

# MDWFP

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS  
1505 EASTOVER DR. | JACKSON, MS 39211 | 601-432-2400 | MDWFP.COM





# FOUNDATION

WILDLIFE | FISHERIES | PARKS

# Join Our Mission

FOUNDATION FOR MISSISSIPPI WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS

**OUR MISSION IS TO AUGMENT THE STATE'S EFFORTS TO ENSURE  
THE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF OUR FISH AND  
WILDLIFE RESOURCES SO THEY SURVIVE AND THRIVE FOR  
CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS**

Please join us in supporting Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks and its responsibility for hunting, fishing, shooting sports, and conservation in our state.

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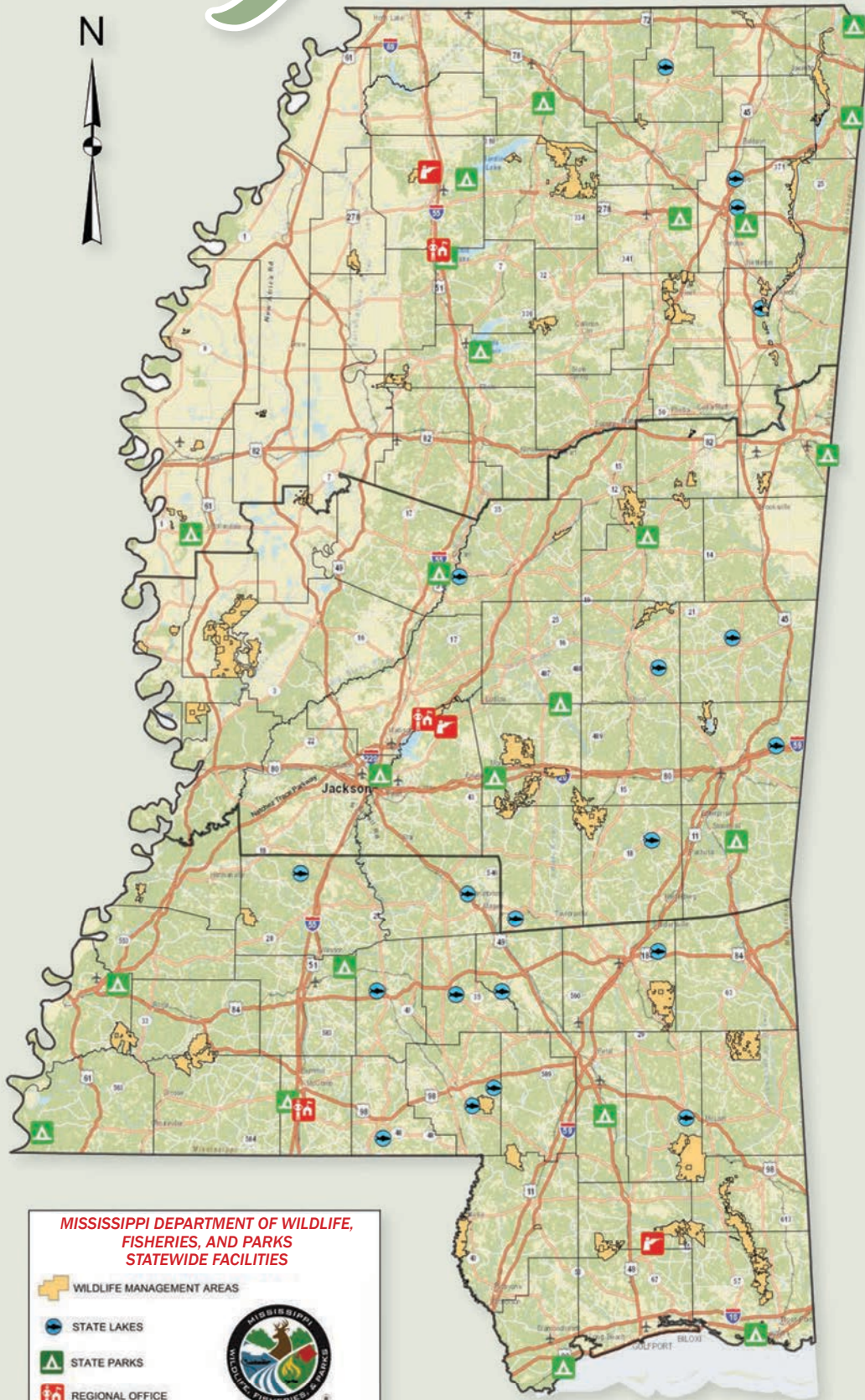
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**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE,  
 FISHERIES, AND PARKS  
 STATEWIDE FACILITIES**

-  WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS
-  STATE LAKES
-  STATE PARKS
-  REGIONAL OFFICE
-  SHOOTING RANGE



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**MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS**

Lynn Posey  
Executive Director

December 31, 2023

Honorable Tate Reeves  
Governor of Mississippi  
550 High Street  
Sillers Building, 19<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Jackson, Mississippi 39201

Dear Governor Reeves:

I am pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. Within these pages, one can read of the accomplishments reached through the dedicated efforts of our agency's many talented employees, as well as the support of outdoor enthusiasts throughout the state.

This agency is founded on the principles to conserve and enhance our state's natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities. We believe each outdoor experience is unique as it brings a renewed sense of hope and anticipation of undergoing something new and exciting. Through the continued support of the citizens and communities within our state, we provide some of the most enjoyable outdoor attractions in the nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve this great state and for your continued support.

See you Outdoors!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn Posey".

Lynn Posey  
Executive Director





**TATE REEVES**  
*Governor of Mississippi*



**LYNN POSEY**  
*Executive Director, MDWFP*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Wildlife Management .....	6
Freshwater Fisheries Management.....	14
Law Enforcement.....	19
Mississippi Museum of Natural Science .....	22
Mississippi State Parks .....	24
Support Services.....	28
Marketing and Media .....	29
Archery in Mississippi Schools.....	30

## 2023 COMMISSIONERS

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Bill Mounger.....	Jackson
Leonard Bentz.....	Gulfport
Gary Rhoads .....	Flowood

Photography by Blythe Summers/MDWFP

*Cover: Fall colors at Tombigbee State Park*







# 2023

## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

### Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Program

- Operated and managed 53 WMAs encompassing more than 700,000 acres and 44 employees statewide.
- More than 138,000 acres are owned by the State of Mississippi.
- WMA users participated in 214,364 days hunting game and 10,861 days of non-consumptive use.
- 57,130 resident WMA user permits sold in FY23 generating \$856,950 in revenue.
- 4,163 non-resident WMA user permits sold in FY23 generating \$124,890 in revenue.
- 9,610 acres are managed annually in permanent openings and food plots.
- 21 WMAs provided special youth or handicapped hunting opportunities.
- Four youth dove hunts were conducted on four WMAs.
- 394 acres are planted to provide migratory dove hunting opportunities on 14 WMAs.
- Senior adult draw hunts are offered on five WMAs.

### WMA Habitat Management

- Planted 114 acres of mixed hardwoods on Canal Section WMA.
- Thinned 70 acres of pine hardwood mix on Canemount WMA.
- Cruised and sold 92 acres on Copiah County WMA.
- Cruised and sold 39 acres (clearcut) on John Bell Williams WMA.
- Cruised 130 acres and thinned 64 acres on Malmaison WMA.
- Cruised and thinned 96 acres on Marion County WMA.
- Thinned 173 acres on O'Keefe WMA.
- Precommercial thinned 173 acres on Pascagoula WMA.
- Sprayed 500 acres of cogon grass on Land Between the Creeks Unit on Pascagoula WMA.
- Conducted Timber Stand Improvement injection work on 60 acres on Theodore Mars WMA.
- Conducted river clean out operations on more than 7 miles of the Pearl River on Nanih Waiya WMA.
- Aerially applied herbicide to control woody growth in a 70-acre unit managed for wintering waterfowl on Nanih Waiya WMA.
- Mulched 20 acres of overgrown woody stems to create openings for waterfowl use on Sky Lake WMA.

- Protected seven sandbars on Ward Bayou to protect T&E turtle species.
- Prescribed burned 7,358 acres on 10 WMAs.
- Trapped 361 pigs across eight WMAs.

### WMA Infrastructure

- Improved 126 miles of roads across 27 WMAs.
- Improved two bridges on two WMAs, 46 low-water crossings across nine WMAs, and four culverts across four WMAs.
- Replaced or improved 27 water-control structures across four WMAs.
- Renovated 5 miles of ditches associated with levees.
- Marked with paint and posted 65 miles of boundaries across 12 WMAs.
- Renovated 10 miles of levees.
- Renovated over 500 acres of waterfowl impoundments across two WMAs.
- Installed one water well for irrigating waterfowl impoundments on Sky Lake WMA.

### Private Lands Habitat Program

- Conducted 337 technical guidance site visits on private lands throughout Mississippi impacting nearly 270,997 acres. Of those technical guidance site visits, 185 were first-time site visits constituting more than 98,233 acres and 152 visits impacting 172,764 acres were either repeat or initial visits to Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) Clubs.
- Conducted 38 public presentations, including several lectures for Mississippi colleges and universities.
- Wrote 24 digital or print media products including podcasts, videos, website content, and press releases related to habitat management.
- Provided coordination and/or support for several habitat-related groups including the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMVJV) LA/MS Conservation Delivery Network, Black Belt Prairie Restoration Initiative, Mississippi Longleaf Implementation Team, and Mississippi Prescribed Fire Council.
- Coordinated with USFWS, Wildlife Mississippi, Mississippi Forestry Commission, National Wild Turkey Federation, National





Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and others on the “Fire on the Forty” campaign, which has accounted for more than 84,081 acres of prescribed fire in the Black Belt Prairie and Piney Woods regions of the state.

- Maintained the Private Lands Program web pages to help inform and educate the public on habitat-related issues.
- Attended professional development training and or events accounting for 33 man-days.
- Represented the MDWFP at professional meetings related to conservation accounting for 69 man-days.
- Assisted other programs with dove and wood duck banding, white-tailed deer herd health evaluations, and bobwhite and wild turkey population monitoring efforts.

### White-tailed Deer Program

- Data collection.
  - Compiled velvet deer season compliance data and provided to Law Enforcement Bureau.
  - Coordinated three Magnolia Records deer scoring sessions.
  - Conducted 10 spring deer herd health evaluations.
  - Coordinated National Forests Spotlight Counts.
  - Conducted thermal deer survey on Natchez Trace Parkway.
  - Responded to sick deer reports. Coordinated sampling when feasible.
- Deer Information, Education, and Technical Guidance
  - Wrote and submitted four articles on deer and Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).
  - Prepared and presented 38 CWD presentations to various groups.
  - Conducted 19 Workshops/Demonstrations/Events/Presentations other than CWD.
  - Conducted 42 public land tech guidance assistance and 36 private land site visits.
- 1,164,149 acres enrolled in Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP).
- Taught cadets at Mississippi Conservation Officers Training Academy (MCOTA).
- Assisted MDWFP Media on campaign to promote deer harvest and management.
- Worked with MDWFP Media on youth hunter participation project.
- Attended and assisted with coordination of Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS) Wildlife Disease Workshop for MDWFP staff.
- Participated in Deer Research
  - Coordinated with MS State Department of Health on tick research.
  - Coordinated with MSU on deer and pig interaction research.
  - Coordinated with Mississippi College on SARS research and sample collection.
  - Assisted University of Vermont with SARS research of deer-human interaction.
  - Assisted MSU Deer Lab with tooth wear/replacement research.
  - Compiled statewide Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (aka blue-tongue) data and submitted to Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS).
- Representation
  - Served as MS representative and chair for Cervid Working Group and SE Deer Committee.
  - Attended Cervid Working Group Meeting and Southeastern Deer Study Group Meeting.
  - Attended Animal Working Group Meeting.
- Assisted with regulating white-tailed deer herds within enclosures.
  - Assisted with two enclosure decommissions.
  - Conducted nine enclosure site visits.





- Gathered data for approval/denial of semen, ova, embryo importation requests from enclosures.
- Served as liaison between public and MS Board of Animal Health regarding escaped exotics.
- Coordinated/tallied CWD samples from enclosures.
- Developed protocol for Animal Control Permit (ACP) renewal requests; multiple meetings with MSU Ag Extension specialists.
- Assisted LE Bureau with onsite evaluations for ACP renewal requests.
- Worked with MS River Landowners' Alliance regarding increasing doe harvest opportunities; resulted in Executive Order for DMAP properties to use weapon of choice in early primitive antlerless-only season.
- Processed all camera survey permit requests.
- Provided recommendations on deer hunting season dates and bag limit regulations.

### Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Monitoring

- Collected more than 7,885 samples from July 2022–June 2023.
- Detected 73 CWD-positive deer during FY23. Contacted all hunters. Mailed replacement tags.
- Established 61 CWD sample drop-off freezers and worked with 72 taxidermists for CWD sample submission across the state.
- Implemented taxidermist CWD payment program.
- Implemented CWD DMAP Program.
- Participated in CWD Research
  - SOP4CWD (Cornell University)
  - CWD DNA study (University of Wisconsin)
  - RT-QuIC CWD testing research (MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab)
  - CWD impact on deer density research (MSU Deer and Genetics Lab)
  - CWD in Scrapes and Feeders (MSU Deer Lab and University of Minnesota)

- Economic Impacts of CWD in North MS and South-west TN (MSU Forestry and University of Tennessee)
- CWD Storyboard Education Project (MSU Deer Lab)
- Participated in CWD panel for Alabama CWD Public meeting.
- Participated in SE states CWD bi-monthly update meetings.
- Attended International CWD Symposium in Denver, CO; served on deer management panel.
- Created CWD Season Guide and updated CWD website.
- Collected and uploaded all CWD-positive harvest locations from surrounding states.
- Communicated and coordinated CWD mitigation techniques with adjacent states.
- Hosted CWD Partners meeting at MDWFP Headquarters. Attendees included MS Department of Environmental Quality, MS Board of Animal Health, MS State Department of Health, and MS Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

### Migratory Bird Program

- Attended 10 workshops/field days.
- Developed 25 popular articles, press releases, and digital media products on migratory game birds and management of associated habitats.
- Participated in seven media interviews related to migratory game birds.
- Issued 860 Light Goose Conservation Order permits and reported hunter effort and harvest estimates to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Prepared 10 weekly waterfowl reports during 2022–2023 hunting season and posted online.
- Continued coordination of Youth Waterfowl Hunting and Education Camp with Ducks Unlimited.
- Conducted four winter aerial waterfowl surveys, analyzed data, and posted reports on MDWFP Waterfowl Program web page.
- Conducted waterfowl drone surveys on selected WMAs periodi-





cally throughout the winter.

- Instructed one college class meeting on waterfowl conservation related topics at Mississippi State University.
- Administered a private land water control structure program for wetland habitat establishment: provided 19 structures, impacting 345 acres of new wetlands.
- Conducted 41 private land site visits, impacting 9,110 acres by providing wetland habitat management recommendations.
- Represented Mississippi during 44 professional meetings of the Mississippi Flyway Council Game Bird and Non-game Bird Technical Sections, Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society, Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMVJV) Waterfowl Working Group, LMVJV LA/MS Conservation Delivery Network, Gulf Coast Joint Venture Management Board, and other groups.
- Chaired the Mississippi Flyway Council Gamebird Technical Section.
- Chaired the Mississippi Flyway Council Gamebird Technical Section's Dabbling Duck Committee.
- Provided recommendations to the MDWFP Commission and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on migratory game bird hunting seasons and regulations.
- Worked with conservation partners and Wildlife Bureau staff to compile recommendations for Mississippi State Waterfowl Stamp funding recommendations and presented recommendations to the MDWFP Commission.
- Maintained the Waterfowl Program, Dove Program, and Falconry Program web pages to help inform and educate the public on migratory game bird-related issues.
- Administered eight nuisance Canada goose take permits to private landowners.
- Administered falconry take permits and facility inspections.
- Coordinated with Mississippi State University and funded a waterfowl research post-doctoral project to analyze long-term aerial waterfowl survey data.
- Coordinated resident migratory bird banding during July-September: banded 239 wood ducks and 601 mourning doves.
- Assisted the WMA Program with wildlife habitat manipulations and management.

## Black Bear Program

- Anthony Ballard took over the black bear program in November of 2022 after Richard Rummel's retirement.
- Documented black bear sightings across the state via email, phone calls, texts, and social media. The information from these reports is being collected on our system, and will soon be displayed on the Black Bear Program webpage. The hope is to increase public awareness and participation reporting observations.
- Bear-human conflicts are still being reported and are being answered by phone consultation or in-person site visits.
- From August 2022 through June of 2023, a total of 12 bears have been captured and collared in Warren, Issaquena, Wilkinson, and Bolivar counties.
- Provided technical assistance to the public and to agency personnel regarding real or potential human-bear conflicts.
- "Bear Week" on social media reached over 600,000 users across Facebook and Instagram platforms. This was a big accomplishment for reaching the public with educational materials about black bears.
- The black bear reporting features on the MDWFP website has reached an all-time high.
- The black bear program website now features an interactive map showing all bear observations since 2016 (updated in real-time).
- Automated hogeye systems were used to trap two mature males in June of 2023. The program plans to build on these successes.
- The black bear program will soon have an automated Cambrian trap online for captures.
- The MSU black bear hair snare project has concluded in several areas of the state but is ongoing in southeast Mississippi.
- A human dimensions survey has been approved and is in the beginning phases of implementation. This survey is slated to be conducted in summer of 2025.
- Continued work on revision of Black Bear Conservation & Management Plan.
- Continued work on the SEAFWA Large Carnivore Working Group.
- Made presentation on "Black Bears in Mississippi" to MCOTA





cadet class.

## Wild Turkey Program

- Coordinated Game Check, Mississippi's system for the mandatory reporting of turkeys harvested during the spring season. During 2023, 11,277 gobblers were reported by 7,646 unique hunters. These figures were 13% and 10% increases, respectively, over the previous year. Forty-four percent of all Mississippi counties reported an increase in spring turkey harvest over the previous year.
- Provided recommendations and education updates to the Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks on turkey hunting regulations and policy. Worked specifically with the Commission on rule changes to turkey hunting, including (a) the implementation of mandatory tagging for harvested turkeys beginning in 2025, and (b) the suspension of Mississippi's fall, either-sex season. These changes were recommended following a multi-year evaluation which included cooperative research with Mississippi State University.
- Coordinated statewide monitoring efforts on wild turkey populations including summer Wild Turkey Brood Survey, Spring Gobbler Hunting Survey, and Wildlife Management Area Hunter Observation survey.
- In conjunction with faculty at Mississippi State University's College of Forest Resources, coordinated research utilizing non-invasive genetics to determine the health and status of wild turkey populations across eight different study sites in Mississippi. Successfully developed project proposals to garner grant funding from the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) and Turkeys For Tomorrow.
- Oversaw drawing to regulate nonresident hunter pressure on public lands during the opening weeks of Mississippi's spring season.
- Cooperated with MDWFP Wildlife Management Area (WMA) staff to develop management projects to enhance turkey habitat on WMAs utilizing funding from the National Wild Turkey Federation and other outside sources.

- Worked with other Wildlife Bureau- staff to develop a \$570,000 request to the Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund to underwrite cost-sharing of habitat management practices on private lands throughout the state. When coupled with additional funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, this project will enhance or conserve up to 100,000 acres in Mississippi in the next five years.
- Conducted 18 technical guidance site visits offering wildlife management recommendations to private landowners impacting 15,529 acres. Conducted 10 public land technical guidance site visits. Drafted management plans for four properties.
- Participated in 10 public presentations, technical guidance events, or field days in which wildlife conservation and management information was presented to lay audiences.
- Developed 17 turkey-related popular articles, agency press releases, or digital media products.
- Communicated with multiple outdoor writers, members of the press, and other mass media outlets regarding the status of wild turkeys in Mississippi or wild turkey hunting forecasts.
- Maintained and updated information on the MDWFP Wild Turkey web page, including Magnolia Turkey Records Program.
- Coordinated the Turkey Management Assistance Program (TMAP) application of the web-based Natural Resource Information System. Worked to clean and incorporate data gathered from the WMA check-in smartphone application into the TMAP system.
- Monitored reports of diseased turkeys. Maintained database on all reports of diseased turkeys. When feasible, obtained specimens for diagnostics and collaborated with the Southeast Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study Group or the Mississippi State University veterinary lab in Pearl.
- Served as a member of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) Wild Turkey Working Group, including attending the group's annual meeting hosted in Durant, Oklahoma. Provide a 12-page annual update to the working group on the status of wild turkeys in Mississippi.
- Appeared as a guest on nationally distributed podcasts to discuss wild turkey conservation and management including *Spring Legion*, *NWTf's Turkey Call All Access*, and *Wild Turkey Science*.
- Served as an invited panelist speaker for the Conservation Conference at the National Wild Turkey Federation's annual convention in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Served as technical advisor to the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation.
- Provided support to other MDWFP Wildlife Bureau programs and projects as needed.

## Small Game Program

- Conducted one public land site visit.
- Conducted three private land site visits.
- Provided wildlife habitat and population management technical guidance through 23 emails/phone calls.
- Provided general information about small game hunting and other information through 108 emails/phone calls.
- Cooperated with the MDWFP Private Lands Program to implement and track habitat practices that benefit quail and other small game on private lands.
- Coordinated breeding season quail call counts on 17 Wildlife



Management Areas (WMAs) and processed data.

- Coordinated quail covey call counts on two WMAs.
- Maintained small game web pages.
- Cooperated with MDWFP Wildlife and Law Enforcement Bureaus and US Fish and Wildlife Service to organize youth squirrel hunting events on four WMAs and one National Wildlife Refuge.
- Coordinated action items relevant to the National Bobwhite and Grasslands Initiative including habitat inventory, Coordinated Implementation Program, and state-level support for operations.
- Represented MDWFP on National Bobwhite and Grassland Initiative Technical Committee.
- Conducted initial planning activities for hosting 2024 annual meeting of National Bobwhite and Grassland Initiative Technical Committee.
- Participated in Quail Forever chapter planning meetings.
- Participated in East Gulf Coastal Plain Joint Venture board meeting.
- Participated in Lagomorph Working Group virtual meeting.
- Continued to monitor for and provide information on Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus Type 2.
- Provided guidance in developing and implementing a quail population dynamics cooperative research project with MSU.
- Assisted in collection of hunter-harvested rabbit tissue samples to support a swamp rabbit population research project conducted by MSU.
- Participated in a quail management video segment for media outreach.
- Conducted a small game management seminar at Mississippi National Guard Youth Wildlife Camp.
- Authored one popular article for Mississippi Outdoors magazine.
- Participated in radio show segment about small game management information.
- Provided requested small game hunting season forecasts to outdoor writers for various outlets.
- Assisted with Fire on the Forty Initiative projects to assist landowners with prescribed burning.
- Provided Wildlife Bureau support assisting with deer herd health evaluations, waterfowl draw hunts, and wildlife habitat manipulations (e.g., prescribed burning) on WMAs.

## Alligator Program

- Facilitated 980 public water alligator hunting permits.
- Facilitated 121 approved Private Land Alligator Hunting Properties with 344 harvest vouchers on 22,681 acres of privately owned alligator habitat.
- Reported 830 alligators harvested on public waters and 142 on private lands.
- Responded to approximately 305 nuisance alligator complaints that required agency action.
- Licensed and monitored two Alligator Ranches and one Alligator Egg Production Facility.
- Conducted 251.5 miles of public waterway alligator survey routes.
- Facilitated quota nuisance alligator harvest permits on Pelahatchie Bay and Ross Barnett Reservoir (75 alligators removed) and Lake Hico (Entergy Facility) in Hinds County (3 alligators removed) due to lake closures and draining operations.

- Proposed and approved a new alligator hunting season and permitting process for Pelahatchie Bay portion of Ross Barnett Reservoir.
- Conducted nine public presentations.
- Conducted 12 TV/newspaper/magazine/social media interviews locally, statewide, and nationally related to alligator activity, nuisance alligators, alligator hunting, and alligator biology.
- Provided three press releases related to alligator hunting opportunities.
- Issued nine transportation permits for commercial interstate movement of live alligators.
- Authored/Co-authored two magazine articles.
- Assisted MDWFP Wildlife Management Area program with waterfowl enforcement efforts (7 days/24 citations).
- Facilitated 12 permits for the special Pelahatchie Bay alligator hunt.
- Reported 22 alligators harvested during the special Pelahatchie Bay alligator season

## Furbearer Program

- Attended furbearer working group in May 2023.
- Conducted Kosciusko fur sale in February 2023.
- Conducted trapper survey to over 1,500 licensed trappers.
- Supplied CITES tags to MDWFP points of sale across the state.
- Developed a new 3-Day Nonresident Fur Dealer's License (\$75) to promote a more affordable license for out-of-state fur dealers and more competitive participation at the annual fur auction.
- Surveyed over 1,000 licensed fur trappers to determine harvest estimates and other trapping effort parameters.

## Exotic Species Program

- Administered permitting program for Inherently Dangerous Animals. Reviewed applications, conducted inspections, and issued Temporary Exhibitor Permits and Fee-Exempt Permits.
- Consulted with and coordinated with MS Board of Animal Health/State Veterinarian on importation, legal possession, and exhibition of both exotic and native wildlife species under jurisdiction of MDWFP.
- Responded to inquiries from various zoos and captive animal facilities throughout the country on "pass-through" permit requirements when transporting captive animals through Mississippi.
- Provided technical guidance to various local, state, and federal agencies as well as the general public on MDWFP statutes/regulations regarding ownership and possession of captive wildlife.
- Responded to emails and texts with photos of animals, animal tracks, scat, and other sign requesting identification.
- Coordinated with USDA/Animal Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) /Animal Care on the licensing of exotic species facilities in Mississippi.
- Provided support to MDWFP Enforcement Bureau on the identification of non-game wildlife species and implementation of exotic species regulations.



## Wildlife Research Program

- Conducted grant project administration for cooperative wildlife research projects (seven projects in FY) between MDWFP, Mississippi State University (MSU), and University of Tennessee (UT) funded through Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program funds.
- Funded third year of wild turkey population dynamics and harvest modeling study with MSU.
- Funded third year of white-tailed deer populations in relation to Chronic Wasting Disease and long-duration floods study with MSU.
- Funded third year of effect of growing season prescribed fire on Species of Greatest Conservation Need in pine forests study with MSU (State Wildlife Grant project cooperating with Mississippi Museum of Natural Science).
- Funded third year of Mississippi portion of vegetation response to season of prescribed fire application in pine forests multi-state study with UT.
- Funded second year of investigating the scale of effect of northern bobwhite populations across multiple landscapes using MDWFP Wildlife Management Areas as a model study with MSU.
- Funded first year of wild turkey population parameters estimation using non-invasive genetics techniques study with MSU.
- Funded first year of black bear population monitoring and modeling study with MSU.
- Supported the multi-state, multi-agency Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study Group.
- Coordinated the annual harvest survey for hunters and trappers.
- Monitored waterfowl populations via aerial surveys (coordinated by Migratory Game Bird Program).
- Banded wood ducks and mourning doves (coordinated by Migratory Game Bird Program).

## Nuisance Species Program

- Martin Coker took over the Nuisance Species Program in the summer of 2023.
- The Nuisance Species Program is currently discussing private land trapping (WMA-adjacent lands) and the updating of many internal documentation portals is underway.
- WMA and Wild Hog Program personnel captured and removed approximately 490 wild hogs on 9 WMAs.
- The wild hog survey project has seen great success. With estimated density reduction of 92% over the summer of 2021, but an increase of 42% over the 2021-22 hunting season.
- Malmaison and Okeefe WMAs were added to the survey project. Malmaison also saw drastic reduction in hog density estimates. In total, 153 hogs were removed from the oxberry unit (800 acres).
- Since then, the survey method has been employed on a 15,000 acre conglomerate of private land in the North Delta by the private lands program (Summer of 2023). This method enabled a wildlife intern to identify and target areas to trap on these properties.
- Conducted site visits on four private lands, multiple WMAs,



- and one state park to provide technical guidance on wild hog trapping.
- Maintained and edited “Wild Hog Program” web pages on MDWFP website.
- Attended meetings including International Wild Pig Conference, Animal Working Group Meeting, Hunt Coordinator, Beaver and Wild Hog Control Assistance Program, and collaborative meetings with MSU extension, USDA WS, MDAC, and MFC.
- Chaired two meetings of the Wild Hog and Beaver Control Advisory Board to initiate legislative action to provide a ban on transportation of live wild hogs on public roads and highways. House Bill #1065 was passed and became effective July 1, 2022.
- The nuisance wildlife operator permit system has completed its second year of digital renewals. The website will soon feature a searchable list of permitted NWCOs in the state.
- Constructed private land instructional guide on wild hog damage survey method.
- Appeared on Creature Comforts, MS Outdoors, and multiple other podcasts/shows for education purposes.
- Conducted multiple presentations and/or career days to adult and young adult audiences.
- Conducted three night operations for disease sampling and management purposes.
- Prepared and submitted disease and/or genetic samples to USDA WS for testing.
- Updated nuisance wildlife operator map.
- Provided phone and email technical guidance to multiple private landowners and managers as needed.







# 2023

## FRESHWATER FISHERIES MANAGEMENT



### Statewide Fisheries Management and Research

- Sampled fish populations in 52 public waters using 539 days of effort.
- Expended 54 days enhancing fish habitat in public waters.
- Wrote or contributed to 7 popular articles, 1 press release, and 33 social media posts.
- Provided technical assistance to private water owners and other government agencies.
- Conducted 205 private waters assessments encompassing 2,642 acres.
- Investigated or consulted on 4 fish kills in public waters and 6 fish kills in private waters.
- Managed 20 Community Fishing Assistance Ponds (CFAP) ponds containing 411 acres.
- Staff spent 414 days surveying and controlling over 3,417 acres of aquatic plant communities in 32 public waters bodies.
- Continued funding research with Mississippi State University on improving fish population analysis software, improving crappie spawning techniques, assessing state lake management, and Invasive Carp control.
- Managed the Freshwater Commercial Fishing program. Sold 1,127 freshwater commercial fishing licenses and 494 slat basket licenses.

### State Fishing Lakes

- Anglers spent 56,616 days fishing on state fishing lakes.
- Total users (anglers, campers, and pavilion users) accounted for 75,136 days.
- Repaired spillway at Lake Bogue Homa.
- Kemper County Lake was transferred to Kemper County Board of Supervisors per 2023 legislation, and will no longer be leased and managed by MDWFP.
- Reopened Simpson County Lake to the public.

### Aquatic Education and Outreach

- Provided information and education services.
- Participated as guest on MS Outdoors Television and Radio shows.

- 45 youth fishing events were conducted and attended by 4,782 participants.
- Answered 217 questions posted on Agency website.
- Expended 76 days updating statewide fishing reports.
- Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery Visitor Education Center summary:
  - Planned and coordinated 21 on-site programs/events including:
    - Summer Gyotaku
    - Spring Break Mystery Week
  - Created Educational Traveling Trunks where 891 Students reached off-site.
  - Coordinated and hosted 2 on-site teacher workshops with 49 educators participating.
  - Conducted 59 F.I.S.H. programs, 6 interpretive talks, and 72 aquarium feedings.
  - Expanded Downloadable/Virtual Section to Website:
    - Created Fish Predator Book/Lesson Plan
    - Scale Up Your Knowledge
    - Smithsonian lesson plans (English and Spanish)
  - Conducted 66 guided tours of the aquarium, exhibits, and hatchery.
  - Attendance figures totaled 5,223 visitors.
  - Coordinated Youth Art Contest (404 entries).
  - Continued water safety exhibit with USACE.
  - Created L.A.B. (Learn About Biodiversity) program including specimens from aquatic flora and fauna.

### Public Boating Access

- One boat ramp site was developed:
  - An extension was made to the boat ramp at Okhissa Lake at an approximate cost of \$8,400.
- One additional ramp repair was made at:
  - Black Creek additional rip rap for an approximate cost of \$921
- Repair of spillway valve at Lake Bogue Homa with approximate cost of \$5,948.
- Archeological survey at Bogue Homa spillway project area at an approximate cost of \$1,089.
- Renovation of a fishing pier at Lake Mary Crawford at an





approximate cost of \$523.

- Purchase of pilings for various pier projects at \$7,020.
- Purchase of sport fish restoration signs and agency logos at an approximate cost of \$1,063.
- Replaced signs at Big Sunflower and Nanih Waiya ramps at an approximate cost of \$1,320.
- 16 boat ramps required routine maintenance. Multiple trips were made, per user requests to the Hwy 61 and Hwy 16 ramps on the Big Black River, the Hwy 12 ramp on the Yazoo River, the Hwy 49 ramp on the Bowie River, and Laney's Landing on the Mississippi River.
- 35 ramps were inspected but required no maintenance.
- Assisted with facility and equipment maintenance and construction of State Parks, WMAs, State Lakes, and Turcotte Field Office.

## Fisheries Administration

- Annual Reports were completed for the following Federal grants:
  - Fish Administration
  - Freshwater Fisheries Management and State Lakes Operation and Maintenance
  - Aquatic Education
  - Boating Access
  - Lake Jeff Davis Operation, Maintenance and Development
  - Lake Elvis Presley Restroom Renovation
  - MS-F-F19AF00638 FRASps: a planning support tool for inland fisheries management
  - FY17AP01041- Activities to Implement the Mississippi State Management Plan for Aquatic Invasive Species
  - FY20AP11539 – Activities to track effects of invasive carps on native fish populations in Moon Lake and Yazoo/Mississippi River drainages
  - FY21AP02996 – Activities to track effects of invasive carps on native fish populations in Eagle Lake, Tennessee-Tombigbee lakes, and evaluating Mississippi Alluvial Valley oxbow lakes for potential invasion of invasive carps
  - F22AP03338 – Activities to track invasive carps on

the Tennessee River system Lakes (Pickwick Lake in Mississippi)

- Maintained public fishing records. New state records were established for:
  - **Trophy:** Blue Catfish – 131 pounds
  - **Rod and reel:** Redfin Pickerel – 0.16 pounds
  - **Fly fishing:** White Crappie – 2.17 pounds
- Technical Advice or Assistance was provided to 33 local, state and federal agencies and nongovernmental organizations including the American Fisheries Society; Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; Bass Angler Sportsman Society, Gulf and South Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species; Instream Flow Council; Lower Mississippi River Conservation Committee; Mississippi Aquatic Invasive Species Council, Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association; Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species; Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality; Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Mississippi State University, Pearl River Valley Water Supply District; Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership; Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; US Department of the Interior, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Forest Service, US Environmental Protection Agency, US Air Force; US Army, US Army Corps of Engineers - Memphis District, Mobile District, and Vicksburg Districts and at Grenada Lake; US Fish and Wildlife Service, City of Eupora, City of Olive Branch, City of Olive Branch, Tate/Desoto and Panola/Tallahatchie County Forestry Associations.
- Fisheries Staff were assigned to represent the department in professional associations (AFS, AFWA, SEAFWA) and technical committees as requested.

## Fish Hatcheries and Fish Stocking

- Managed two hatcheries totaling 29 surface acres of water and produced 971,596 fish.



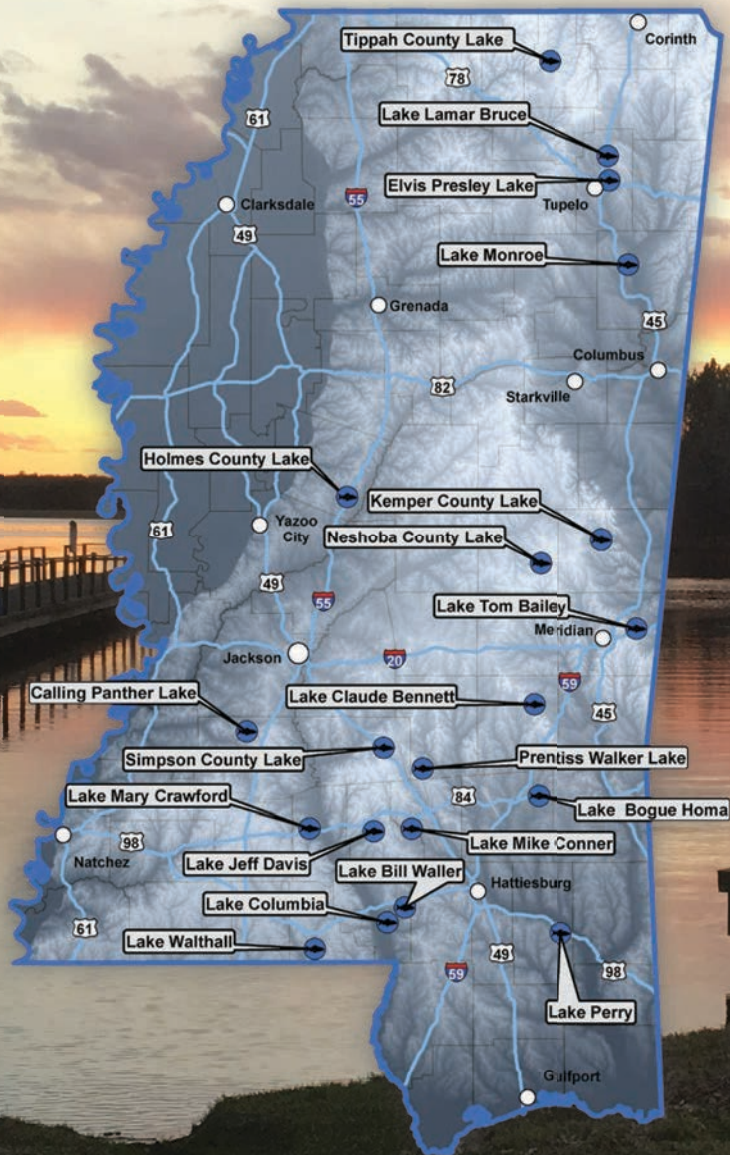
Number	County	Public Water
<b>Florida Largemouth Bass</b>		
20,400	Yazoo	Lake George
12,000	Yazoo	Dump Lake
90,000	Tishomingo	Pickwick Lake
100,000	Prentiss	Bay Springs Lake
18,500	Yazoo	Wolf Lake
29,700	Lauderdale	Okatibbee Reservoir
200,000	Madison, Rankin	Ross Barnett Reservoir
450	Warren	Eagle Lake
471, 050T		
<b>Koi</b>		
8,595	Yalobusha	Bass Pond – North MS Fish Hatchery
8,595 T		
<b>Coppernose Bluegill</b>		
188,000	Holmes	Horseshoe Lake
40,000	Simpson	Simpson County Lake
560	DeSoto	Olive Branch ( Lower)
1,500	Lafayette	Lake Patsy
200	DeSoto	Olive Branch (Middle)
230,260 T		
<b>Redear Sunfish</b>		
64,000	Holmes	Horseshoe Lake
3,000	Forrest	Duncan Lake
70	DeSoto	Olive Branch (Middle)
200	DeSoto	Olive Branch ( Lower)
67,270 T		
<b>Northern Largemouth Bass</b>		
5,000	Holmes	Horseshoe Lake
30,000	Holmes	Bee Lake
1,750	Bolivar	Little Round Lake
500	Bolivar	Bear Pen Park Lake
37,250 T		

Number	County	Public Water
<b>Black Crappie</b>		
25,000	Lee	Elvis Presley Lake
9,000	Lowndes	Lake Lowndes State Park
5,000	Marion	Lake Bill Waller
1,200	Holmes	English Lake at Holmes Co. State Park
4,000	Jeff Davis	Lake Jeff Davis
44,200T		
<b>Golden Shiners</b>		
42,000	Yalobusha	
42,000 T		
<b>Channel Catfish</b>		
150	Desoto	Lees Summit Park Lake
300	Lafayette	Olive Branch - Lower Lake
100	Lafayette	Olive Branch - Middle Lake
200	Lafayette	Olive Branch - Upper Lake
2,400	Marshall	Wall Doxey State Park
700	Lafayette	Lake Patsy
16,000	Lee	Pvt John Allen National Fish Hatchery
30,732	Holmes	Horseshoe Lake
50,582 T		
<b>Grass Carp</b>		
1,978	Webster	Whites Creek
9,000	Clark	Ivy Lake at Clarkco State Park
1,500	Scott	Shadow Lake, Roosevelt St Pk
1,500	Scott	Golden Memorial
20	Lee	Lake Lamar Bruce
1,000	Lee	Elvis Presley Lake
2,466	Jones	Lake Bogue Homa
1,000	Pontotoc	Trace State Park Lake
1,000	Marshall	Spring Lake at Wall Doxey St Park
170	Lowndes	Black Prairie WMA lakes
750	Lowndes	Lake Lowndes State Park
20,384 T		





# MISSISSIPPI *State Lakes*



Mississippi's 20 state lakes are a premier destination for quality fishing and outdoor recreation. With lakes located across the Magnolia State, it is easy to hook a fish or spend the day on the water with family and friends.

Visit [www.mdwfp.com/statelakes](http://www.mdwfp.com/statelakes) for more information regarding Mississippi's State Fishing Lakes



# 2023

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

### Cadet Class

In May 2022, 15 cadets started the MS Conservation Officers Training Academy (MCOTA). As always, the training process works and 9 remaining cadets graduated in November 2022, and started their career as a Conservation officer with MDWFP working with a field training officer (FTO). As of this update, all 9 are still employed with MDWFP. On Nov. 15, 2022, MDWFP advertised through the MS State Personnel Board (MSPB) for 15 vacant cadet positions in hopes of hiring another class. A 30-day advertising and social media blitz drew interest from 175 total applicants, 26 of whom were sincerely interested in becoming an MDWFP Conservation Officer. Through the pre-PT testing and interview process, 15 applicants were selected to start MCOTA in March 2023. At the end of FY 23, 12 Cadets remained and had completed both the MCOTA and MLEOTA phase of the training process. Those 12 Cadets graduated Aug. 31, 2023, and began working with a Field Training Officer (FTO) in their area of responsibility.

### Turcotte, Mclvor, and McHenry Shooting Facilities

- 25,209 total customers utilized MDWFP's three Shooting Facilities
- MDWFP shooting facilities with individual check-in numbers as follows:

#### Turcotte Shooting Facility, Canton - Number of Customers

- Handgun Range - 2,063
- Sporting Clay Course - 3,283
- Rifle Range - 2,618
- Skeet Fields - 528
- 5-Stand - 182
- Archery Sight-in and 3D Course - 249
- **TOTAL: 8,923**

#### Mclvor Shooting Facility, Sardis - Number of Customers

- Handgun Range - 1,460
- Sporting Clay Course - 1,982
- Rifle Range - 2,045
- Skeet Fields - 763
- Trap Fields - 422
- 5-Stand - 279

- Archery Sight-in and 3D Course - 601
- **TOTAL: 7,552**

#### McHenry Shooting Facility, Perkinston - Number of Customers

- Handgun Range - 2,087
- Sporting Clay Course - 3,194
- Rifle Range - 2,539
- Skeet Fields - 386
- Trap Fields - 121
- 5-Stand - 226
- Archery Sight-in and 3D Course - 181
- **TOTAL: 8,734**

#### Mississippi Scholastic Shooting Program

MDWFP introduced the Mississippi Scholastic Shooting Program (MSSP) in 2017. MSSP is a team-based youth development program that uses the shotgun sports of 5-Stand, Skeet, and Sporting Clays to instill life skills such as discipline, safety, teamwork, ethics, self-confidence, and other life values. The program utilizes these disciplines to teach hunting skills through the safe use of hunting equipment, including firearms, and their relationship to hunting situations. Team members can participate in any or all three of the clay target disciplines: Trap, Skeet, and Sporting Clays.

The MSSP is not designed to compete with 4-H or other youth based organizations, but should complement it in schools. The MSSP will provide youth an opportunity to compete for their school in a scholastic shooting sports program.

- There are currently 77 total teams involved in the program. There are 32 private schools, 32 public schools and 13 clubs actively participating in the program.
- 1,376 students are enrolled in the program and 1,346 participated in the MDWFP tournaments. Of those that participated in the tournaments, there were 99 females and 1,277 males.
- MSSP is now present in 45 counties around the state.





### Special Response Team (SRT)

There are currently 50 SRT members serving on this team including the new K9 and Dive teams. The K9 handlers completed eight-plus weeks of training with their new K9 partners. The team responded to 16 calls for assistance around the state in FY23. The SRT members continue to perform at a high level, always being Law Enforcement professionals.

There have been several high-profile missions performed during FY 23.

- SRT provided drone mapping and security for the Mississippi state fair.
- SRT provided training for the cadet class.
- SRT provided executive protection for CBC in Biloxi, MS.
- SRT provided drone and security in Smith County for protest events.
- Deployed to Montgomery County to assist USMS with tactical search.
- Deployed to George County for search and rescue of missing person.
- Deployed to Holmes County for search and rescue of missing person.
- Deployed to Hinds County for tactical search assisting the U.S. Marshals Service.
- The SRT also participated in the 6th annual Yanky 72 Memorial in Itta Bena MS.





## Officer Activities

Officers issued 7,931 citations in FY 23

- No hunting license by resident: 1,352 citations
- Trespassing: 493 citations
- Hunting From Public Road: 364 citations
- No License by Non-Resident: 398 citations
- Supplemental feeding violation: 243 citations
- Deer hunting without hunter orange: 171 citations
- Head lighting deer: 159 citations
- Hunting over bait: 42 citations
- Boating related, Littering, Hunting out of Season, and other violations: 4,709 citations

Other officer involvement:

- 3,001 (10-61) checks on our WMAs and State Lakes
- Investigated 35 total boating related accidents/incidents.
- Recorded 31,604 hours working on the water enforcing boating regulations, with four fatalities, 22 injuries, and an estimated \$204,500 in property damage
- 21 public water drownings
- Issued 52 total BUI citations statewide
- Performed 557 boat inspections
- Officers investigated 16 hunting accidents/incidents
- Has 136,112 currently registered vessels in MS
- Certified 6,412 students in Boater Safety

## Youth Programs

### Youth Participation Initiative (YPI)

- To date, \$2,704,098 has been awarded to help fund 415 projects.
- 57 applications were received totaling \$298,239 in requested fund-

ing. YPI was authorized to award up to \$ 200,000.

- The YPI Program provided a total of \$ 191,250 to help fund 53 projects across Mississippi.
- The projects focused on youth recruitment, retention, and education in the areas of wildlife conservation, white-tail deer, squirrel, and waterfowl hunting and fishing opportunities, shooting sports, marine education, and Hunter and Boater Education.
- 3,894 youth were educated or introduced into the outdoors through the Youth Participation Initiative this year.

### Hunter Education

- 10,300 students were certified throughout the state.
- Classroom and online courses are available. As of July 29, 2020, full online Hunter Education certification is available to residents 12 and older.
- 219 classes were taught statewide.
- Coordinated 390 volunteer instructors.
- Certified 72 volunteer instructors during this period.
- 1,648 hours were contributed to the Hunter Education Program
- This program is administered by eight MDWFP personnel through:
  - Evaluating MDWFP and instructor performance.
  - Evaluating and improving Hunter Education Classes
  - Developing and providing training for MDWFP personnel and volunteer instructors.
  - Evaluating state and federal program compliance.
  - Purchasing necessary supplies and equipment to support the program.
  - Providing and maintaining a database for storage and retrieval of student and instructor records.





# 2023

## MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE

MISSISSIPPI  
Museum of  
Natural  
Science

### Public Programs (Education and Exhibits)

- Served a grand total of 251,396 people.
- Hosted 83,951 visitors at the Museum.
- Conducted 626 in-house presentations for grades Pre-K to Adult for over 19,491 individuals.
- Conducted 248 in-house presentations for school-aged children from Pre-K to College for over 19,504 students.
- Planned, organized, and conducted 15 conservation education workshops. 259 educators participated.
- Planned, organized, and executed major events: *World Snake Day*, *Sciencefest*, *Park After Dark*, *Wild About Gobblers*, *STEM with Snowflakes*, *Snow Much Fun*, *New Year Glow Party*, *Fossil Road Show*, *Born to be Wild*, *Owl Prowl* and *Naturefest*. Approximately 17,270 visitors.
- Held 13 spring/summer camp sessions for 209 campers.
- Organized and executed nine Fun Friday programs for families.

- Conducted more than 145 interactive fish feeding sessions for 7,447 individuals.
- Museum volunteers and groups contributed more than 2601 hours of volunteer time, equivalent to a dollar value of \$65,025.

### Statewide Conservation Education Outreach

- Served approximately 149,860 people through Museum conservation education outreach both in-person and virtually.
- Presented 803 interactive classroom programs to approximately 30,731 students throughout Mississippi in their schools.
- Presented at 134 community events/groups for 28,593 participants.
- Provided information, resources, videos, and technical guidance to approximately 42,780 Mississippians. 24,447 technical







guidance, 18,333 including IG and Facebook.

- Provided 18 classroom science education kits reaching approximately 4,000 students.

### **Conservation Biology (Natural Heritage and Research)**

- Provided scientific technical assistance and/or recommendations on habitat management practices for rare species for organizations including: the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U. S. Geological Survey, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, MS Department of Transportation, MS Department of Environmental Quality, MS Department of Marine Resources, regional state wildlife agencies and universities, The Nature Conservancy, private companies, and the general public.
- Consulted with numerous private landowners on species and habitat management.
- Responded to more than 3,741 requests for information about non-game species.
- Issued more than 111 scientific collection permits.
- Accessioned/registered more than 381 new scientific collections.
- Cataloged 47,247 new scientific specimens.
- Maintained 1,634,603 specimens in the scientific collections.
- Loaned or transferred 49 specimens/tissue samples to outside agencies and institutions throughout the U.S.
- Completed more than 75 species surveys on state, federal, and private lands that covered 30 counties.
- Generated 5 manuscripts or reports on research conducted using state and federal funds.
- Maintained over 45,475 species occurrence records in the Natural Heritage Databaset that included updating 31,934 visit fields.
- Provided comments to 463 environmental review requests

that were submitted for review.

- Completed 15 data sharing agreements with other organizations.

### **Exhibits**

- "From Here to There" - Jan 27-May 7, 2023
- "Permian Monsters" - May 22, 2023-Jan. 5, 2024

### **Awards**

- Family Favorite: Parents & Kids Magazine Family Favorites.
- Best Animal/Wildlife Attraction: Mississippi Magazine 2023 Best of Mississippi.
- Trip Advisor 2022 Certificate of Excellence.
- People Love Us On Yelp 2022: YELP.

### **LeFleur's Bluff Education & Tourism Complex**

- The LeFleur's Bluff Playground has welcomed 204,058 visitors since opening December 2021. Almost 95,000 visitors were welcomed just in FY2023.
- The LeFleur's Bluff Playground was voted "Best Playground/City Park Winner" in Mississippi Magazine's "Best of Travel" reader poll for 2023.
- The LeFleur's Bluff Playground was awarded a place in the M List Top 5 in the "Best Free Adventure" category in Mississippi Magazine's "Best of Travel" reader poll for 2023.
- The LeFleur's Bluff Playground was awarded the "Best New Addition to Jackson" in the Jackson Free Press Community Poll for 2023.



# 2023

## MISSISSIPPI STATE PARKS

### Partnered with National Park Service on the following events:

- Bike your Park
- Kids To Parks Day
- First Day Hike
- Earth Day

Several parks host Easter Egg hunts, Fall Festivals, and Fishing Rodeos. Fisheries Bureau rebuilt fishing piers at Roosevelt, Lake Lincoln, J.P. Coleman, Paul B Johnson, Percy Quin, Wall Doxey state parks.

### Partnered with private and public groups

#### AmeriCorps

- Roosevelt State Park – Worked on trails and built bridges
- George P. Cossar State Park – Cleared brush and vegetation
- Hugh White State Park – Restored existing trails
- Percy Quin State Park – Worked on trails, and helped with other park projects
- Wall Doxey State Park – Worked on trails, beach area, and helped with other park projects

#### Hattiesburg Disc Golf Club

- Paul B Johnson State Park – helps with the disc course by purchasing equipment and disc golf signs

### New amenity offered

- Virtual tours of Buccaneer, Roosevelt, Percy Quin, Tishomingo, Tombigbee, Trace, and Clarkco state parks are offered at [www.MDWFP.com](http://www.MDWFP.com).
- Tentrr – glamping tents located at seven State Parks
- Splash zone completed and open to public at Buccaneer State Park

### Individual Park Events

#### Clarkco State Park

- 4th Annual Lake Run
- Bluegrass in the Park

#### JP Coleman State Park

- FLW Phoenix Bass Fishing League

#### Paul B. Johnson State Park

- July 4th Fireworks

#### Roosevelt State Park

- July 4th Fireworks



#### Leroy Percy State Park

- Mainly Marathon/Riverboat Series

#### Tombigbee State Park

- Veteran Awareness Week
- Northeast Mississippi Cycling Club race
- Redemption Day Car Show
- Christian Motorcyclist Association Rally

### Friends of the Park

Mississippi State Parks continues to foster our Friends of the Park groups for local and community support.





*Cabin at Roosevelt State Park*

- Clarkco State Park
- George P Cossar State Park
- Lake Lowndes State Park
- Legion State Park
- Roosevelt State Park
- Tishomingo State Park

### **Facility & Grounds Development In-House Projects**

#### **Roosevelt State Park**

- Renovated Cabins 8 & 12 completely

### **Bureau of Building, Grounds, & Real Property Management**

#### **MDWFP Administration Building**

- Carpet Replacement

#### **Buccaneer State Park**

- Splash zone completed
- New RV beach sites completed

#### **Hugh White State Park**

- Waste Water Treatment Improvements

#### **JP Coleman State Park**

- Renovation on Motel rooms – completed

#### **Natchez State Park**

- Started renovations on 10 cabins

#### **Percy Quin State Park**

- Started renovations on 9 cabins

#### **Tishomingo State Park**

- RV campsite improvements complete

### **Renovations & Repair Crew (In-House)**

#### **John W. Kyle State Park**

- Campground clean-up, removal of trees and brush

#### **Mallard Pointe Golf Course**

- Replaced roof on irrigation building
- Rebuilt cart paths
- Installed drainage culvert and catch basins
- Painted villas

#### **Paul B. Johnson State Park**

- Renovation of Assistant Manager's house
- Built new gatehouse

#### **Roosevelt State Park**

- Relocated and worked on camp store
- Renovated Motel rooms
- New siding and painted concession stand
- Painted bathhouse (tennis courts)
- Extended camp pads
- Replaced siding and paint gatehouse

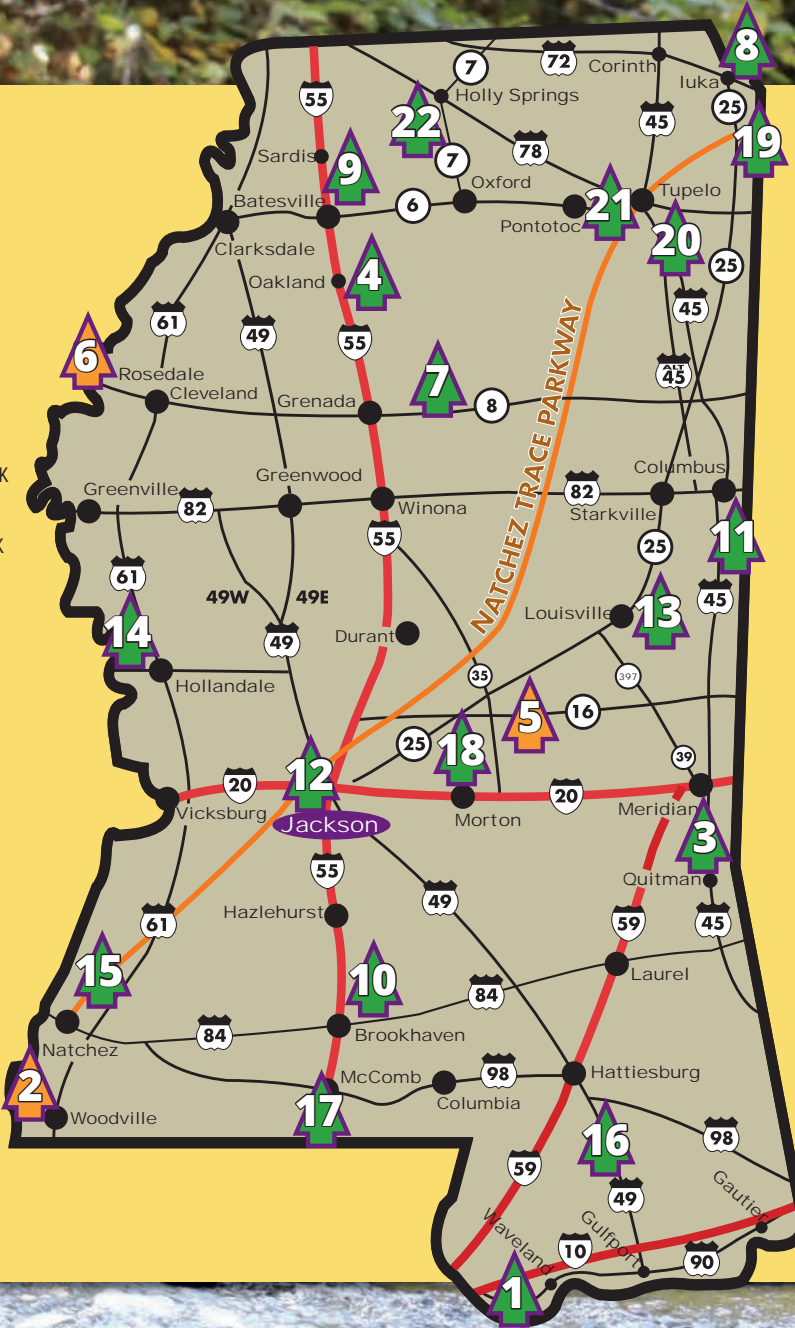
#### **Tishomingo State Park**

- Renovated bathhouse 1
- Built new fire pits in campground
- Demolished bathhouse 3
- Removed trees



1. BUCCANEER STATE PARK  
WAVELAND, MS
2. CLARK CREEK NATURAL AREA  
(DAY-USE) WOODVILLE, MS
3. CLARKCO STATE PARK  
QUITMAN, MS
4. GEORGE P. COSSAR STATE PARK  
GRENADA, MS
5. GOLDEN MEMORIAL STATE PARK  
(DAY-USE) WALNUT GROVE, MS
6. GREAT RIVER ROAD STATE PARK  
(DAY-USE) ROSEDALE, MS
7. HUGH WHITE STATE PARK  
GRENADA, MS
8. J.P. COLEMAN STATE PARK  
IUKA, MS
9. JOHN W. KYLE STATE PARK  
SARDIS, MS
10. LAKE LINCOLN STATE PARK  
WESSON, MS
11. LAKE LOWNDES STATE PARK  
COLUMBUS, MS
12. LeFLEUR'S BLUFF STATE PARK  
JACKSON, MS

13. LEGION STATE PARK  
LOUISVILLE, MS
14. LEROY PERCY STATE PARK  
HOLLANDALE, MS
15. NATCHEZ STATE PARK  
NATCHEZ, MS
16. PAUL B. JOHNSON STATE PARK  
HATTIESBURG, MS
17. PERCY QUIN STATE PARK  
MCCOMB, MS
18. ROOSEVELT STATE PARK  
MORTON, MS
19. TISHOMINGO STATE PARK  
TISHOMINGO, MS
20. TOMBIGBEE STATE PARK  
TUPELO, MS
21. TRACE STATE PARK  
BELDEN, MS
22. WALL DOXEY STATE PARK  
HOLLY SPRINGS, MS



-  STATE PARK
-  DAY-USE STATE PARK  
CLARK CREEK NATURAL AREA  
GOLDEN MEMORIAL STATE PARK  
GREAT RIVER ROAD STATE PARK



# MISSISSIPPI STATE PARKS

*Always in Season*

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
601-432-2400

Reservations Available at  
1-800-GO-PARKS or MDWFP.com





*Clark Creek Natural Area*

### Outdoor Recreational Grants

- Awarded \$1,159,852 in FY23 Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
- Awarded \$2,037,700 in FY23 Land and Water Conservation Fund

### Recreational Trails Program

Awarded \$1,159,852 for 11 Recreational Trail Projects including:

- City of Ridgeland, Friendship Park – 5,072 linear feet asphalt trail repair and overlay of existing trail
- Town of Puckett, Twelve Oaks Park – 2,640 linear feet asphalt trail repair and overlay of existing trail
- Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, Jefferson County Community Park – 1,800 linear feet asphalt trail repair and overlay existing trail, trailside lights, drainage pipe
- City of Pascagoula, IG Levy Park – 3,546 linear feet asphalt trail
- Town of Mize, Clear Creek Park – 1,320 linear feet asphalt trail repair and overlay existing trail, trailside bank stabilization, parking
- Town of Monticello, Atwood Water Park – trailside restroom facility
- Town of Mantee, Mantee Community Park – 1,320 linear feet asphalt trail with exercise stations, benches, parking
- City of Clarksdale, Sunflower River Walk – 1,070 linear feet boardwalk trail connecting to existing pedestrian trail
- Lowndes County Board of Supervisors, Columbus Soccer Complex – 450 linear feet concrete trail with exercise stations
- Wildlife Mississippi, Old Cove Natural Area – 4 miles natural surface trail, wood trail bridges, benches, shelters, and parking
- Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors, Buena Vista Park – 1,769 linear feet asphalt trail

### Land and Water Conservation Fund

Awarded \$2,037,700 for 2 Land and Water Conservation Fund projects including:

- MDWFP, JP Coleman State Park – Renovation of 21 cabins, park gatehouse, pavilions, restroom facility, campground bathhouse, linen storage building, marina entrance building, swimming pool and pool house, picnic shelters, and installation of new playground equipment
- MDWFP, Wall Doxey State Park – Renovation of 6 cabins, campground bathhouse, day use area restroom, and installation of a playground in day use area



*Mayes Lake at LeFleur's Bluff State Park*



# 2023

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### Support Services

- Monthly Commission meetings were conducted in a variety of locations throughout the State.
- GAAP financial reports are compiled annually and submitted to the Department of Finance and Administration to reflect the Agency's financial status on a modified accrual basis, as presented in the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
- The Department continues to seek new sources of revenue for implementing conservation programs and procure land for Wildlife Management Area conservation. Wildlife Car Tag sales totaled \$517,640.
- Revenue, in excess of \$16,108,953 from various grants, was provided through the Department of Interior, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Special Fund Revenues in excess of \$33,909,174 were documented by fund and general ledger accounts and deposited into the State Treasury. In-house revenue systems were maintained on hunting and fishing license sales, park user fees, and lake sales to provide additional information not maintained within the statewide accounting system or through the State Treasury.
- Various training classes were held throughout the fiscal year to train employees on the rules and regulations of the State's procurement, purchasing and travel processes.
- The Asset Management department continues to use a bar-code property tracking system to identify property identified by guidelines set forth by the Office of the State Auditor. In addition, the Asset Management department uses an electronic filing/indexing system to track all asset management related documents. These documents include purchasing, invoicing, and warrant information related to each property item. Asset Management maintains records and submits all required reports on equipment, lands, and buildings to the State Auditor's Office-Bureau of Property Control. The value of all equipment, land, and buildings as of June 30, 2023, was over \$330,257,327 in excess of 24,389 items. These items are periodically audited by the Asset Management Division in conjunction with self-audits conducted at Regional Offices.
- Fleet Operations verified and maintained operational costs on all agency vehicles. Costs included fuel usage totaling \$1,500,427; processing of repair and maintenance invoices totaling \$643,322; 35 new vehicles were purchased; 22 used vehicles were sold with no loans, and no transfers during the fiscal year; 6 accidents or incident investigation reports were processed. The number of wrecker service calls totaled 22. Fleet Operations is also responsible for acquiring and maintaining vehicle titles, overseeing, and maintaining Jackson Headquarters motor pool, ordering fuel service credit cards, and acquiring agency vehicle license plates.

### FY23 LICENSE SALES

LICENSE	NUMBER SOLD	REVENUE
RESIDENT	328,720	\$7,483,736.30
NON-RESIDENT	147,227	\$11,664,921.40
OTHER	5,691	\$313,409.00
LIFETIME	1,252	\$819,500.00



# 2023

## MARKETING AND MEDIA

Mississippi Outdoors Marketing and Media is an educator, sharing knowledge with enthusiasm. Through our platforms, we connect, educate, and inspire Mississippians, fostering a deep bond with the outdoors and ensuring its preservation for future generations.

### Marketing

Our mission is to promote the conservation of Mississippi's wildlife, fisheries, and state parks, as well as the provision of quality outdoor recreation. We have created award-winning content by a skilled group of writers, designers, photographers, videographers, social media, and communication specialists.

### Print

- **Mississippi Outdoors magazine:** Bi-monthly publication (six issues a year) with engaging articles, stunning photos, and practical insights spanning hunting, fishing, conservation, and safety
- **Mississippi Outdoor Digest:** Annual publication with rules, regulations, and general information on licenses, Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), State Fishing Lakes, and State Parks
- **WMA regulations and maps:** Brochures that encompass updated regulations and boundaries on each of the state's WMAs
- **Harvest reports for deer, turkey, and alligator:** Publications that include hunter-reported data on individual game
- **CWD Report:** Report on the latest regulations and statistics associated with Chronic Wasting Disease
- **Season cards:** Wallet-sized product with the dates and bag limits for every hunting season.

### Digital

- We have created an environment of communication, collaboration, and coordination between the public and Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) through the use of social media. The agency's staff creates an active presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube that provides easy access to educational videos, department news, and events for our user groups. In addition

to promoting conservation and outdoor recreation, these outlets are used as a convenient forum to interact with the public daily.

- Our email marketing strategy includes a monthly e-newsletter that shares information about upcoming seasons, events, and department news directly to license holders. Season-specific emails make the hunting public aware of rules and regulations, conservation concerns, and season predictions.
- The MDWFP website regularly provides information on programs, events, and outdoor recreation opportunities. It also serves as a resource for residents and visitors to plan their outdoor experience.

### Video

- **Mississippi Outdoors TV:** An award-winning television show that celebrates our state's natural wonders, shown twice a week on Mississippi Public Television and appears as its own channel on YouTube.com





# 2023

## ARCHERY IN MISSISSIPPI SCHOOLS



### Archery in Mississippi Schools (AIMS)

Established in 2006, The AIMS program is an all-inclusive program for students in grades 4-12 that introduces Mississippi's youth to archery. AIMS is designed to encourage interest in outdoor recreation through archery to recruit future hunters and anglers thereby increasing license sales. The AIMS program has become one of the largest student archery organizations in the country and has been celebrated for the program's ability to foster teamwork, build confidence, enhance academic performance, and provide scholarship opportunities. In its first year, the AIMS program had 10 participating schools has now grown to include over 400 schools in over 50 counties.

### 2023 Participation

- The AIMS Staff oversees statewide archery competitions from school matches to the AIMS Championship Series. We facilitate all aspects of these events from securing venues, staffing, logistics, operation, registration, and promotion.
- 2,635 students and 125 Teams participated in the 2023 North State Qualifier held in Oxford.
- 4,012 students and 187 Teams participated in the 2023 South State Qualifier held in Hattiesburg.
- 5,688 students and 312 Teams participated in the 2023 AIMS State Championship held in Jackson.
- 180 students participated in the AIMS All-Star Championship held in Jackson, MS. This event showcases the state's top shooters following the Championship Series.
- The AIMS Program had a total of 400 coaches across the state for the 2023 season.

### Training and recruitment

- In 2023, 82 school faculty members completed the "Basic Archery Instructor Training Course". This is a required certification needed by school faculty to teach/coach for the AIMS Program. This 8-hour course involves history, safety, technique, equipment, and improvement. The candidates shoot "Olympic Style" targets placed in front of an arrow-resistant curtain located in their gymnasium. Training classes are con-



ducted statewide throughout the year.

- The Coaches Association participates in AIMS-sanctioned events all season, including Basic Archery Instructor (BAI) training, Specialty Archery Instructor (SAI) training, and the AIMS Fall Coaches Meetings (15-20 statewide annual coaches and rules meetings held in December.)
- Hosted training for the 2023 MDWFP Law Enforcement Cadet Class at the MDWFP Archery Center. This training certifies officers to serve as “Range Officials” to control and manage live archery ranges during the annual AIMS Championship Series.
- On-going meetings with schools across the state to discuss joining the AIMS Program. Recruitment involves setting initial appointments with school officials and multiple follow up

to facilitate the procurement of equipment, coordinate faculty, staff training, and actual installment of the program and range setup.

### Affiliated Programs

- Institutions of higher learning having seen the positive effects that archery has had with the high schools in Mississippi, many have established their own archery programs to help recruit new students to their schools. There are Five active collegiate programs offering scholarships to in-state and out-of-state student athletes for archery.
- Specialty programs including Center Shot, Xtreme, Collegiate, and Individual programs all enhance the presence of archery.





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MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS



The NEW FREE MDWFP app will give you an edge on the outdoors! With an easy, interactive experience you will have the most up to date information at your fingertips. You will have access to your personal licenses, rules and

regulations, Game Check, bag limits, WMA maps, feeding times, and more in the palm of your hand. Visit the Apple or Android app store and download the MDWFP app today!