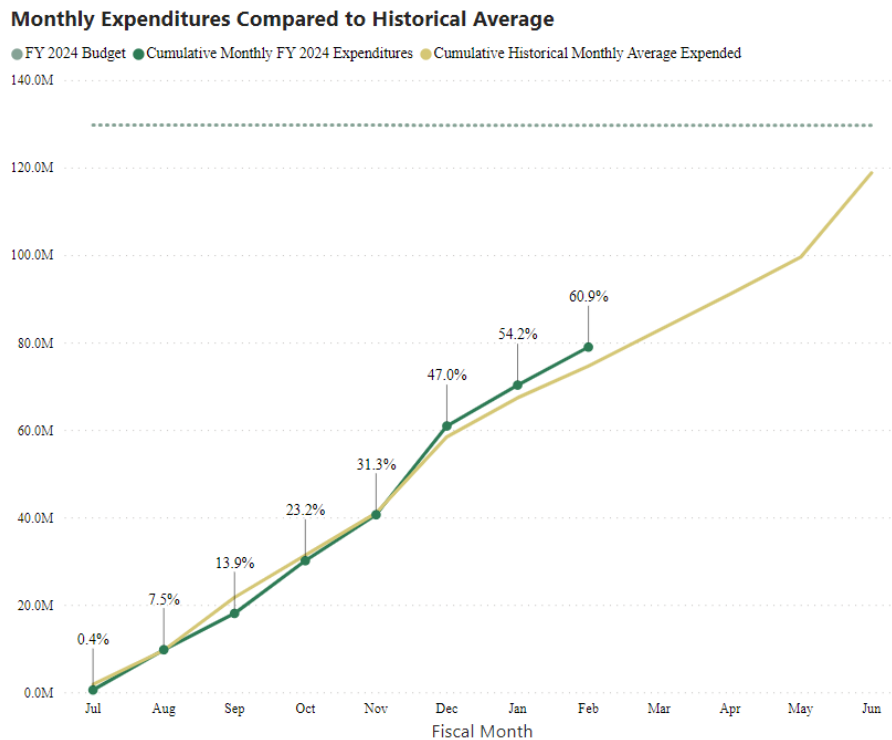
Fish Wildlife and Parks Reorganization Funding Movement			
Division	State	Federal	Total
	Special Revenue	Special Revenue	
Fisheries	(285,707)		(285,707)
Wildlife	(248,760)	(317,042)	(565,803)
Parks and Outdoor Recreation	(86,270)		(86,270)
Administration	620,738	317,042	937,780
Total	-	-	-

Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Reorganization FTE Movement					
Division	Fisheries	Wildlife	Reclassified as	Program	Total
	Research	Research	Biologist	Specialist	
Fisheries	(3.00)	-	-	-	(3.00)
Wildlife	-	(6.00)	2.00	-	(4.00)
Parks and Outdoor Recreation	-	-	-	(0.65)	(0.65)
Administration	3.00	6.00	(2.00)	0.65	7.65
Total	-	-	-	-	-

Other budget modifications reclassified \$204,000 in operating expenditures as grants and transfers.

## HB 2 APPROPRIATION AUTHORITY

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



Year-to-date the agency has expended 60.9% or \$78.9 million of the FY 2024 budget. This compares to an expenditure rate of 57.5% over the five previous years. The table below summarizes expenditures by program, expenditure type, and funding source.

Program Name	Modified Budget	Expended Budget	% Expended
01 TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION	8,709,721	4,131,269	47.4%
03 FISHERIES DIVISION	23,747,065	13,350,841	56.2%
04 ENFORCEMENT DIVISION	15,175,589	8,940,830	58.9%
05 WILDLIFE DIVISION	19,622,447	12,388,510	63.1%
06 PARKS & OUTDOOR REC DIV	33,240,068	23,068,387	69.4%
08 COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION DIV	5,401,396	3,302,035	61.1%
09 ADMINISTRATION	23,768,545	13,757,097	57.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,664,832</b>	<b>78,938,971</b>	<b>60.9%</b>

Expenditure Type	Modified Budget	Expended Budget	% Expended
Personal Services	60,169,359	40,331,879	67.0%
Operating Expenses	62,675,960	36,577,866	58.4%
Equipment & Intangible Assets	1,270,054	715,797	56.4%
Grants	1,789,279	920,909	51.5%
Benefits & Claims	18,800	11,500	61.2%
Transfers-out	3,100,037	352,944	11.4%
Debt Service	641,343	28,075	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,664,832</b>	<b>78,938,971</b>	<b>60.9%</b>

Fund Type	Modified Budget	Expended Budget	% Expended
02 State/Other Spec Rev	95,983,375	56,539,376	58.9%
03 Fed/Other Spec Rev	33,681,457	22,399,595	66.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,664,832</b>	<b>78,938,971</b>	<b>60.9%</b>

The Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks expended 60.9% of its \$129.7 million HB 2 modified budget through February 29, 2024. The agency expended \$4.4 million more, primarily for personal services and operations, than would be expected based on average expenditure rates in the previous five years of 57.5%.

## Personal Services

Appropriations for personal services in the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks total \$60.2 million and are 67.0% expended through February 29, 2024. The department has 711.91 HB 2 FTE and 90.3% of these positions were filled as of February 1, 2024, which compares to 90.8% of positions filled in November 2023. The following table shows the filled and vacant FTE within the agency as of February 1, 2024.

Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Vacancies as of February 1, 2024			
<u>Division</u>	<u>Filled FTE</u>	<u>Vacant FTE</u>	<u>Total FTE</u>
Technical Services Division	34.00	5.00	39.00
Fisheries Division	151.64	22.05	173.69
Enforcement Division	107.00	12.00	119.00
Wildlife Division	97.83	4.65	102.48
Parks & Outdoor Rec Div	94.10	7.62	101.72
Communication & Education Div	27.50	-	27.50
Administration	130.87	17.65	148.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>642.94</b>	<b>68.97</b>	<b>711.91</b>

On average, open positions have been open for about nine months. The Fisheries Division has the greatest number of vacancies at 22.05 FTE. Most of the vacant positions in the Fisheries Division are seasonal workers that staff aquatic invasive species check stations and fisheries technicians. It is anticipated that the agencies will fill these positions in time for the summer season. About 16.0% of the positions have been open for less than a month, 70.0% for less than six months. If these seasonal positions are excluded, vacant positions have been open for about 5.2 months. Since July 1, 2023, the equivalent of 30.00 FTE left state employment, 10.00 FTE have retired, and 8.00 FTE have transferred to a new agency.

The department currently has 32 open positions in active recruitment. Many of these are summer season positions as the department ramps-up for Parks and Outdoor Recreations' busiest season. The agency continues to have large applicant pool for species specific biologists and technicians (i.e., Bear, wolf, mountain lion, etc.). It continues to be challenging to generate robust applicant pools for fisheries biologists and technicians – these recruitments tend to take longer to fill due to low numbers of total and qualified applicants. It is also difficult to fill accounting, budgeting, and administrative support positions at Headquarters. The pools for these office-based professional and entry level positions have been very small and have resulted in several ongoing searches to find qualified applicants. The agency is moving toward leveraging a LinkedIn presence to better market business and specialized professional positions. The agency has engaged with the Department of Administration and Montana State University to better market internship opportunities to students and faculty to build pipeline opportunities to department employment.

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

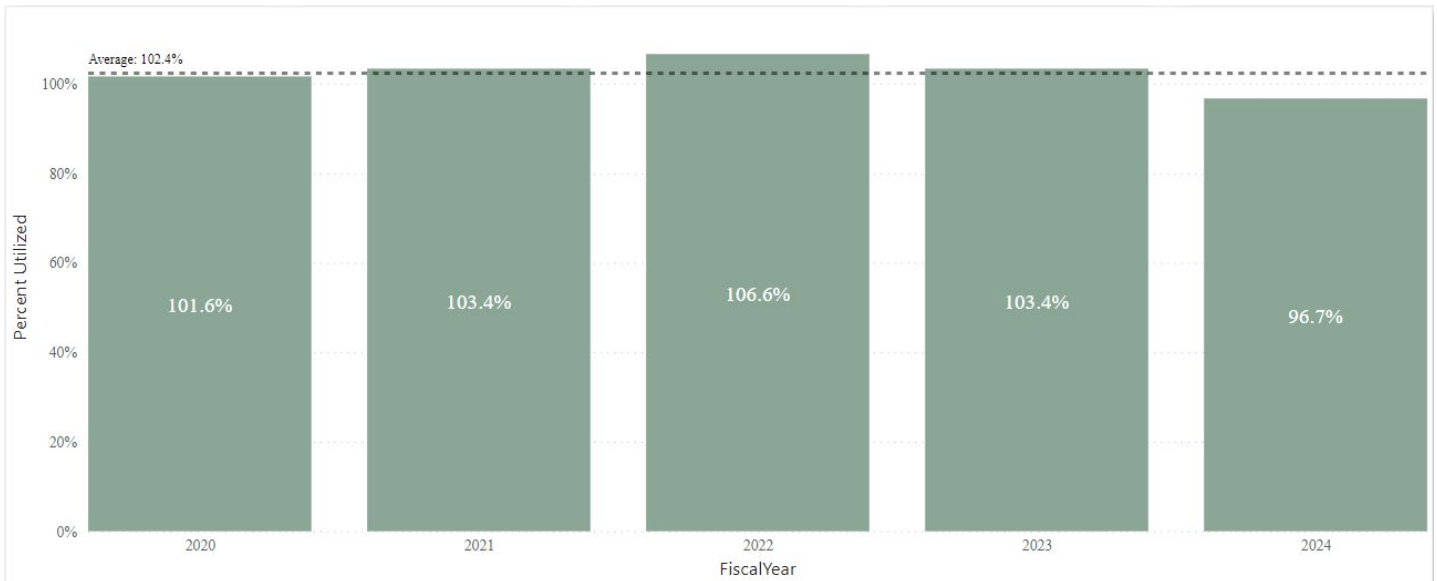
**Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Vacancies**  
**As of February 1, 2024**

<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>
<b>Technical Services Division</b>				<b>Fisheries Division</b>			
Information Systems Specialist	1.00	4.2	\$37.85	Fisheries Technician 4	1.00	7.0	\$19.34
GIS Programmer	1.00	7.0	\$45.80	Regional Fisheries Manager	1.00	7.0	56.47
Technology Strategist	1.00	5.7	46.04	Fisheries Management Biologist	0.40	15.8	34.12
GIS Technician	1.00	0.9	36.64	Recreation and Access BC	1.00	8.5	51.21
GIS Technician	1.00	2.5	36.64	Stream Protection Prog Coord	0.50	4.8	38.15
<b>Division Total / Average<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>\$40.59</b>	Fish Culture Specialist	1.00	0.9	25.90
<b>Enforcement</b>				Fish Culture Specialist	1.00	1.1	25.90
Game Warden	1.00	8.0	\$28.14	Fisheries Technician 5	0.48	8.0	29.58
Game Warden	1.00	5.2	28.14	Fisheries Technician 3	0.50	24.5	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	5.9	28.14	Fisheries Technician 4	0.15	12.6	19.34
Game Warden	1.00	3.8	28.14	Fisheries Tech 3	0.50	9.1	15.47
Warden Captain	1.00	0.6	39.66	Fisheries Technician 3	1.13	19.4	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	4.1	28.14	AIS Watercraft Inspector	1.90	27.2	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	1.0	28.14	Fisheries Technician 3	0.40	51.9	15.47
Game Warden Sergeant	1.00	0.4	30.95	AIS Watercraft Inspector	1.08	23.1	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	0.6	28.14	AIS Site Lead Worker	1.42	27.2	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	3.8	28.14	AIS Watercraft Inspector	3.32	27.3	15.47
Game Warden	1.00	3.8	28.14	AIS Site Lead Worker	0.10	1.0	15.47
Game Warden 1	1.00	11.2	28.14	AIS Watercraft Inspector	1.27	22.6	15.47
<b>Division Total / Average<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>\$29.33</b>	AIS Site Lead Worker	0.66	22.2	15.47
<b>Wildlife Division</b>				AIS Inspectors	0.25	23.6	15.47
Wildlife Technician 4	1.00	6.0	\$19.34	AIS Watercraft Inspector	0.22	27.7	15.47
Wildlife Technician 4	1.00	4.8	19.34	AIS Watercraft Inspector	0.04	16.3	15.47
WL Statewide Program Coordinat	1.00	1.5	40.31	AIS Watercraft Inspector	0.89	8.0	15.47
Wildlife Management Biologist	1.00	3.4	34.12	AIS Watercraft Inspector	1.64	25.8	15.47
Wildlife Technician 3	0.17	6.5	15.47	Fisheries Technician 3	0.10	9.8	15.47
Wildlife Technician 4	0.10	0.2	19.34	Fisheries Technician 3	0.10	28.1	15.47
Wildlife Technician 3	0.18	5.8	15.47	<b>Division Total / Average<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>22.05</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>\$21.26</b>
WHP Lab Tech	0.20	4.8	20.33	<b>Parks Division</b>			
<b>Division Total / Average<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>4.65</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>\$26.78</b>	Recreation Manager	1.00	8.0	\$37.53
<b>Administration</b>				Recreation Site Technician	1.00	8.0	18.85
Construction Manager	1.00	8.0	\$45.06	RMU Supervisor	1.00	0.2	36.25
Regional Admin Support	1.00	0.6	21.48	Recreation Ranger	0.75	1.5	30.02
Regional Admin Support	1.00	1.0	21.48	Recreation Ranger	0.5	7.5	30.02
Spl Project & Consumer Outrch	1.00	0.6	43.40	Access Technician	0.07	29.5	15.47
Lead Engineer	1.00	11.4	40.97	Parks Planner	0.5	6.3	43.30
Landscape Architect	1.00	2.0	24.65	Parks Administrative Clerk	0.3	2.1	15.17
Federal Grant Manager	1.00	1.2	31.98	Recreation Ranger	0.5	3.4	30.02
Front Desk Admin Assistant	0.50	2.9	17.28	Recreation Ranger	0.45	3.8	30.02
Human Resources Assistant	1.00	0.2	20.60	Recreation Site Technician	0.42	3.8	18.85
Budget Analyst 2	1.00	6.6	33.52	Parks Administrative Clerk	0.98	0.6	15.17
Lawyer	1.00	0.6	55.14	Recreation Site Technician	0.15	4.5	18.85
Strategic Communication Manage	1.00	7.0	38.19	<b>Division Total / Average<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>7.62</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>\$27.77</b>
Fleet Program Supervisor	0.10	3.8	36.25	<b>Grand Total<sup>1</sup></b>			
Accounting Technician	1.00	1.1	16.23		<b>68.97</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>\$28.32</b>
Accountant/Grant Accountant	1.00	4.2	29.57				
Fleet Automotive Tech	0.10	1.1	28.77				
Accounting Manager	1.00	5.2	34.56				
Budget Analyst 2	1.00	1.0	33.52				
Chief of Staff	1.00	8.9	75.89				
HR Intern Coordinator	0.95	13.0	12.44				
<b>Division Total / Average<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>17.65</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>\$33.61</b>				

<sup>1</sup> Averages for months vacant and pay rate are weighted by FTE



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 February 1 for each fiscal year.



Overall, the department has utilized 96.7% of the hours budgeted through February compared to an average of 102.4% of budgeted hours through February 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.

## OTHER ISSUES

### Information Technology Project Expenditures.

Large Information Technology Projects Original and Revised Budgets						
<u>Project</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Original Budget</u>	<u>Revised Budget</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Percent Expended</u>
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.

The Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks				
Legislative Appropriation and Expenditures for the 2025 Biennium FY 2024				
<u>Decision Package</u>	Legislative			Percent
	<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Expended</u>
DP - 402 Culvert Bear Traps (Bien/OTO)	\$130,000	\$130,000	\$0	0.0%
DP 910 - Instream Flow (RST/BIEN)	100,000	100,000	-	0.0%
DP 902 - 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	-	0.0%
DP 6308 - Fishing Access Weed Control & Riparian Habitat (RST/BIEN/OTO)	150,000	150,000	7,451	5.0%
<b>Total of HB 2 Line Itemed Decision Packages</b>	<b>\$680,000</b>	<b>\$680,000</b>	<b>\$7,451</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

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 and 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."