

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Overview

2023





DNR's mission is to work with Minnesotans

to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life.

To accomplish its mission, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has the following goals:

- Minnesota's waters, natural lands, and diverse fish and wildlife habitats are conserved and enhanced
- Minnesota's outdoor recreation opportunities meet the needs of new and existing participants so all benefit from nature
- Minnesota's natural resources contribute to strong and sustainable job markets, economies, and communities
- DNR demonstrates operational excellence and continuous improvement in service to Minnesotans

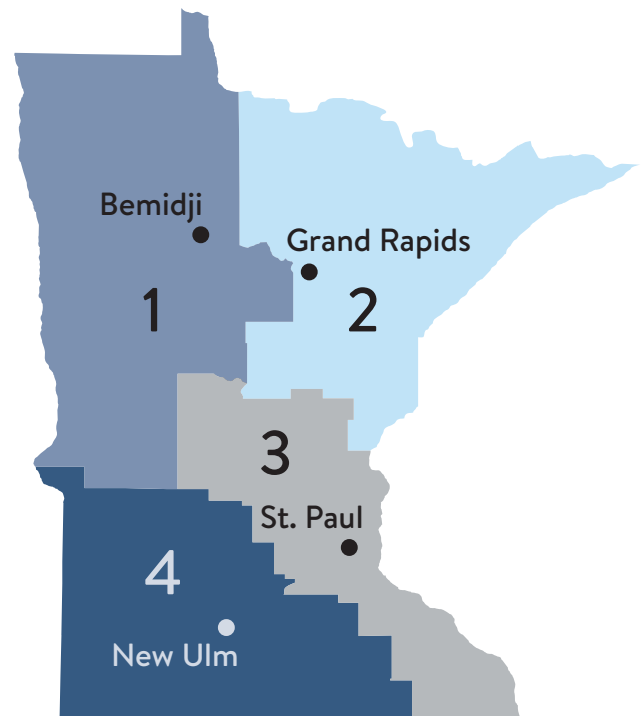
The DNR manages the state's water and natural lands, such as forests, wetlands, and native prairies. We provide enriching public outdoor recreational opportunities, such as hunting, fishing, wildlife-watching, camping, skiing, hiking, biking, and motorized recreation for Minnesotans of all ages and backgrounds. The department strives to provide economic opportunities in a manner consistent with sound natural resource conservation and management principles. We work with a wide variety of partners to manage natural resources. These partners represent Minnesotans' many interests and values.

The DNR's core work is rooted in natural resources management and environmental protection. Thriving natural systems are critical for thriving communities by managing for the sustained health of natural resources, the DNR contributes to community health and economic opportunity. In this work, the agency is also committed to mitigating and adapting to climate change and enhancing the climate resiliency of natural systems and communities now and into the future.

The DNR is committed to providing equitable access to outdoor spaces and the benefits afforded by a healthy environment to all Minnesotans throughout our work. In addition, the DNR is focused on attracting and retaining a workforce that reflects Minnesota's diversity.

How DNR does its work

The DNR is one department, working through seven divisions, organized into four geographical regions. The divisions each offer expertise to help achieve our mission, while the regions allow for in-depth local community knowledge and engagement. All divisions and regions work together under the same mission, goals, and priorities.



DNR's Seven Divisions

- Ecological and Water Resources
- Enforcement
- Fish and Wildlife
- Forestry
- Lands and Minerals
- Operations Services
- Parks and Trails

The following summary information is based on the agency budget narratives that can be viewed in full on the Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) website:
mn.gov/mmb-stat/documents/budget/2024-25-biennial-budget-books/base-budget-november/natural-resources.pdf

DNR's Four Administrative Regions

The state is divided up into administrative regions.

Region 1: Northwest

Region 2: Northeast

Region 3: Central

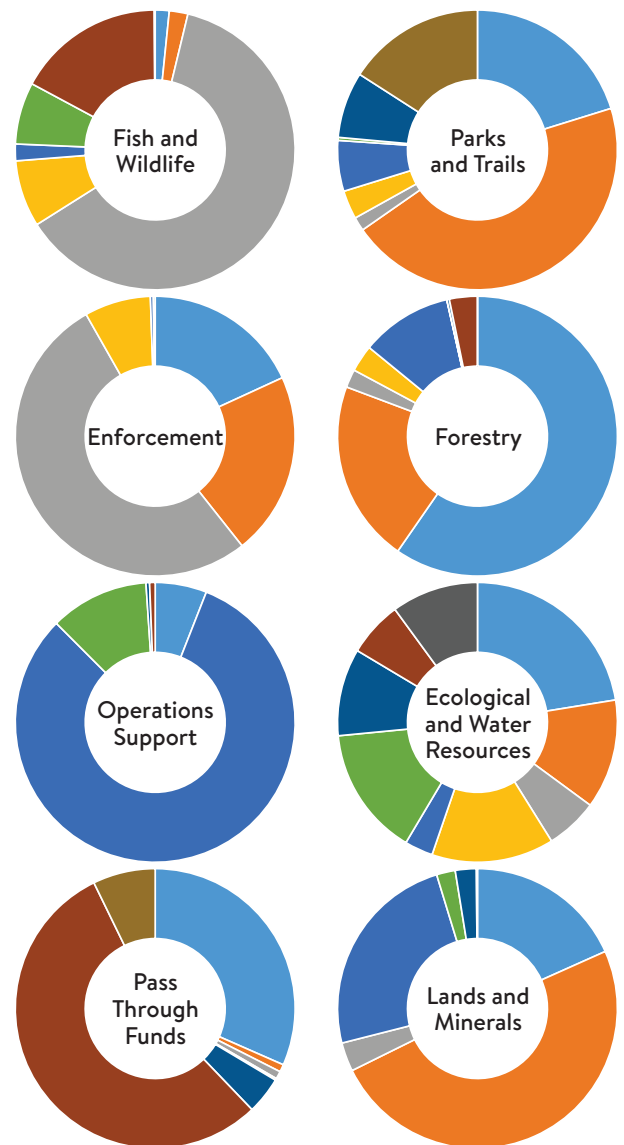
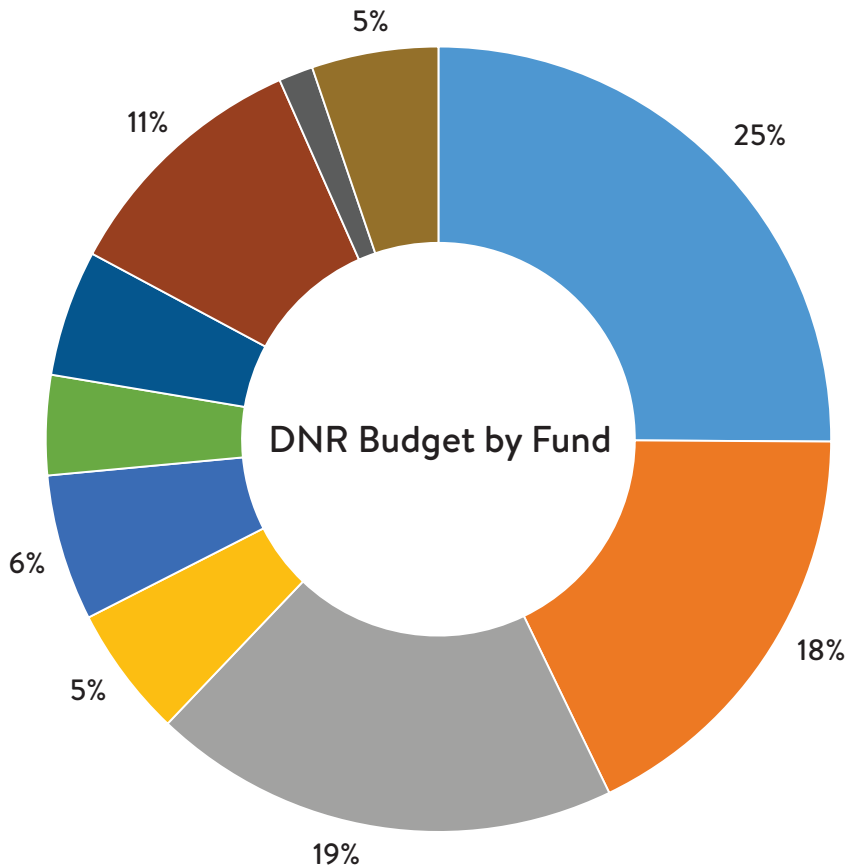
Region 4: Southern

DNR Funding

Every dollar in our budget contributes to DNR's mission. Our FY22-23 biennial budget is \$1.3 billion, which comes from a mixture of dedicated and direct appropriations across 50 funds. Twenty-five percent of our budget comes from the General Fund, nineteen percent comes from the Game and Fish Fund, nineteen percent

comes from the Game and Fish Fund and eighteen percent comes from the Natural Resources Fund. Approximately twenty-two percent of our budget comes from the Legacy Funds and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Funds by Division or Category



Key

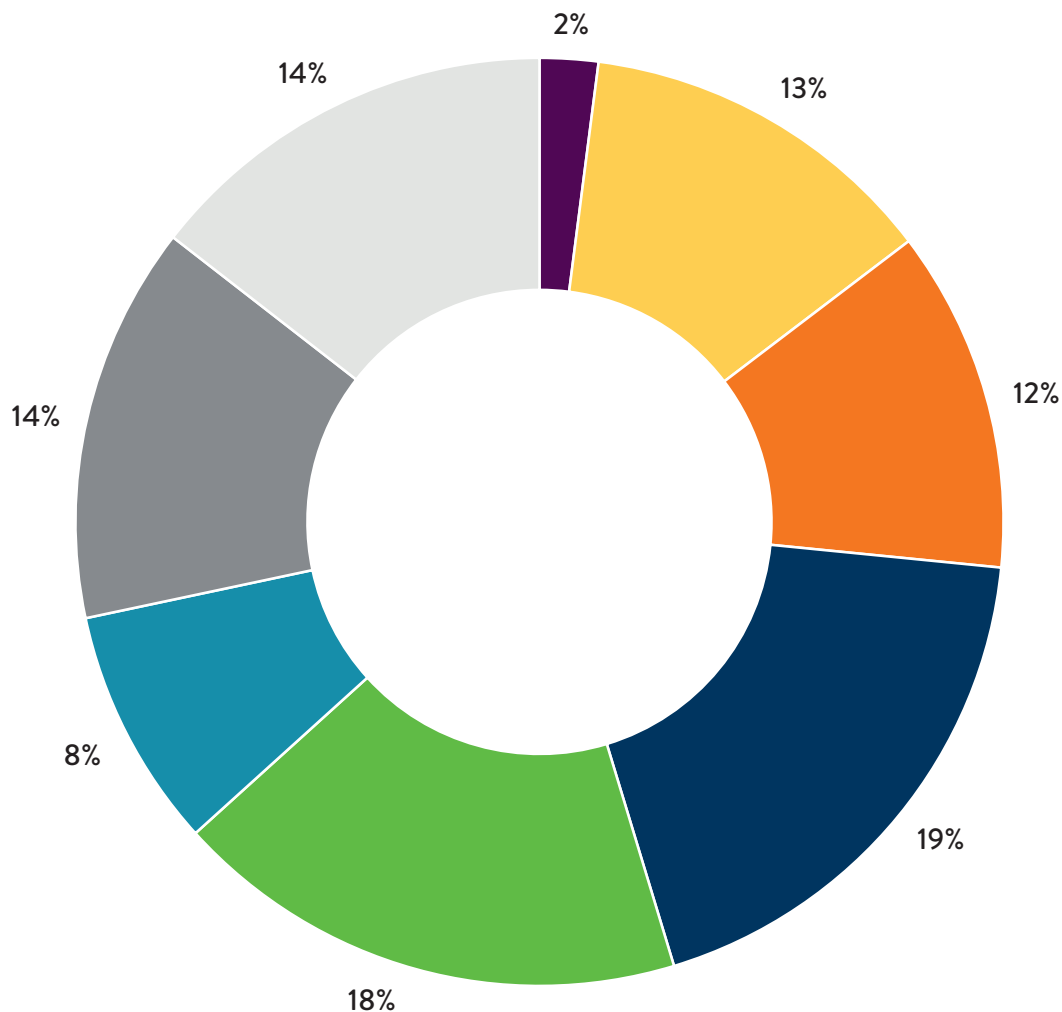
- General
- Natural Resources
- Game and Fish
- Federal
- Special Revenue
- Other
- Env and NR Trust
- Outdoor Heritage Legacy
- Clean Water
- Parks and Trails

Money in the Game and Fish Fund comes largely from hunting and fishing license sales to support game and fish related programs, while money in the Natural Resources Funds comes from a variety of dedicated sources such as recreation vehicle registrations, state park passes, camping fees, and timber revenues. Money in the General Fund comes from “general” taxes such as income and sales tax. Environment and Natural Resources

Trust Fund dollars are generated from the Minnesota State Lottery, while the Legacy funds come solely from sales taxes dedicated to these purposes.

DNR’s budget funds our own programs as well as advancing natural resources outcomes through legislatively-directed grants to our conservation partners.

Expenditures by Division



Key

- Lands and Mineral
- Ecological and Water Resources
- Forestry
- Parks and Trail
- Fish and Wildlife
- Enforcement
- Operations Support
- Pass Through Funds



Ecological and Water Resources

The DNR Ecological and Water Resources Division helps realize a vision of healthy lands and waters throughout Minnesota by delivering integrated land and water resource conservation.

Consistent with DNR's mission, the division supports sustainable economic development, enhances rare wildlife and native plant populations, and protects aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems from the negative impacts of invasive species.

Services Provided

DNR's ecological and water resources work falls into three main areas:

- Conservation assistance and regulation
- Ecosystem management and protection
- Inventory, monitoring, and analysis



Enforcement

As the primary conservation law enforcement agency in Minnesota, the DNR Enforcement Division plays an important role in connecting people to the outdoors and conserving and enhancing Minnesota's natural resources by providing outreach, safety training and law enforcement throughout the state.

Services Provided

Our enforcement work includes outreach, safety education, and law enforcement in four main areas:

- Fish and Game Education, Protection and Enforcement
- Recreational Safety and Enforcement
- Natural Resource Protection and Enforcement
- Public Safety



Forestry

The DNR Forestry Division aims to help sustain community wellbeing and quality of life by improving the productivity, health, diversity, accessibility, and use of forests. Healthy forests provide clean water, carbon storage, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and forest-related products.

The division also provides wildfire protection for 45.5 million acres of public and private land.

Services Provided

DNR achieves the state's forestry goals by:

- Wildfire prevention and response
- Leading forest management and policy development
- Providing technical assistance to communities and private landowners



Fish and Wildlife

The DNR Fish and Wildlife Division strives to sustain healthy populations of fish and wildlife, high quality recreational opportunities, and vibrant local economies. We manage fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. We facilitate use of these public resources, including fishing, hunting, and trapping, through skill building and other programs. We also serve people seeking hunting and fishing licenses and recreational vehicle registration and titling.

Services Provided

We organize our fish and wildlife work across four categories:

- Monitor and manage fish and wildlife populations
- Protect, restore, and enhance key fish and wildlife lands
- Connect people to the outdoors through hunting, fishing, and engagement
- Administer hunting and fishing licenses and recreational vehicle titles and registrations



Lands and Minerals

The DNR Lands and Minerals Division regulates mining to protect natural resources and the environment. This includes both currently operating and proposed mines, as well as the reclamation of mining areas for future use once mining is complete. The mineland reclamation activity promotes a healthy environment with sustainable use of natural resources and contributes to a strong natural resource-based economy.

The division's land management responsibilities include real estate services for the Department such as appraisals, title work, leasing, and sales. Land management also includes oversight of school and university trust lands, which generate revenue by leasing surface lands and mineral rights. These funds go to public school districts throughout the state and the University of Minnesota and its students. In addition, the DNR manages minerals on tax-forfeited land, providing revenue to local school districts, counties, cities, and townships.

Services Provided

DNR lands and minerals work falls into three areas:

- Mine permitting and reclamation
- Minerals management
- Real estate management



Operations Support

The DNR Operations Support program provides operational support to the department and promotes department-wide and regional leadership and coordination to advance the DNR's mission and serve Minnesotans.

Services Provided

- Financial management and internal audit
- HR operations and workforce support
- Affirmative action, accessibility, and diversity, equity and inclusion
- Strategic communications, outreach, and education
- Infrastructure management (fleet, design and construction, buildings and sustainability)
- Safety, emergency preparedness and non-fire emergency and disaster response
- Project management, continuous improvement, and planning
- Department-wide and regional leadership
- Stakeholder and partner engagement
- Strategic priorities and goal-setting
- Government relations, including Tribal consultation and coordination
- Legal services



Parks and Trails

The DNR Parks and Trails Division aspires to provide unforgettable park, trail, and water recreation experiences that inspire people to pass along the love of the outdoors to current and future generations.

State parks and trails improve the lives of individuals, children and families by connecting them to nature, helping them to stay healthy and fit, strengthening local communities and economies, and conserving Minnesota's special places and resources.

Each year, the DNR serves millions of out-of-state visitors and Minnesotans alike. There is a state park, trail, recreation area, or forest campground within 30 miles of most people in the state.

Services Provided

DNR's parks and trails work falls into three major categories:

- Develop and manage state parks, trails, recreation areas, forests and water recreation opportunities

- Work with outdoor recreation partners to provide a seamless outdoor recreation system at the local, regional, state and federal levels
- Deliver natural resources education and interpretive programming