



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



ABOUT MDWFP

No day is ordinary for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP). Across Mississippi, MDWFP field staff may be capturing a black bear for research, raising bass in a hatchery, enforcing state wildlife regulations, conducting prescribed burns, educating the public on conservation, launching an event at a state park, assessing construction sites for potential impacts on endangered species, or analyzing data from tagged fish. Meanwhile, at MDWFP headquarters in Jackson, a team provides vital support, from mapping and technology to accounting, human resources, communications, and customer service.

MDWFP's mission is to lead wildlife conservation efforts and inspire people to cherish the outdoors and their role in protecting it. We believe that outdoor spaces are better when shared, and MDWFP is committed to welcoming Mississippians and visitors to safely, responsibly, and knowledgeably enjoy the state's natural beauty. The diverse work of MDWFP's dedicated team of full-time employees supports thriving habitats and safe, accessible recreational opportunities for everyone to experience Mississippi's wildlife and great outdoors.



OUR MISSION

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks is committed to conserving and enhancing Mississippi's wildlife, fisheries, and parks, providing quality outdoor recreation, and engaging the public in natural resource conservation.

1 CONSERVE & ENHANCE

We observe all regulatory and best practices about conservation and the management of our wildlife, fisheries, and parks - so the natural state of Mississippi always shines through.

2 ENGAGE

MDWFP is the state's premier curator of safe, fun, and often educational outdoor recreation. From hunting and fishing to boating and skiing, hiking, and much more.

3 PROTECT

Human beings can be hard on the environment, so it's important to remind others about conservation, respect for nature, and preservation of our natural resources.

THE BUREAUS



WILDLIFE



FISHERIES



STATE PARKS



**MUSEUM OF
NATURAL SCIENCE**



LAW ENFORCEMENT



SUPPORT SERVICES

EACH BUREAU WITHIN MDWFP CONTRIBUTES UNIQUELY TO CONSERVING, ENHANCING, ENGAGING, AND PROTECTING MISSISSIPPI'S NATURAL RESOURCES. ANNUALLY, MDWFP WORKS TO:



Maintain and enhance 53 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), covering nearly 700,000 acres of public land for wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation.



Support quality fishing and boating access across more than 225,000 acres of lakes and reservoirs, including 21 state park lakes and 18 state lakes.



Educate thousands of students in conservation principles and outdoor safety.



Protect both the public and Mississippi's natural resources through active management and enforcement.



Encourage citizen participation in the development of regulations, promoting transparency and public input.



Offer technical support to the public on wildlife, fisheries, and habitat management.



Operate and enhance 25 state parks to support outdoor activities and community engagement.



Promote safe outdoor recreation to enrich the quality of life and foster stewardship of Mississippi's natural landscapes.



Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2024

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GOVERNOR OF MISSISSIPPI

Tate Reeves

MDWFP COMMISSIONERS

Scott Coopwood - Chairman
 Gary Rhoads - Vice-Chairman
 Billy Mounger
 Colin Maloney
 Todd Hairston

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Lynn Posey - Executive Director
 Curtis Thornhill - Chief of Staff
 Brian Ferguson - Chief of Staff
 Larry Pugh - Deputy Director
 Jason Thompson - Deputy Administrator
 Col. Jerry Carter - Chief, Law Enforcement
 Russ Walsh - Chief of Staff, Wildlife
 Jerry Brown - Director, Fisheries Bureau
 Andre Hollis - Director, State Parks
 Angel Rohnke - Director, Mississippi Museum of Natural Science
 Jeremy Bass - Director, Marketing and Communications

MDWFP EMPLOYS MORE THAN 600 MISSISSIPPI RESIDENTS.

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DIRECTOR'S LETTER

I am pleased to present the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) Annual Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

During fiscal year, Mississippi State Parks completed numerous infrastructure and facility improvements across the park system. These enhancements contributed to the popularity of our parks as destinations for outdoor recreation, attracting both Mississippians and visitors from across the country.

The Wildlife Bureau continued to expand access to hunting and fishing by developing new public land and upgrading existing wildlife management areas (WMAs). Thousands of acres of new public hunting land were acquired to enhance outdoor recreation and conservation. Our outreach efforts were also strengthened through educational programs, designed to introduce newcomers to the many outdoor activities MDWFP offers. These initiatives have helped increase public awareness about our conservation efforts and recreational opportunities.

Our Fisheries Bureau had an active year managing the state's freshwater resources. Through careful monitoring and research, we focused on conserving important game fish species, while ensuring access for recreational and commercial fishing. This balance supports Mississippi's eco-tourism and fishing industries, both of which rely on our state's abundant aquatic resources. The Fisheries team also led successful fishing seasons, expanded habitat restoration projects, and supported boating access improvements across the state.

Our Law Enforcement Bureau had many significant achievements over the year, while enforcing game laws and safety on and off the water. Shooting sports interest has increased and education through Archery In Mississippi Schools and Mississippi Scholastic Shooting Sports program have been extremely effective throughout the state – engaging our youth in promoting focus, discipline, and confidence while aligning with

Mississippi's educational standards and outdoor heritage.

The award-winning Mississippi Museum of Natural Science had an impactful year, serving as a premier destination for environmental education, scientific exploration, and family-friendly discovery. Welcoming thousands of visitors, the museum showcased Mississippi's diverse ecosystems and wildlife through engaging exhibits, live animal displays, and immersive experiences that inspire a deeper appreciation for our natural world. Through its exhibits and programming, the museum continues to be a vital resource, promoting environmental stewardship and sparking curiosity about Mississippi's rich natural heritage.

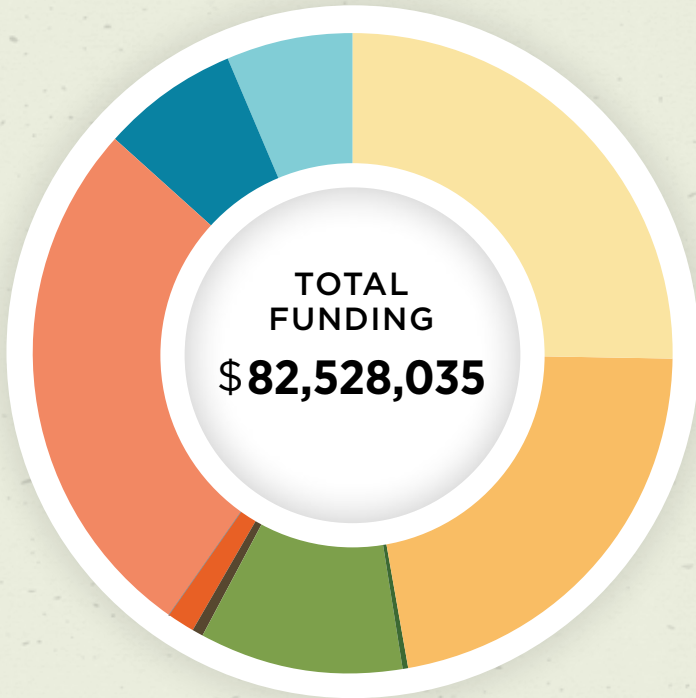
These are just a few of the many accomplishments highlighted in this report. Thank you for your continued support and leadership for our agency and the State of Mississippi.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn Posey". The signature is fluid and cursive.











Lynn Posey
Executive Director

HOW WE ARE FUNDED



MDWFP primarily operates through non-general fund revenues. Our work is supported by multiple dedicated funds that enable us to fulfill specialized roles in Law Enforcement, Wildlife Management, Fisheries, Boating and Hunting Safety, Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation, Capital Projects, and Public Outreach. These funds also sustain essential administrative functions in Human Resources, Planning, Finance, and the Executive Office, ensuring that MDWFP can effectively meet its diverse responsibilities across the state.

Primary Revenue Sources That Support MDWFP*

	Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Licenses, Permits, and Stamps	25.32%	\$20,900,000
	Federal Grants for Wildlife and Fisheries Support	22.17%	\$18,300,000
	Sales Tax on Outdoor Equipment for Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife Watching	0.09%	\$72,700
	State Park Accommodation and Visitor Fees	10.42%	\$8,600,000
	Boat Registration and Titling Fees	0.40%	\$330,000
	Federal Grants for Boating	1.33%	\$1,100,000
	Educational Enhancement Funding	0.15%	\$125,335
	Capital Expense Funds	26.78%	\$22,100,000
	Oil and Gas Tax	6.97%	\$5,750,000
	Miscellaneous	6.36%	\$5,250,000

*AS A PERCENTAGE OF ANNUAL REVENUE

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION IN MISSISSIPPI



HUNTING

The 274,880 hunters resulted in an economic impact of \$658 million.



FISHING

The 398,000 anglers resulted in an economic impact of \$772 million.



RECREATIONAL BOATING

The 128,000 registered boats resulted in an economic impact of \$1.5 billion.



WILDLIFE WATCHING

The 6.4 million wildlife viewers in Mississippi resulted in an economic impact of \$829 million.



SHOOTING SPORTS

The 692,110 participants in Mississippi resulted in an economic impact of \$950 million.

REFERENCES: U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE. (N.D.). RETRIEVED FROM WWW.FWS.GOV; NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION. (N.D.). RETRIEVED FROM WWW.NSSF.ORG; MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS. (N.D.). RETRIEVED FROM WWW.MDWFP.COM; MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION. (N.D.). RETRIEVED FROM EXTENSION.MSSTATE.EDU



WILDLIFE BUREAU

The Wildlife Bureau is charged with conserving Mississippi's wildlife and habitats by utilizing science-based strategies and management techniques. An experienced team of wildlife biologists, land managers, foresters, and outreach specialists strive to enhance Mississippi's outdoors in the face of the changing landscape.

THE DUTIES OF A DEDICATED STAFF INCLUDE:

- ✓ Monitoring wildlife populations statewide
- ✓ Mitigating and monitoring wildlife disease
- ✓ Manage and enhance game and non-game species on public and private lands
- ✓ Maintaining public hunting and recreational opportunities
- ✓ Providing landowners and sportsmen with science-based information to aid them in decision making for the conservation and enhancement of Mississippi's wildlife resources

WMA Habitat Management

The Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) of Mississippi are managed by the MDWFP to ensure sustainable habitats for native wildlife while providing diverse recreational opportunities for the public. This year, the WMA program focused on habitat restoration, enhancing access, and improving resources across 53 WMAs statewide. Efforts included prescribed burns, timber thinning, and native vegetation management, all aimed at supporting game and non-game species. These improvements aid in bolstering biodiversity, promoting ecosystem health, and maintaining Mississippi's natural heritage. In addition to conservation work, MDWFP continues to provide hunting, fishing, and wildlife-watching opportunities across WMAs, encouraging responsible outdoor recreation and conservation awareness within Mississippi's communities.



BLACK BEAR PROGRAM

Mississippi's black bear population, once nearly extirpated, is showing signs of a promising comeback because of ongoing conservation efforts and habitat protection. MDWFP has prioritized research and habitat preservation to support black bear recovery across the state. Field biologists track population health and movement using GPS collars and non-invasive monitoring techniques,

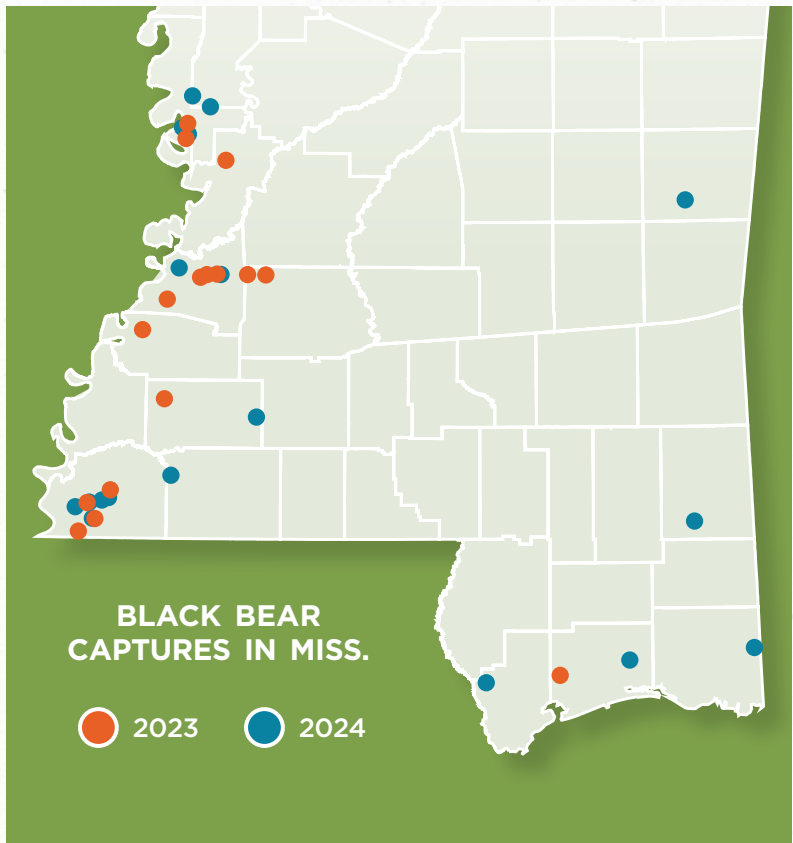
providing vital insights into bear behavior, habitat use, and population trends. Additionally, public education on coexistence and the reporting of bear sightings has played a crucial role in fostering safe human-bear interactions, which are essential as bear numbers grow. Continued management and conservation efforts aim to ensure the black bear remains a valuable part of Mississippi's wildlife heritage.



MDWFP successfully transplanted an abandoned cub in Warren County to a foster litter in Wilkinson County.



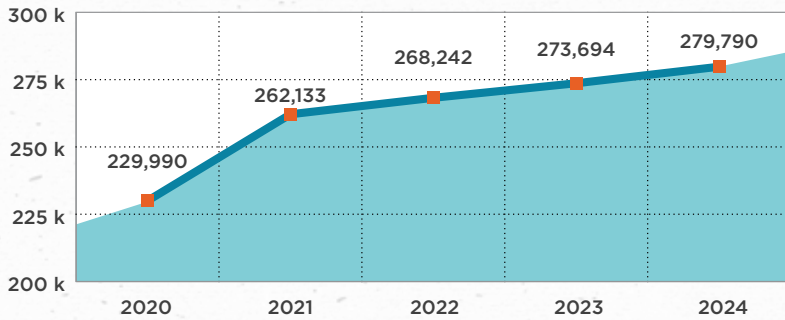
This year marked a new milestone in MDWFP's efforts to study and protect Mississippi's black bear population. In 2024, a total of 21 bears were collared or sampled across 12 counties, surpassing all previous years. This expanded research provides critical data to support conservation and management efforts for this iconic species in Mississippi.



WHITE-TAILED DEER PROGRAM



DEER HARVEST



* Buck and doe - Resident and non-resident



White-Tailed Deer Velvet Season

In 2022, Mississippi introduced a white-tailed deer velvet hunting season, a unique addition to the state's hunting opportunities. This specialized season, limited to a brief window in mid September, allows hunters to pursue bucks while their antlers are still in the velvet stage. Designed

to enhance Mississippi's hunting experiences, the velvet season caters to avid hunters interested in an early season pursuit while contributing to wildlife management efforts. This initiative highlights Mississippi's commitment to innovative conservation and hunter engagement strategies.



Disease Management

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal neurological disease in cervids including white-tailed deer. Since it was discovered in Mississippi in 2018, MDWFP has worked diligently to monitor, manage, and slow the spread of the disease through a rigorous protocol of testing, research, and hunter education. To manage the growing number of hunter-harvested deer to be sampled, MDWFP offers 59 sample drop off locations across Mississippi.

ANNUAL STATEWIDE CWD TESTING

HARVEST TESTING + POSITIVE CASES

8,024 / 18 +	2019
8,514 / 35 +	2020
7,312 / 33 +	2021
7,106 / 56 +	2022
7,915 / 86 +	2023
9,051 / 111 +	2024

WILD TURKEY PROGRAM



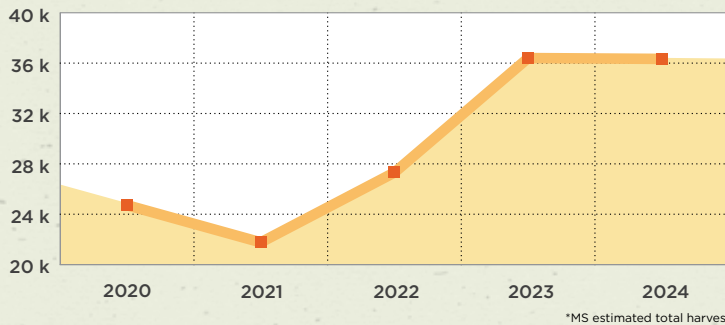
The Wild Turkey Program is dedicated to the conservation and sustainable management of Mississippi's wild turkey populations and their habitats. Through a combination of scientific research, habitat restoration, partnerships, and effective management practices, the program works to ensure that wild turkeys remain a thriving part of our state's natural heritage. From monitoring population trends and habitat quality to collaborating with hunters and landowners, the Mississippi Wild Turkey Program is committed to preserving this iconic species for future generations.



WILD TURKEY RESEARCH

In collaboration with Mississippi State University's College of Forest Resources, MDWFP coordinated a research project that uses non-invasive genetic sampling to assess the health and population status of wild turkeys across eight study sites in Mississippi. This innovative approach allows us to gather critical data without disturbing the wildlife. The project is supported by funding from MDWFP, Mississippi State University, the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), and Turkeys for Tomorrow, highlighting a strong partnership in conservation efforts to protect and manage Mississippi's wild turkey populations.

WILD TURKEY HARVEST



ALLIGATOR PROGRAM

Mississippi's alligator season continues to provide hunters with a unique and exciting outdoor experience, as well as critical opportunities for managing the state's growing alligator population. Held annually, the season is regulated by the MDWFP and requires hunters to apply through a draw system because of high demand. Successful applicants receive specific permits to harvest alligators within designated

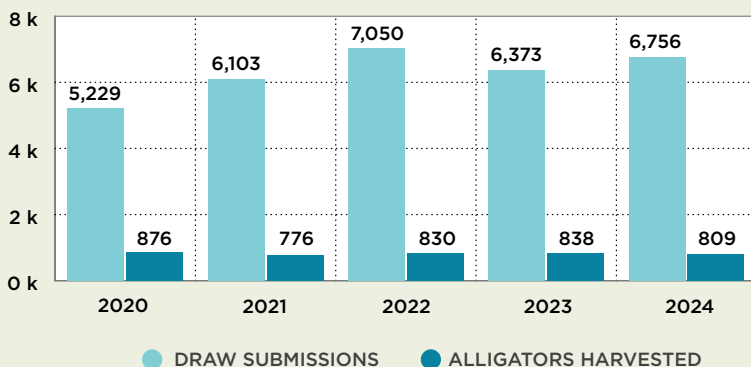
zones, ensuring a balanced and sustainable harvest across regions. In 2023, hunters actively contributed to conservation efforts by helping to control alligator numbers, particularly in areas where natural predation and other factors alone cannot regulate population growth. The season reflects Mississippi's commitment to wildlife management and safe, regulated outdoor recreation.



FURBEARING & TRAPPING

MDWFP is committed to the sustainable management of Mississippi's furbearer populations, which include species such as bobcats, raccoons, and beavers. Through research, monitoring, and regulated trapping programs, MDWFP ensures that furbearer populations remain healthy and in balance with their habitats. These efforts not only support Mississippi's ecosystems but also provide valuable opportunities for outdoor recreation and economic benefits to local communities. MDWFP also offers educational resources and training for trappers, promoting responsible and ethical trapping practices across the state.

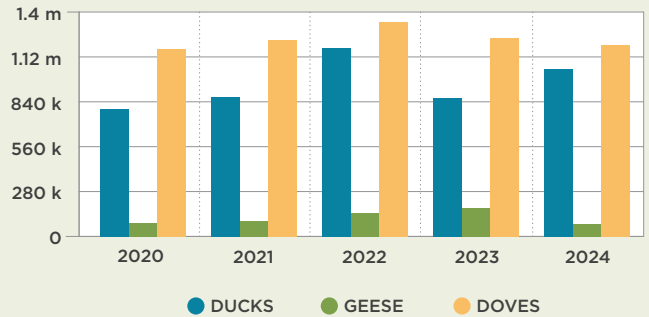
ALLIGATOR HARVEST



MIGRATORY BIRD PROGRAM: DOVE, DUCK, & GOOSE

There are a variety of public land hunting in Mississippi for dove and waterfowl, and MDWFP continues to create opportunities to improve access and quality. MDWFP biologists collect annual data to manage migratory gamebird populations statewide. MDWFP coordinates banding projects, assisting biologists in tracking waterfowl nesting grounds, assessing hunting pressure, and estimating productivity and survival.

MIGRATORY BIRD HARVEST REPORT



In 2024, MDWFP banded 504 mourning doves and 359 wood ducks for scientific study.

Aerial Waterfowl Surveys

MDWFP conducted four aerial waterfowl surveys over the winter season to monitor waterfowl populations across Mississippi's key wetland habitats. Data collected from these surveys were carefully analyzed to track species distribution, population trends, and habitat use, which are essential for guiding conservation and management strategies. Detailed reports from each survey were made publicly available on the MDWFP Waterfowl Program webpage, providing valuable insights for researchers, hunters, and conservationists interested in the health and movement patterns of Mississippi's wintering waterfowl.





SMALL GAME

MDWFP is dedicated to the conservation and management of small game species, such as rabbits, squirrels, and quail, which play an important role in Mississippi's ecosystems and hunting heritage. MDWFP's small game management efforts include habitat restoration, population monitoring, and research initiatives aimed at understanding and supporting these species. By partnering with landowners, biologists, and conservation organizations, MDWFP works to enhance habitats and promote sustainable populations, ensuring that small game species continue to thrive and provide recreational opportunities for current and future generations.

GAME BIRD SUMMIT

In February 2024, MDWFP partnered with Mississippi State University, National Wild Turkey Federation, Turkeys for Tomorrow, Quail Forever, NRCS, the Mississippi Trappers Association, and OnX for a Gamebird Weekend held in Starkville. This special two-day educational event covered all aspects of managing quail and turkeys in Mississippi and brought together nearly 90 private landowners who collectively owned or managed nearly 16,000 acres.



FALCONRY

Falconry, an ancient tradition with roots as far back as 1000 BC, has been practiced by people across all walks of life—from peasants to royalty. Brought to the United States in 1622, falconry has since evolved, yet the strong bond between falconer and bird endures. This demanding sport requires dedication and expertise, offering a unique connection to nature for those involved. MDWFP supports this heritage by providing resources and guidance for aspiring falconers across Mississippi.



FISHERIES BUREAU

The Fisheries Bureau is charged with conserving Mississippi's fish populations and their aquatic habitats. An experienced team of fisheries biologists, lake managers, and outreach specialists strive to enhance Mississippi's outdoors in the face of constantly changing weather conditions and the natural complexities of our state's waters.



THE DUTIES OF A DEDICATED STAFF INCLUDE:

- ✓ Providing and monitoring public access to 5,700 miles of streams and rivers and 232,000 acres of lakes and reservoirs by way of shorelines, boat ramps, and fishing piers
- ✓ Monitoring and stocking public waters with sportfish and forage fish cultured at two agency fish hatcheries
- ✓ Engaging the public in natural resources conservation by providing aquatic education
- ✓ Providing quality outdoor recreational opportunities at State Fishing Lakes, State Park Lakes, and Community Fishing Assistance Program waters
- ✓ Providing private pond owners with science-based information to aid them in decision making for the conservation and enhancement of Mississippi's resources





ELVIS PRESLEY LAKE

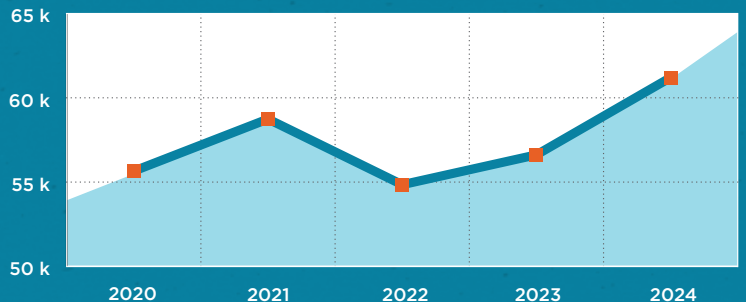
MDWFP Fisheries Bureau completed extensive renovations to the facilities at Elvis Presley Lake, revitalizing this popular Tupelo destination, and enhancing recreational opportunities for the public. The renovations included improvements to the lake's infrastructure, upgraded boat ramps, accessible fishing piers, and restocking, providing a welcoming environment for anglers, boaters, and families. These updates have transformed Elvis Presley Lake into a well-equipped, family-friendly location that now offers an even better experience for outdoor enthusiasts.

YOUTH FISHING RODEOS

The MDWFP Fisheries Bureau hosted 40 successful Youth Fishing Rodeos across Mississippi this year, attracting more than 5,300 participants and fostering a love for fishing and conservation in communities statewide. These family-friendly events provided children and novice anglers with an opportunity to experience the joy of fishing in a safe and supportive environment. With stocked ponds, educational sessions, and hands-on instruction from MDWFP staff and volunteers, the rodeos offered a memorable introduction to fishing while promoting responsible outdoor recreation. Through these events, the Fisheries Bureau continues to inspire a new generation of anglers, building connections to Mississippi's natural resources and encouraging conservation stewardship.



MISSISSIPPI STATE LAKE ANGLERS



MDWFP FISH HATCHERIES

The MDWFP Fisheries Bureau successfully managed two hatcheries this year, covering a combined 29 surface acres of water, to support fish populations across Mississippi's public waters. Through dedicated efforts in fish breeding, care, and sustainable management practices, the hatcheries produced an impressive 670,639 fish, including popular species for recreational fishing and those crucial for ecosystem health. These fish are used to stock public lakes, rivers, and ponds across the state, enhancing fishing opportunities for residents and visitors while contributing to the conservation of Mississippi's aquatic biodiversity. The Fisheries Bureau's hatchery operations underscore MDWFP's commitment to preserving and enriching the state's freshwater resources for generations to come.

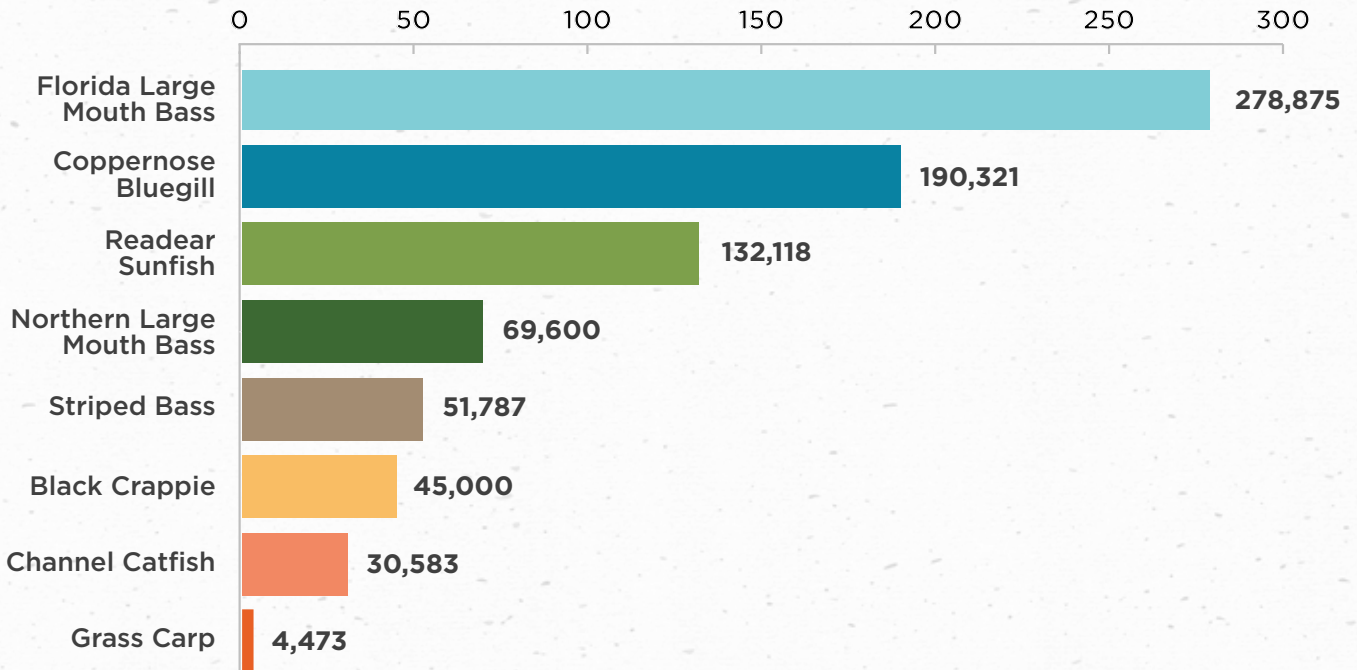


Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery Visitor Education Center

The Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery Visitor Education Center (VEC) had a busy year, welcoming more than 5,600 visitors on-site and reaching more than 1,000 through off-site events. It offered engaging experiences with 68 guided tours, 52 F.I.S.H. programs, 77 aquarium feedings, and a variety of public events like Summer Gyo-taku and a Youth Fishing Event with 500 participants. New exhibits included a fossil display, expanded fishing tackle collection, and unique biodiversity programs featuring aquatic specimens. The VEC also created resources like the "Alien or Aquatic Animal" ID program, hosted teacher workshops, and provided Spanish translations of local fishing regulations to support community accessibility.



MDWFP'S TWO FISH PRODUCTION FACILITIES PRODUCE AND STOCK PUBLIC LAKES, RIVERS, AND PONDS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.





LAW ENFORCEMENT & EDUCATION

The Law Enforcement Bureau is charged with enforcing the state's game and fish laws as well as those for recreational boating and water safety. They enhance the outdoors by protecting Mississippi's outdoor spaces and wildlife – as well as Mississippians and others who seek to enjoy them. Currently, the bureau supports a force of nearly 200 sworn Conservation Officers, highly trained and dedicated to their important work throughout the state.

BUREAU STAFF DUTIES INCLUDE:

- ✓ Monitoring and patrolling for wildlife violations
- ✓ Enforcing boat and water safety laws & regulations
- ✓ Performing vital Search and Rescue operations
- ✓ Conducting and teaching hunter and boater education classes
- ✓ Meeting with landowners, hunting clubs, and sportsmen
- ✓ Administering shooting facilities
- ✓ Administering hunter development programs (AIMS, MSSSP)



AIMS introduced four new program additions to increase participation in archery statewide.

- ✓ AIMS MSNASPD 3D
- ✓ AIMS Extreme Summer Series
- ✓ AIMS Outdoor Series
- ✓ AIMS MSNASP Instructor

AIMS AND MSSP

MDWFP's Law Enforcement Bureau made significant strides this year through its Archery in Mississippi Schools (AIMS) and Mississippi Scholastic Shooting Program (MSSP), engaging thousands of young people in safe, structured, and educational shooting sports. The AIMS program introduces students to

archery statewide. With over 600 school teams and 6,000 archers, AIMS is one of the fastest-growing sport in Mississippi - promoting focus, discipline, and confidence while aligning with educational standards. MSSP offers youth training in clay target shooting, reinforcing firearm safety and responsibility.

Both programs not only cultivate outdoor skills but also foster teamwork, sportsmanship, and respect for wildlife and natural resources. Through AIMS and MSSP, MDWFP Law Enforcement continues to shape responsible young outdoor enthusiasts and strengthen connections to Mississippi's conservation traditions.

MDWFP SHOOTING RANGES

MDWFP's shooting ranges provide safe, accessible spaces for the public to practice shooting sports and refine their skills in a supportive environment. The facilities include options for both rifle and shotgun use, catering to a variety of shooting activities from recreational practice to training for hunting season. MDWFP continues to promote these ranges as an essential part of Mississippi's outdoor recreation offerings, where individuals can learn and practice in a regulated and secure setting. These ranges also serve as venues for educational programs and special events that encourage responsible firearm use and enhance shooting sports participation across the state. Over 25,000 customers utilized MDWFP's three shooting facilities.



CUSTOMERS BY SHOOTING FACILITY

<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 20px; background-color: #e67e22; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>TURCOTTE Canton, MS</p> </div> </div>	<p>8,795 VISITORS</p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 20px; background-color: #f1c40f; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>MCIVOR Sardis, MS</p> </div> </div>	<p>8,580 VISITORS</p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 10px; height: 20px; background-color: #27ae60; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div> <p>MCHENRY Perkinston, MS</p> </div> </div>	<p>7,814 VISITORS</p>
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11,225

HUNTER EDUCATION STUDENTS WERE CERTIFIED THROUGHOUT THE STATE

278

IN-PERSON CLASSES WERE TAUGHT STATEWIDE

64

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTORS WERE CERTIFIED



Finding and Training the Next Conservation Officers

MDWFP's Law Enforcement Division launched an extensive recruitment effort for a new class of Conservation Officers, focusing on reaching a broad range of communities and engaging with diverse applicants. The initiative aimed to identify individuals who embody the dedication required to protect Mississippi's natural resources, balancing the conservation of woodlands, waters, and wildlife. Through community engagement and outreach,

MDWFP demonstrated its commitment to ensuring its Conservation Officers reflect the agency's values and mission of preserving Mississippi's natural heritage. The 24-week Basic Academy welcomed 19 new officers, who completed rigorous training and were sworn in as Conservation Officers, ready to uphold the state's conservation goals under the guidance of experienced field training officers.



MDWFP SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM (SRT)

The MDWFP Special Response Team (SRT), composed of 50 dedicated members, is now strengthened by its newly established K-9 and Dive teams. This year, Dive team members completed their Public Safety Diver certification, enhancing the team's capacity to respond effectively to water-related emergencies. Throughout

FY24, the SRT answered 20 calls for assistance across Mississippi, consistently upholding the professionalism and readiness expected of MDWFP law enforcement. The team's specialized training and commitment ensure that they are prepared to support public safety and wildlife conservation efforts statewide.



Operation Dry Water

As part of a national campaign to prevent boating under the influence, MDWFP's Conservation Officers actively patrolled Mississippi's waterways during the Operation Dry Water in early July 2023. This enforcement led to several arrests and citations related to impaired boating and other violations, ensuring safety on the state's popular lakes and rivers.



Keeping Boaters Safe

The MDWFP Boating Safety Program is dedicated to keeping Mississippi's 128,076 registered boat operators and passengers safe and informed on the water. With ongoing efforts, boating accidents statewide have seen a significant reduction. Over 5,500 students took part in boating safety education courses, available in both in-person and online formats. In coordination with MDWFP's communications team, the program shares boating safety messages across digital platforms, including email newsletters, social media, and the MDWFP website, ensuring critical safety information reaches boaters throughout the state.

MDWFP CONSERVATION OFFICERS PROTECT:

2.9 Million
MS Residents

82
Counties

1.2 Million
Acres of
National Forest Land

19.9 Million
Acres of State
Forest Land

700,000
Acres of Wildlife
Management Areas

119
Public Lakes

5,000
Rivers and Creeks

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSERVATION OFFICER RECOGNITION

Waterfowl Officer of the Year
Master Sgt. Keith Bond

Conservation Officer of the Year
Cpl. Cole Bush



NATURAL SCIENCE MUSEUM

Tucked inside historic LeFleur's Bluff State Park in Jackson, the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science overlooks a 300-acre natural landscape, an open-air amphitheater, and 2.5 miles of nature trails. Meet more than 200 living species in the 100,000-gallon aquarium network and explore 73,000 square feet of permanent and temporary exhibits that include deer, waterfowl, fossils, Mississippi's endangered species, and more.

Each year visitors are inspired by the natural world showcased in the museum's permanent and special exhibits. MDWFP team members and researchers contribute by maintaining and enhancing the exhibits and treating guests to memorable experiences, such as guided tours, regular talks, and special events like NatureFEST, Family Fun Science Night, Fossil Road Show, Snake Day, Park After Dark, and many more. Additionally, our education team provides special programs for scouts and teachers and coordinates the museum's popular summer camps.



282,811

People were served through public programs from education and exhibits

89,055

Guests visited the Natural Science Museum



AWARDS

Visit Jackson Hometown Hero 2024:
Corey Wright

Mississippi Magazine's
"Best of Mississippi Travel Reader
Poll 2024": "M List Best Animal/
Wildlife Attraction" MMNS

Mississippi Magazine's "Best
of Mississippi Reader Poll 2024":
"Best Museum" MMNS

CONSERVATION BIOLOGY

Natural Heritage and Research

The Mississippi Museum of Natural Science plays a pivotal role in conservation research, providing scientific expertise to various state and federal agencies, private landowners, and organizations such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and The Nature Conservancy. In FY24, the museum conducted over 260 species surveys across 70 counties, cataloged more than 53,000 new specimens, and maintained a vast collection of 1.6 million specimens. The museum responded to over 3,500 inquiries about non-game species, issued 149 scientific collection permits, and facilitated the loan of 32 specimens to institutions across the U.S. These efforts support the museum's mission to conserve Mississippi's diverse ecosystems and contribute to ongoing research and habitat management for rare species.





LEFLEUR'S BLUFF EDUCATION & TOURISM COMPLEX

Located in Jackson, the complex serves as a dynamic hub for education, conservation, and recreation, offering visitors of all ages a gateway into Mississippi's natural and cultural heritage. This unique complex is a partnership between MDWFP's Mississippi Museum of Natural Science and the Mississippi Children's Museum. Designed to inspire curiosity and foster outdoor appreciation, it includes interactive exhibits, educational programming, and hands-on learning experiences. A highlight of the complex is the innovative playground and new walking trails, which connect the museums with beautiful outdoor spaces, allowing families to explore nature firsthand. Together, these amenities have made LeFleur's Bluff a significant attraction for both locals and tourists, enriching Jackson's role as a destination for education and outdoor engagement.



The LeFleur's Bluff Playground has welcomed over 350,000 visitors since opening December 2021.

Mississippi Magazine's "Best of Mississippi Reader Poll 2024": "Best Park" LeFleur's Bluff State Park, "M List Best Attraction for Kids" LeFleur's Bluff Playground



The "Permian Monsters: Life Before the Dinosaurs" exhibit transported visitors to an ancient world filled with unique creatures from 290 million years ago. Featuring life-size models and fossil displays of prehistoric predators and giant insects, the exhibit told the story of life on Earth before the dinosaurs and explored the largest mass extinction event in history. The exhibit was on display from May 22, 2023, to December 31, 2023, and combined science, history, and art, offering a captivating experience for all ages.



The "Attack of the Bloodsuckers!" exhibit at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science took visitors on an intriguing journey through the world of blood-feeding creatures. Running from January 20 to May 12, 2024, this exhibit highlighted the biology and behaviors of various sanguivores—like mosquitoes, fleas, and leeches — through engaging, interactive displays. Attendees were able to examine live specimens, test their own "bug appeal" by removing their shoes to see if they attract mosquitoes, and even interact with a giant inflatable tick. Alongside exploring these fascinating creatures, the exhibit also provided helpful tips on avoiding bites and staying safe from parasites in daily life.



MISSISSIPPI STATE PARKS

From the rocky hills of Tishomingo to the waterfalls at Clark Creek, Mississippi's 25 beautiful and expansive state parks dot the entire state, and every one is unique regarding the sites, experiences, and amenities they offer. MDWFP team members are crucial to the management, safe enjoyment, and brand perception of Mississippi's state parks. From daily visitor service and administrative management to groundskeeping and regular conservation efforts – they define the park experience.



The mission of the State Parks Bureau is to provide outdoor recreational opportunities throughout the state, promote tourism, conserve historic and natural resources, and provide informational/education seminars to promote park amenities and activities.



MDWFP MAINTAINED STATE PARKS

- 1** **Buccaneer State Park**
WAVELAND, MS
- 2** **Clarkco State Park**
QUITMAN, MS
- 3** **Clark Creek Natural Area**
WOODVILLE, MS
- 4** **George P. Cossar State Park**
OAKLAND, MS
- 5** **Golden Memorial State Park**
WALNUT GROVE, MS
- 6** **Hugh White State Park**
GRENADA, MS
- 7** **Holmes County State Park**
DURANT, MS
- 8** **John W. Kyle State Park**
SARDIS, MS
- 9** **J.P. Coleman State Park**
IUKA, 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





RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Welcomed 703,328 guests to the park system
- ✓ Implemented multiple design and renovation projects throughout the State Parks System
- ✓ Upgraded cabins, cottages, chalets, and campsites
- ✓ Hosted over 100 events including 19 interpretive programs
- ✓ Introduced a new brand and logo for Mississippi State Parks

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Completed splash zone and cabanas at Buccaneer
- ✓ Renovated 25 cabins
- ✓ Started renovation on 16 cabins
- ✓ Renovated 67 campsites
- ✓ Started renovation on 117 campsites
- ✓ Bridge replacement and renovated bathhouses at Percy Quin
- ✓ New gatehouse at Paul B. Johnson
- ✓ Completed new entrance at LeFleur's Bluff
- ✓ Completed concession renovations at LeFleur's Bluff
- ✓ Completed camp store at Roosevelt
- ✓ Added Wi-Fi to Buccaneer



Facilities and Personnel

Of the 25 State Parks, 22 are maintained by State Parks staff. Staffing is determined by each location's size, development, and operation. The total number of employees for all parks varies from approximately 300 during peak season to approximately 200 during off-season. Three parks are staffed and operated through manage-

ment agreements with local governments or concessionaires. The State Parks Bureau Central Office in Jackson includes six sections: Operations, Marketing and Promotions, Education and Interpretation, Recreational Trails, Planning and Visitor Services, and Management Analysis.

Friends of the Park

The “Friends of the Park” initiative strengthens community support for Mississippi State Parks, fostering volunteer groups committed to enhancing and preserving their local parks. These groups play an essential role by organizing events, supporting park projects, and raising awareness of each park’s unique recreational and natural offerings. Through Friends of the Park, Mississippi State Parks build lasting partnerships that empower local advocates to contribute directly to the conservation, improvement, and enjoyment of their community’s natural resources, creating a sustainable legacy of stewardship across the state.



Awarded \$1,159,852 in FY23 Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The **Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** is an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The RTP provides funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized and nonmotorized recreational trail uses.

Awarded \$2,037,700 in FY23 Land and Water Conservation Fund

The **United States’ Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** is a federal program that provides funds and matching grants to federal, state, and local governments for the acquisition of land and water, and easements on land and water, for the benefit of all Americans. The main emphases of the fund are recreation and the protection of national natural treasures in the forms of parks and protected forest and wildlife areas.



Interpretive Event Program

Mississippi State Parks’ park staff, historians, partners, and stakeholders worked together to develop a comprehensive program that outlines educational and recreational opportunities for visitors to develop intellectual and

emotional connections to the natural and cultural resources found within state parks. Our goal is to promote Mississippi State Park’s resource values through specially planned visitor experiences and excellence in interpretation.





OUTREACH & MEDIA

The Marketing, Communications, and Media Bureau at MDWFP has consistently fulfilled its mission to connect, educate, and inspire Mississippians about the outdoors. As an enthusiastic educator, the bureau has effectively utilized a diverse range of platforms to foster a deep bond with nature, ensuring its preservation for future generations.

Our mission remains centered around promoting the conservation of Mississippi's wildlife, fisheries, and state parks while providing quality outdoor recreation. Unlike many state agencies, MDWFP is primarily funded not by taxpayer dollars, but through hunting and fishing license sales, state park usage fees, and admissions to the Natural Science Museum. This unique funding structure, along with support from grants and foundations, gives us the inherent ability to establish an integrated marketing platform that effectively increases public awareness and engagement. By doing so, we help maintain a stable revenue stream to support our ongoing conservation mandate. This year, our skilled team of writers, designers, photographers, videographers, social media managers, and communication specialists produced award-winning content that furthered our mission and connected more Mississippians to the outdoors.

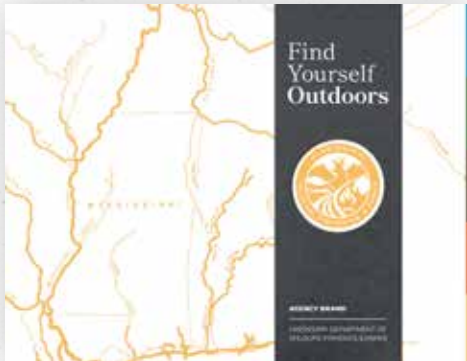


2024 CORE INITIATIVES INCLUDE:

- ✓ Mississippi Outdoors Media Initiative
- ✓ MDWFP Brand Awareness Initiative
- ✓ Mississippi State Parks Branding Initiative

MDWFP BRAND AWARENESS INITIATIVE

MDWFP Marketing, Communications, and Media Bureau embarked on a transformative journey with the implementation of the MDWFP Brand Initiative. This comprehensive branding effort was designed to solidify the agency's presence and enhance its role as a leading advocate for Mississippi's outdoors.



Brand Strategy Overview

At the core of the MDWFP Brand Initiative was the development of a detailed branding plan, which included the creation of a brand book. This essential resource was crafted to educate stakeholders about the MDWFP brand, emphasizing the agency's role as ambassadors for Mississippi's natural resources. The brand book serves as a foundational guide, outlining the agency's core values, mission, and vision, and providing clear guidelines on visual and messaging standards to ensure consistency across all platforms and communications.

Branding Campaign

From the branding plan emerged a dynamic branding campaign designed to establish MDWFP firmly in the marketplace. This campaign integrated both internal and external communication strategies, along with visual elements that resonate with all audiences. The goal was to unify the agency's message and image, ensuring that every interaction with the public reinforces our commitment to conservation, outdoor recreation, and community engagement.



Impact and Future Focus

The MDWFP Brand Initiative has successfully enhanced the agency's visibility and credibility, positioning MDWFP as a trusted leader in conservation and outdoor recreation. Moving forward, we will continue to build on this foundation by refining our brand messaging, expanding our outreach efforts, and engaging with new and existing audiences to further our mission and achieve our conservation goals.

MISSISSIPPI STATE PARKS BRAND INITIATIVE

Mississippi State Parks undertook a significant rebranding effort with the introduction of a new logo, designed to enhance the image of our parks system and foster a stronger connection with the public. This initiative was driven by the need to create a distinct identity for Mississippi State Parks, separate from the MDWFP state seal logo, which, while emblematic of the department's authority, did not capture the unique experiences and natural beauty of our parks.



Logo Overview

The new Mississippi State Parks logo is a thoughtfully crafted emblem that encapsulates the essence of our cherished landscapes and our commitment to their preservation. This shield represents our dedication to safeguarding these resources for future generations. Horizontal lines elegantly depict the transition between land, water, and sky, reflecting the breathtaking scenery that defines our state parks. Central to the logo is a pinecone, which stands as a proud emblem of Mississippi's natural heritage and the diverse wildlife that thrives within our parks.

Purpose and Impact

The new logo plays a crucial role in rebranding and elevating the image of Mississippi State Parks. It is not merely a visual element but a powerful tool for communicating the parks' essence, values, and experiences to both loyal patrons and potential new visitors. By uniting all State Parks under a cohesive brand while allowing each park to maintain its unique charm, the logo enhances emotional attachment and engagement with the parks.





MISSISSIPPI OUTDOORS MEDIA INITIATIVE

In 2024, the Marketing, Communications, and Media Bureau underwent a significant transformation with the creation of **Mississippi Outdoors Media**. This integrated media platform includes the *Mississippi Outdoors Magazine*, *Outdoor Digest*, *Mississippi Outdoors TV*, and the newly launched *Mississippi Outdoors Podcast*. With the combination of media, Mississippi Outdoors underwent a branding transformation to increase awareness and reach to our audience. Together, these channels work to connect, educate, and inspire Mississippians, fostering a deep bond with the outdoors and advocating for its conservation.

Mississippi Outdoors Magazine

For more than 85 years, our bi-monthly print publication continues to be a flagship product, featuring engaging articles, stunning photos, and practical insights on hunting, fishing, conservation, and safety. In addition to our more than 12,000 print subscribers, Sportsman's License holders can access the online magazine, offering a reliable source of information and inspiration to our readers.

Mississippi Outdoor Digest

The annual digest remains an essential resource, compiling rules, regulations, and vital information about licenses, Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), State Fishing Lakes, and State Parks. With more than 340,000 publications distributed statewide, the digest serves as an authoritative guide for both residents and non-residents who engage in outdoor activities.

Mississippi Outdoors TV continues to be an award-winning highlight of our media strategy. With 104 shows broadcast twice weekly on Mississippi Public Television and available on YouTube, the show celebrates our state's natural wonders, connecting audiences to Mississippi's diverse outdoor offerings. This year, the show expanded its reach, generating over 8.4 million impressions as the second highest rated show on MPB. Mississippi Outdoors TV is also available on the Mississippi Outdoors Media YouTube channel offering additional, anytime, access for our followers.

Mississippi Outdoors Podcast launched in 2024, and quickly became a popular addition to our media offerings. The show provides a new platform for in-depth conversations on outdoor activities, conservation efforts, and community stories. With a new episode launching each week on YouTube, Spotify, and Apple Podcast, the show has gained significant recognition, being nominated for a People's Choice Podcast Award. We anticipate the podcast will have continued growth based on the enthusiasm of our audience.



ADDITIONAL PRINT PUBLICATIONS

Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) Regulations and Maps

Updated brochures are released annually detailing regulations and boundaries for all 53 WMAs, providing crucial information for hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts.

Wildlife and Fisheries Brief

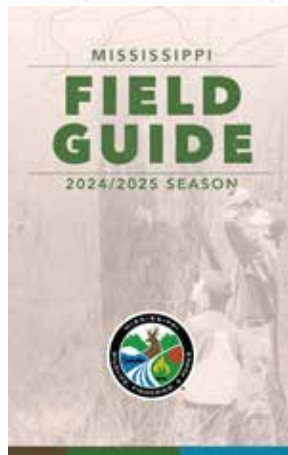
The Wildlife and Fisheries Brief is a newly introduced publication that provides the public with timely, in-depth information on each of MDWFP's wildlife programs, including white-tailed deer, waterfowl, black bear, alligator, and more. This brief covers the latest developments, challenges, and scientific studies related to Mississippi's diverse wildlife and aquatic resources. With insights from biologists and field experts, it offers an accessible way for readers to understand ongoing conservation efforts, population management, habitat restoration, and the ecological factors impacting these species. Distributed statewide, the Wildlife and Fisheries Brief serves as an essential communication tool, fostering transparency, community engagement, and public support for our conservation initiatives.

Harvest Reports and Disease Management

Our annual Harvest Reports for deer, turkey, and alligator provide crucial hunter-reported data that have been instrumental in shaping effective conservation strategies and

ensuring sustainable wildlife populations across Mississippi. Complementing these reports is the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Report, which plays a vital role in educating the public about CWD—a serious threat to deer populations—and the latest measures to manage and mitigate its spread. Together, these publications serve as key resources for hunters, landowners, and wildlife managers, offering transparency and fostering informed participation in the conservation of our state's natural resources.

MDWFP Pocket Guide and Season Cards



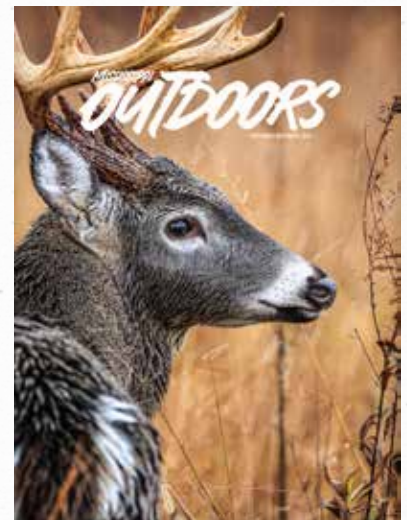
A cherished resource among hunters and anglers, the MDWFP Pocket Guide and Season Cards are a compact, convenient booklet that offers an annual calendar detailing season dates and bag limits. It also features moon phases and helpful seasonal information to enhance the outdoor experience. Designed for quick reference in the field, the guide provides essential information at a glance, making it a reliable companion for planning hunting

and fishing trips throughout the year. Its continued popularity reflects our commitment to providing practical, user-friendly resources that support safe and enjoyable outdoor activities across Mississippi.

Annual Sportsman's Calendar



Published annually, the Sportsman's Calendar is a comprehensive, full-sized wall calendar designed specifically for Mississippi's hunting and fishing community. This calendar goes beyond just marking the days—it is packed with detailed season dates, moon phases, peak hunting times, and vivid, captivating photography of Mississippi's diverse landscapes and wildlife.



ADDITIONAL VIDEO CONTENT

Video content continues to be a powerful outreach tool for MDWFP, enhancing our ability to connect with diverse audiences across the state. Our ongoing production includes educational videos about wildlife and fisheries management, highlights of scientific studies, and promotions for events related to wildlife, fisheries, and state parks. We regularly produce engaging content for the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, including a monthly lecture series that offers in-depth education on Mississippi's unique natural resources. These videos, offered online through our website and YouTube, serve as an accessible and dynamic medium, providing a visual platform to share our conservation efforts, promote outdoor recreation, and foster a deeper appreciation for the state's rich biodiversity.



New Website Launch

One of the year's key accomplishments was the successful launch of a new, user-friendly MDWFP website. The redesigned site provides an enhanced experience for visitors, offering easy access to information on licenses, hunting and fishing regulations, state parks, and educational resources. As the primary tool used by the public to gain information, the new website also supports our outreach efforts by serving as a dynamic platform for sharing news, updates, and multimedia content, furthering our goal of increasing public awareness and engagement.



OUTREACH

Public Relations and Media Engagement

The Marketing, Communications, and Media Bureau has made significant strides in expanding the reach and impact of MDWFP through a robust public relations strategy. This year, we issued over 100 press releases and monthly newsletters to keep the public informed about key initiatives, events, and developments in wildlife conservation, state parks, and outdoor recreation. We leveraged CISION, a leading public relations software, to monitor media coverage, enhance our media engagement, and ensure our messaging reached a wide audience. Partnerships with Mississippi Tourism, and other state agencies were strengthened, allowing us to expand our mission and promote the state's natural resources more effectively.


Active Community Engagement

Our team remained actively engaged with the community through direct participation in events, exhibits, and outreach programs. By supporting local and regional events, we fostered stronger connections with the public, raised awareness of MDWFP initiatives, and encouraged participation in outdoor activities. These efforts not only promoted conservation and outdoor recreation but also reinforced MDWFP's role as a vital partner in community engagement.

Social Media Engagement

We have significantly enhanced our social media presence, creating a dynamic environment of communication, collaboration, and coordination between the public and MDWFP. Our platforms, including Facebook, X, Instagram, and YouTube, are vital channels for promoting conservation, outdoor recreation, and facilitating public interaction.

SUPPORT SERVICES



The Support Services division of MDWFP plays a critical role in the agency's mission by providing the infrastructure and resources needed to ensure seamless operations. This division includes Human Resources, which focuses on recruitment, training, and staff development; Accounting, which manages the agency's budget and financial planning; Information Services, responsible for maintaining and enhancing technology systems; Printing, which oversees the production of publications and materials; and Operations, which ensures the smooth functioning of facilities and logistics.

Additionally, Support Services oversees license sales, streamlining processes and providing essential support to maximize accessibility for customers. Together, these teams form the backbone of MDWFP, supporting the conservation, education, and outdoor recreation efforts that benefit the people and natural resources of Mississippi.



FY 2024 LICENSE SALES & REVENUE

RESIDENT 325,835 SOLD	\$7,421,811
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NON-RESIDENT 129,731 SOLD	\$12,162,629
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LIFETIME 1,231 SOLD	\$826,000
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OTHER 5,909 SOLD	\$324,994
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FUNDING OUR FUTURE

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) relies on sustainable revenue from a variety of sources. These include the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and permits, boat registrations and titles, and federal funding—much of which is tied to the number of licenses sold and boats registered each year.

Our conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives are further supported by the sale of Mississippi Conservation License Plates, subscriptions to Mississippi Outdoors magazine, and donations

through Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, Parks, and Marine Foundation. Additionally, MDWFP benefits from the transfer of funds from the Mississippi Legislature associated with state sales tax on watercraft and the sales tax on hunting, fishing, and wildlife-watching equipment.

MDWFP is continuously exploring ways to enhance these funding streams and develop partnerships with other state agencies, non-profits, and private businesses.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- ✓ Purchase hunting and fishing licenses and permits.
- ✓ Buy firearms, ammunition, or equipment for fishing, archery, or wildlife watching.
- ✓ Register your boat and purchase fuel for it.
- ✓ Subscribe to Mississippi Outdoors magazine.
- ✓ Obtain a Mississippi Conservation License Plate through the DMV.
- ✓ Donate to MDWFP through the Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, Marine, and Parks Foundation.
- ✓ Engage with MDWFP through sponsorships and public-private partnership opportunities.

To learn more about how you can support Mississippi's outdoors, go online at:
www.mdwfp.com/support

In 2024, MDWFP made remarkable strides in conserving Mississippi's natural resources, enhancing outdoor recreation, and engaging the public. These achievements showcase the agency's dedication to wildlife management, habitat conservation, and expanding access to outdoor opportunities across the state.

WILDLIFE

Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Program

- Managed 53 WMAs across 700,000+ acres with 44 employees.
- 138,000+ acres owned by the State of Mississippi
- Managed 9,610 acres in food plots and openings
- 21 WMAs offered youth/handicapped hunting
- 4 youth dove hunts across 4 WMAs
- Planted 394 acres for migratory dove hunting on 14 WMAs
- 5 WMAs hosted senior adult draw hunts

WMA Habitat Management

- Forest management on 10,600 acres across 3 WMAs
- Reforested 40 acres on O'Keefe and Malmaison WMAs
- Timber thinned on 201 acres across 3 WMAs
- 125 acres of timber sold on Old River WMA
- 670 acres of land leveling on Howard Miller WMA
- Sprayed 685 acres of cogongrass on 3 WMAs
- Conducted prescribed burns on 5,800+ acres
- Managed 9,000+ acres of waterfowl habitat
- Sprayed 330 acres for invasive species

WMA Infrastructure

- Improved 90 miles of roads and 1 bridge
- Installed a bridge on O'Keefe WMA
- Improved 20 miles of levees and 10 water control structures
- Repaired 27 low-water crossings and replaced 12 culverts
- Renovated 24 miles of ditching and repaired 1 low-water crossing
- Maintained 38 miles of boundary line
- Updated 3 youth/handicap blinds and purchased 4 new ones
- Developed infrastructure for Charlie Capps WMA

Private Lands Habitat Program

- Conducted 537 site visits impacting 250,492 acres
- Held 31 public presentations, including college lectures
- Wrote 40 habitat management-related articles and media

- Coordinated with several conservation groups and agencies
- Supported Fire on the Forty campaign, impacting 8,914 acres in FY24
- Maintained web pages for habitat-related education
- Attended 81 days of professional development and 116 days of meetings

White-tailed Deer Program

- Conducted 57 site visits for land guidance
- 977,579 acres enrolled in DMAP
- Responded to sick deer reports and coordinated sampling
- Coordinated 4 Magnolia Records scoring sessions
- Assisted MSU with deer-related research and deer harvest promotion
- Provided 21 CWD and deer presentations
- Collected and submitted CWD samples from free-range and captive herds

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Monitoring

- Detected 110 CWD-positive deer in FY24
- Identified first captive CWD-positive deer
- Collected 8,952 CWD samples
- Implemented thermal surveys and taxidermist payment program
- Participated in several CWD research studies
- Created and updated CWD guides and website

Migratory Bird Program

- Delivered 12 public presentations and participated in 8 workshops/field days
- Developed 21 articles, press releases, and digital media on migratory game birds and habitat management
- Engaged in 11 media interviews about migratory game birds
- Issued 890 Light Goose Conservation Order permits and provided harvest estimates to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Published 8 weekly waterfowl reports during the 2023–2024 season
- Coordinated the Gunner Palmer Youth Waterfowl Hunting and Education Camp with Ducks Unlimited
- Conducted 4 winter aerial waterfowl surveys, analyzed data, and posted findings online

- Taught a college class on waterfowl conservation at Mississippi State University
- Administered a private land water control structure program, impacting 444 acres of wetlands
- Completed 38 private land site visits, advising on wetland habitat management across 11,000 acres
- Represented Mississippi in 42 professional meetings, including the Mississippi Flyway Council and Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture
- Chaired committees for the Mississippi Flyway Council Gamebird Technical Section.
- Provided recommendations for migratory game bird hunting seasons and waterfowl stamp funding
- Managed nuisance Canada goose and falconry permits.
- Funded a post-doctoral waterfowl research project at Mississippi State University
- Coordinated resident migratory bird banding, banding 324 wood ducks and 454 mourning doves
- Assisted with Wildlife Management Area habitat management

Black Bear Program

- Documented sightings via email, phone, and social media, with real-time map updates.
- Managed 5 bear-human conflict cases, including site visits and relocations.
- Contributed parasite samples to Mississippi State University for research.
- Attended the Eastern Black Bear Workshop in Wisconsin.
- Captured and sampled 30 bears across 12 counties, including collaring efforts
- Transplanted an abandoned cub in Warren County to a foster litter in Wilkinson County
- Responded to 5 bear mortalities, including roadkill and illegal kills.
- Provided technical assistance on human-bear conflicts
- Reached nearly 1 million users on social media during "Bear Week" and engaged 22,000 members on the "Mississippi Black Bears" Facebook group
- Appeared in 17 news interviews and on various podcasts
- Contributed to 13 articles and books on black bears

- Updated MDWFP's bear reporting system, increasing reports by 300%.
- Developed an interactive bear observation map on the MDWFP website
- Utilized automated trapping systems for bear capture, garnering interest from other states
- Created a new portable automated trap for better access to trapping areas
- Completed the MSU black bear hair snare project and launched a public survey on bear perceptions

Wild Turkey Program

- Coordinated Game Check for mandatory reporting of turkeys harvested in the spring season, with a 37% increase in reported gobblers
- Provided updates and recommendations on turkey hunting regulations to the MDWFP Commission
- Led monitoring efforts on wild turkey populations, including surveys and research projects in collaboration with Mississippi State University
- Managed a nonresident hunter drawing for public land turkey hunting during the spring season
- Developed a project to rehabilitate riparian hardwoods across 1,200 private acres with the Mississippi Wild Turkey Initiative
- Conducted 39 technical guidance visits to private landowners, impacting 84,110 acres
- Presented at 24 public and professional events about wild turkey conservation
- Published 11 articles and press releases, contributing to national magazines
- Co-authored a peer-reviewed manuscript on predator-prey dynamics
- Hosted "Gamebird Weekend" with over 100 landowners to discuss turkey and quail habitat management
- Served as a guest on several podcasts and appeared in legislative discussions about the Mississippi Wild Turkey Stamp
- Maintained the Wild Turkey web page and coordinated data collection for the Turkey Management Assistance Program
- Monitored diseased turkey reports and collaborated with researchers for diagnostics
- Attended the SEAFWA Wild Turkey Working Group and provided updates on Mississippi's wild turkey status
- Advised the Mississippi Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation and represented Mississippi on NWTF's National Technical Committee

Small Game Program

- Conducted 3 public land site visits and 12 private land site visits.

- Completed 4 Fire on the Forty Initiative contracts for habitat management, including prescribed burning
- Provided wildlife habitat and population management guidance through 13 emails/phone calls.
- Responded to 131 general inquiries about small game hunting and related topics
- Partnered with the MDWFP Private Lands Program to implement habitat practices benefiting quail and other small game on private lands
- Coordinated breeding season quail call counts on 17 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs)
- Managed quail covey call counts on two WMAs
- Maintained web pages for quail, rabbit, and squirrel species
- Organized youth squirrel hunting events in collaboration with various organizations (4 WMAs, military sites, National Wildlife Refuge)
- Assisted Quail Forever with adult and youth sporting clays events
- Coordinated action items for the National Bobwhite and Grasslands Initiative (inventory, implementation, and support)
- Represented MDWFP on the National Bobwhite and Grasslands Initiative Technical Committee
- Organized the 2024 annual meeting for the committee (team meetings, budgeting, sponsorships, agenda).
- Provided guidance on a quail population dynamics project with MSU
- Conducted quail and prescribed fire lectures for MSU and Wildlife Bureau staff.
- Authored two popular articles for Mississippi Outdoors magazine, plus small game notes for a Wildlife Bureau article
- Participated in two radio shows discussing small game biology and management
- Provided hunting season forecasts to outdoor writers
- Assisted Wildlife Bureau with customer service questions, including waterfowl draw hunts and habitat management on WMAs

Alligator Program

- Issued 953 public water alligator hunting permits and 103 private land alligator hunting permits, with 292 harvest vouchers across 19,444 acres of habitat
- Reported 938 alligators harvested from public waters and 142 from private lands

- Responded to 305 nuisance alligator complaints requiring agency action
- Worked on a special alligator season for Pelahatchie Bay to reduce the population
- Developed online tools for alligator harvest logging and private land permit applications
- Conducted 4 public presentations and issued 2 press releases related to alligator hunting opportunities
- Supported MDWFP Enforcement Bureau, resulting in 12 citations
- Assisted with the Gulf Coast Gator Ranch facility issues
- Facilitated a special Pelahatchie Bay alligator hunt, resulting in 18 alligators harvested

Furbearer Program

- Conducted the Kosciusko fur sale in February 2024
- Conducted a trapper survey sent to over 1,500 licensed trappers.
- Supplied CITES tags to MDWFP points of sale
- Conducted an internal audit to ensure seamless customer purchase of required tags

Wild Hog Program

- Completed the third year of digital renewals for the NWCO permit system
- Implemented a verification process to confirm contact information and service details for NWCO permit holders
- Developed a searchable public database for NWCOs, including species and county service details
- Captured and removed approximately 790 wild hogs on 13 WMAs
- Conducted a nighttime hog shooting operation on Mahanna WMA for disease sampling
- Utilized the OnX app for real-time mapping of wild hog signs across various WMAs
- Conducted heat map surveys for hog sign on specific MDWFP lands.
- Conducted Wild Hog Level II training, covering trap systems, hog biology, and disease management
- Participated in media interviews and conducted presentations for various organizations
- Provided technical guidance to landowners and managers regarding wild hog issues

Exotic Species Program

- Updated agency rule to add permits for Permanent Exhibitors
- Administered permits for inherently dangerous animals, including inspections and permit issuance

- Coordinated with the MS Board of Animal Health on the importation, possession, and exhibition of exotic and native species
- Responded to inquiries regarding the transport of captive animals through Mississippi
- Provided technical guidance on exotic species regulations to various agencies and the public
- Supported MDWFP Enforcement Bureau in the identification and regulation of non-game wildlife species

Wildlife Research Program

- Managed 10 cooperative wildlife research projects with Mississippi State University and University of Tennessee, funded by Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program funds
- Continued funding for various studies, including white-tailed deer populations related to Chronic Wasting Disease, bobwhite quail populations, wild turkey dynamics, and black bear population monitoring
- Coordinated annual harvest surveys for hunters and trappers
- Monitored waterfowl populations through aerial surveys and banding of wood ducks and mourning doves
- Supported multi-state research on prescribed fire effects, wild turkey populations, and other species

Training Program Highlights

- 24 Training Events Coordinated
- 638 training man-days across Wildlife and Fisheries
- Workshops on Timber, First Aid/CPR, Explosives, Rifle Courses, Chemical Immobilization, and more
- Specialized workshops: Heavy Equipment Safety (46 employees), Pesticide Applicator (56 employees), Wild Pig (19 employees), Beaver Trapping (9 employees), and Welding (13 employees)
- Sent 6 staff to timber management training in LA
- Developed training tracking app within Xnet to track courses, attendance, and certifications

Wildlife Weapons Qualification

- First wildlife weapons qualification in over 10 years, qualifying 60 shooters (17 as Expert Marksman)

New Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

- Prescribed fire, Pesticide Applicator, and Weapons Qualification SOPs developed and implemented

Cross Bureau and Multi-Agency Partnerships

- Fostered collaboration through training events

Additional Training Initiatives

- Developed and implemented Wildlife Bureau training plans and agency CDL training plans
- Coordinated the development of new hire training to ensure standards of appearance and task completion

FISHERIES

Statewide Fisheries Management and Research Fish Sampling and Habitat Enhancement:

- Sampled fish populations in 42 public waters (435 days of effort).
- Enhanced fish habitat in public waters (63 days)

Public Engagement and Technical Assistance

- Contributed to 8 articles, 5 press releases, and 30 social media posts.
- Provided technical assistance in 158 private waters assessments (4,803 acres)

Fish Kill Investigations

- Investigated 9 fish kills (3 public, 6 private waters)

Community Fishing Assistance Program:

- Managed 20 CFAP ponds (411 acres)

Aquatic Plant Management

- Surveyed and controlled 2,620 acres of aquatic plants in 32 public water bodies (389 days)

Projects and Research

- Initiated Horseshoe Lake Restoration with Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund.
- Continued research funding with Mississippi State University on fish population analysis, crappie spawning, and invasive carp control.

Freshwater Commercial Fishing

- Sold 1,039 freshwater commercial fishing licenses and 438 slat basket licenses

State Fishing Lakes Operations and Maintenance:

- Operated 18 state fishing lake facilities (3,300 acres)
- Anglers spent 61,203 days fishing; total user days (anglers, campers, pavilion users) were 76,126

Lake Renovation and Maintenance:

- Renovated and reopened Elvis Presley Lake
- Applied 11,300 pounds of water-soluble fertilizer

Aquatic Education and Outreach Education Initiatives:

- Participated in MS Outdoors Television and Radio shows
- Conducted 40 youth fishing events with 5,345 participants
- Updated statewide fishing reports (88 days)
- Made improvements to the event pond at Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery

Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery and Visitor Education

- 5,630 visitors on-site; 1,076 reached at off-site events
- Conducted 68 guided tours, 52 F.I.S.H. programs, and 13 interpretive talks
- Planned 28 public events, including fishing days and youth art contest (726 entries)

Exhibits and Programs

- Expanded water safety, fossil, and fishing tackle exhibits
- Launched new programs (Pre-K, L.A.B. program, and educational downloadable materials)
- Hosted Wildlife Forever programs and translated local fishing regulations into Spanish

Public Boating Access Ramp Inspections and Maintenance:

- Inspected and maintained ramps across various rivers (MS River, Pearl River, Yazoo River, etc.)

Facility Improvements

- Constructed new ramps and installed ADA kayak launch piers at multiple locations
- Built and repaired fishing piers at various parks and ramps

Fisheries Administration

Federal Grants and Reporting:

- Completed annual reports for several federal grants supporting fisheries management, aquatic education, and invasive species tracking

Fishing Records

- Established new state records for multiple species, including Largemouth bass (2.67 lbs), Channel catfish (8.19 lbs), and others

Technical Advice and Assistance

- Provided technical advice or assistance to 28 organizations, including local, state, and federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations, such as:
 - 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
- Mississippi Aquatic Invasive Species Council
- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
- Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
- Mississippi State University
- U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and more

Professional Representation

- Fisheries staff represented the agency in professional associations (e.g., AFS, AFWA, SEAFWA, MAPMS) and served on technical committees as requested

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Cadet Class

Graduation and Training Updates

- **August 2023:** 11 Cadets completed the MS Law Enforcement Officers Training Academy
- **September 2023:** 12 Cadets graduated from the MS Conservation Officers Training Academy, beginning their Field Training Program
- **January 2024:** MDWFP advertised for Conservation Officer/Cadet roles, receiving 168 applications. 45 applicants submitted necessary packets to take the entry PT/swim test in March 2024
- **March-April 2024:** MDWFP interviewed the 45 qualifying applicants and selected 22 individuals to join the May 2024 Cadet class at the MS Conservation Officers Training Academy (MCOTA)
- **May 2024:** 22 Cadets began training, with 19 remaining in training by September 2024
- **September 2024:** All 19 Cadets will complete MLEOTA training and return to MCOTA for a 4-week final training period
- **October 2024:** Cadets will graduate and begin their careers as Conservation Officers

In-Service Annual Training for Law Enforcement Officers

- **Training Timeline:** March 4 – April 23, 2024

Training Highlights:

- 170 Officers attended mandatory annual training
- Re-certification and firmware updates for Taser Conductive Electrical Weapons
- Fentanyl training provided by MBN personnel
- Transition from Glock 22 (.40 Caliber) to Glock 45 (9mm) as primary sidearm
- Transition from Glock 42 (.380 Caliber) to Glock 43 (9mm) as backup sidearm

- 6 re-certification courses of fire completed with primary sidearm, backup firearm, and patrol rifle

Wildlife and Fisheries Law Enforcement

- **Patrol Hours:** Officers patrolled 177,654 hours enforcing wildlife and fisheries regulations.
- **WMA/State Lake Checks:** 1,387 conducted.
- **Hunting Accidents/Incidents Investigated:** 14, including 6 firearm-related (3 fatalities) and 8 tree-stand related

Wildlife and Fisheries Citations Issued: 6,754 citations, including:

- No License Resident: 1,134
- No Hunting License Non-Resident: 188
- No Fishing License Non-Resident: 210
- Trespassing: 474
- Hunting From Public Road: 323
- Supplemental Feeding Violation: 248
- Deer Hunting Without Hunter Orange: 195
- Harassment of Wildlife: 24
- Headlighting Deer: 124
- Hunting Over Bait: 40
- Littering: 96
- Federal Migratory Bird Violations: 823

Boating Law Enforcement

- **Vessel Registrations:** 104,430 vessels.
- **Boating Education:** 5,532 students certified.
- **Patrol Hours on Public Water:** 31,250.
- **Boating Accidents/Incidents Investigated:** 20, including 1 fatality and 8 injuries (\$183,400 in property damage).
- **Boating Citations Issued:** 974 citations, including:
 - **No Boat Registration:** 261
 - **BUI (Boating Under the Influence):** 22
 - **PFD / Running Lights Violations:** 457

Law Enforcement Conservation Officer Recognition

- **Waterfowl Officer of the Year:** Master Sgt. Keith Bond.
- **Conservation Officer of the Year:** Cpl. Cole Bush.

Law Enforcement Investigations & Intelligence Unit

- **Conference:** Attended the 2024 Southeastern States Investigations & Intelligence Conference in San Antonio, TX, with 48 attendees from 15 state wildlife agencies and federal agencies.

Task Force Agreement:

MDWFP joined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Task Force Officer Program, becoming the first Southeastern state to participate

- **Investigations Conducted:** 107 cases, with 152 suspects identified for prosecution

Notable Cases:

- Memphis and Southaven men prosecuted for exceeding crappie limit and using illegal hooks at Enid Lake Spillway, ordered to pay fines and restitution totaling \$14,050
- Baton Rouge and Hackberry men prosecuted for conspiring to illegally transport live white-tailed deer, ordered to pay \$69,808 in fines and restitution, and implement CWD sampling at Mistletoe Properties

Special Response Team (SRT)

- **Team Composition:** 50 members, including K-9 and Dive teams
- **Training:** The Dive team completed Public Safety Diver certification

Mission Highlights:

- Provided security for Mississippi State Fair, Dixie National Rodeo, and Governor's Inauguration
- Assisted with Amber and Silver Alerts and search/rescue missions across multiple counties
- Provided executive protection and security for major events
- Responded to 20 calls for assistance in FY24

Shooting Ranges

Total Customers Served: 25,189.

Facility Check-ins:

- **Turcotte Shooting Facility:** 8,795 check-ins.
- **McIvor Shooting Facility:** 8,580 check-ins.
- **McHenry Shooting Facility:** 7,814 check-ins.

Mississippi Scholastic Shooting Program (MSSP)

- **Program Overview:** A team-based youth development program teaching life skills through shotgun sports (5-Stand, Skeet, and Sporting Clays)
- **Active Teams:** 96 teams, including 37 private schools, 34 public schools, and 25 clubs
- **Student Participation:** 1,124 students enrolled, including 103 females and 1,021 males, across 45 counties

Archery In Schools (AIMS)

- The program is facilitated by MDWFP and includes:
 - 600 school teams.

- 6,000 student archers, making archery the fastest-growing school sport in Mississippi.

Programs

- MS NASP Bullseye:
- 600 Teams, 6,000 Student Archers
- AIMS Xtreme:
- 30 Teams, 180 Student Archers
- AIMS All Stars:
- 144 Student Archers

2024 Program Additions: AIMS MSNASP 3D:

- Four Regional Events
- **Northwest, Northeast, South-central, and Coastal Regions**

AIMS Xtreme Summer Series (2024-2025):

- **North Mississippi AIMS Xtreme Summer Invitational** – Hosted in Starkville
- **South Mississippi AIMS Xtreme Summer Invitational** – Hosted in Hattiesburg

AIMS Outdoor Series:

- **North Mississippi AIMS Outdoor Qualifier** – Hosted at Mclvor Shooting Facility
- **South Mississippi AIMS Outdoor Qualifier** – Hosted at McHenry Shooting Facility
- **AIMS Outdoor State Championship** – Hosted at Turcotte Shooting Facility

AIMS MSNASP Instructor Training

- Focused on training instructors to expand the AIMS program and ensure sustainable growth across the state.

Youth Participation Initiative (YPI)

- **Funding:** \$2,898,348 awarded to 498 projects.
- **Projects Funded:** \$199,500 awarded to 83 projects focusing on wildlife conservation, hunting, fishing, and shooting sports
- **Youth Impacted:** 5,729 youth introduced to outdoor activities in FY24

Hunter Education

- **Certification:** 11,255 students certified through 278 classes
- **Instructor Contributions:** 236 volunteer instructors contributed 2,485 hours
- **Online Availability:** Full online certification available for residents aged 12 and older since 2020
- **Instructor Training:** 64 volunteer instructors certified during FY24

MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE

Public Programs (Education and Exhibits)

- **Total People Served:** 282,811
- **Museum Visitors:** 89,055
- **In-House Interactions (Pre-K to Adult):** 27,335 individuals in 708 sessions
- **Curriculum-Based Presentations (School Aged Children):** 9,633 students in 156 presentations
- **Conservation Education Workshops:** 41 workshops with 501 educators
- **Major Events Hosted:** 9,373 visitors participated in 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
- **Spring/Summer Camps:** 12 sessions for 201 campers
- **Fun Friday Programs:** 7 sessions for families
- **Interactive Fish Feeding Sessions:** 150 sessions for 8,065 individuals
- **Volunteer Hours Contributed:** 2,738 hours, valued at \$68,450

Statewide Conservation Education Outreach

- **People Served:** 157,690 through in-person and virtual outreach
- **Classroom Programs:** 1,060 programs for 44,941 students across Mississippi
- **Community Events:** 131 events for 31,374 participants
- **Information and Resources Provided:** Reached 514,157 contacts, including social media, with 17,427 direct interactions
- **Classroom Science Education Kits:** Distributed to 3,000 students

Conservation Biology (Natural Heritage and Research)

- **Scientific Assistance & Recommendations:** Provided to organizations like U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. National Park Service, and others
- **Private Landowner Consultations:** Conducted on species and habitat management
- **Requests for Information:** 3,560 inquiries regarding non-game species
- **Scientific Collection Permits Issued:** 149
- **New Collections Registered:** 1,081

- **New Scientific Specimens Cataloged:** 53,587
- **Total Specimens Maintained:** 1,688,190
- **Specimens/Tissue Samples Loaned:** 32 to various institutions
- **Species Surveys Conducted:** 260 surveys across 70 counties
- **Research Manuscripts/Reports:** 7 published
- **Species Occurrence Records:** 46,103 records maintained
- **Environmental Review Comments:** 317 requests reviewed
- **Data Sharing Agreements:** 13 completed

Exhibits

- **Permian Monsters:** May 22, 2023 – January 5, 2024
- **Attack of the Bloodsuckers:** January 15, 2024 – May 17, 2024
- **Dinosaurs Around the World:** June 3, 2024 – January 8, 2025

Awards

- **Visit Jackson Hometown Hero 2024:** Corey Wright
- **Mississippi Magazine “Best of Mississippi Travel Reader Poll 2024”:**
 - Best Animal/Wildlife Attraction: MMNS
- **Mississippi Magazine “Best of Mississippi Reader Poll 2024”:**
 - Best Museum: MMNS

LeFleur’s Bluff Education & Tourism Complex

LeFleur’s Bluff Playground Visitors:

- Over 350,000 since opening in December 2021

STATE PARKS

Partnered with National Park Service on the Following Events:

- Bike Your Park
- Kids to Parks Day
- First Day Hike
- Earth Day
- **Seasonal Events:** Various parks hosted Easter Egg Hunts, Fall Festivals, and Fishing Rodeos
- **Fishing Pier Rebuilds:** The Fisheries Bureau rebuilt fishing piers at the following parks:
 - Roosevelt State Park
 - Lake Lincoln State Park
 - JP Coleman State Park
 - Paul B. Johnson State Park
 - Percy Quin State Park
 - Wall Doxey State Park

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 assisted with other park projects
- **Wall Doxey State Park:** Worked on trails, beach area, and assisted with other park projects

Hattiesburg Disc Golf Club:

- **Paul B. Johnson State Park:** Assisted with the disc golf course by purchasing equipment and installing disc golf signs

New Amenities Offered:

- Premium Primitive Sites: Introduced at Percy Quin State Park, with plans to expand to other parks statewide
- Cabanas at Buccaneer Bay Water Park
- Kayaks Available: Offered at Clarkco, Trace, Tombigbee, Roosevelt, and Lake Lowndes State Parks
- Buccaneer Tiny Home installation

State Parks Renovations and Updates:

Buccaneer State Park:

- **Completed:** Cabanas at Water Park
- **Tiny House Installation:** Completed

Clarkco State Park:

- **Completed:** Renovations of 6 cabins
- **Major Cleanup:** After storms

Natchez State Park:

- **Completed:** Renovations of 10 cabins

Paul B. Johnson State Park:

- **Started Renovations:** 65 campsites and 16 cabins

Percy Quin State Park:

- **Completed:** Renovations of 9 cabins and 67 campsites
- **Renovated:** Manager's house and all four bathhouses
- **Installed:** 1,000 feet of water main to fish cleaning station
- **Installed:** New transformers at Day Use and Group Camp areas

Roosevelt State Park:

- **Started Renovations:** 52 campsites and remaining cabins
- **Completed:** Cabin roof repairs
- **Relocated and Completed:** Camp store

Tishomingo State Park:

- **Started Renovations:** Lodge flooring and Cabin 6

- **Other Repairs:** Started renovations on Cabin 6

LeFleur's Bluff Playground:

- **Completed:** New entrance and concessions renovations

Renovations & Repair Crew (In-House):

Buccaneer State Park:

- **Installation:** Tiny House

Clarkco State Park:

- **Major Cleanup:** After storms

Cossar State Park:

- **Rebuilt:** Main lift station
- **Installed:** 1,000 feet of new water main

John W Kyle State Park:

- **Cabin 7:** Burned down; removed debris

- **Other Demolitions:** Tore down dilapidated bathhouse and shed

JP Coleman State Park:

- **Remodeled:** Cottage 1

Lake Lowndes State Park:

- **Installed:** New septic tank at main office
- **Installed:** New transformer at ball fields

LeFleur's Bluff Playground:

- **Built:** New decking at Concession area

- **Installed:** New ADA wooden walkway with handrails at Concession area

- **Installed:** New benches at Concession area

Leroy Percy State Park:

- **Installed:** New French doors in non-CCC cabins

Paul B. Johnson State Park:

- **Built:** New gatehouse

Percy Quin State Park:

- **Renovated:** Managers house and all four bathhouses

- **Installed:** 1,000 feet of water main to fish cleaning station

- **Installed:** New transformers at Day Use and Group Camp areas

Roosevelt State Park:

- **Relocated and Completed:** Camp store

Tombigbee State Park:

- **Installed:** AC and Heat at both bathhouses

Tishomingo State Park:

- **Started Renovation:** Cabin 6

State Park Events

Clarkco State Park

- Bluegrass in the Park
- First Day Hike
- Look & See
- Car Show
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Pickleball Tournament

Clark Creek State Park

- First Day Hike
- Mardi Gras Bead Hike
- Scavenger Hunt

Cossar State Park

- First Day Hike
- Valentines Day Dance
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Car Show

Hugh White State Park

- First Day Hike
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Coffee with the Park Manager
- Cinco De Mayo Homeschool Dance
- Kids Day to the Park
- Memorial Day Movie Night
- Thunder on the Water

JP Coleman State Park

- Polar Plunge
- Hot Dog Eating Contest
- Valentines Day Dinner
- Mardis Gras Golf Cart Parade
- Build a Bird House
- BBQ Cook Off
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Cinco de Mayo Cook Off
- Mother's Day Event
- Corn Hole Tournament

Lake Lincoln State Park

- Campers Mardis Gras Parade

Lake Lowndes State Park

- Disc Golf Tournament
- Kids to Park Days
- Pedal Through the Park

LeFleur's Bluff State Park

- First Day Hike
- Audubon Society Bird Watching Hike
- En Plein Air Painting Competition
- CARA Animal Shelter Fundraising Event
- Kids Fishing Rodeo

Legion State Park

- First Day Hike
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Pictures with Easter Bunny
- Breakfast with Park Staff
- Kids n Kats Fishing Pole
- Kids to Park Day
- Build a Birdhouse
- Friends of Legion Picnic
- Guided Hike

Leroy Percy State Park

- First Day Hike
- Fishing Rodeo
- Senior Citizen Fish Day w/ Local Adult Daycares
- Riverboat Marathon Series

Natchez State Park

- First Day Hike
- Look and See
- Easter Egg Hunt

- Wreath Making with Mom
- Kids to Park Day
- Fishing with Fathers

Paul B. Johnson State Park

- Welcome to Iceberg Disc Golf Tournament
- PBJ Gold Dubz Disc Golf Tournament
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Look and See
- NADGT Disc Golf Tournament
- Bike Meet
- 601 Open Disc Golf Tournament
- July 4th Fireworks

Percy Quin State Park

- Easter Egg Hunt
- Dog Tracking Trials
- Look and See

Roosevelt State Park

- First Day Hike
- PAX Hospice Bingo Night
- Blue Grass Festival
- Fishing Rodeo
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Volleyball tournament
- Bienville Classic Chess Tournament
- NICA Competition
- NAPA 5K
- PAX Hospice Bingo Night
- Cornhole Tournament
- NICA State Games of MS
- July 4th Fireworks

Tishomingo State Park

- First Day Hike
- Coffee with Park Manager
- Intro to Disc Golf
- Tent Camping 101

Tombigbee State Park

- Cardboard Boat Regatta

Trace State Park

- First Day Ride
- MS Blues Disc Golf Tournament
- Toyota Volunteer Day
- Fishing Rodeo
- May Day Doubles Disc Golf Tournament
- Guided Nature Trail Walk with Woody

Wall Doxey State Park

- First Day Hike
- Daddy Daughter Dance
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Meet the Staff, with Mornin' Sipp
- Kids to Park
- Synchronous Firefly Tour

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP)

Total Funds Awarded: \$1,159,852
Number of Projects: 11

Project Highlights

City of Ridgeland – Friendship Park:

- 5,072 linear feet asphalt trail repair and overlay

Town of Puckett – Twelve Oaks Park:

- 2,640 linear feet asphalt trail repair and overlay

Jefferson County Board of Supervisors – Jefferson County Community Park:

- 1,800 linear feet asphalt trail repair and overlay
- Added trailside lights and 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
- Added trailside bank stabilization and parking

Town of Monticello – Atwood Water Park:

- Installed trailside restroom facility

Town of Mantee – Mantee Community Park:

- 1,320 linear feet asphalt trail with exercise stations, benches, and 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:

- Developed 4 miles of natural surface trails
- Added 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 (LWCF):

Total Funds Awarded: \$2,037,700

Number of Projects: 2

Project Highlights

MDWFP – JP Coleman State Park: Renovation of:

- 21 cabins, park gatehouse, pavilions, restroom facility, and campground bathhouse
- Linen storage building, marina entrance building, swimming pool and pool house
- Picnic shelters
- Installed new playground equipment

MDWFP – Wall Doxey State Park: Renovation of:

- 6 cabins, campground bathhouse, and day use area restroom

- Installed a playground in the day use area

SUPPORT SERVICES

Commission Meetings: Monthly Commission Meetings

- Conducted and attended at various locations throughout Mississippi to ensure state-wide representation and engagement

Financial Reporting:

Annual GAAP Financial Reports

- Compiled and submitted to the Department of Finance and Administration
- Reports reflect the agency's financial status on a modified accrual basis, as presented in the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)

Revenue Generation & Grants: Wildlife Car Tag Sales

- Generated \$522,824 in revenue to support conservation programs

Grants Revenue

- Over \$16,956,985 received from:
 - Department of Interior
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - U.S. Coast Guard
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture

Special Fund Revenues

- Documented over \$36,712,003 by fund and general ledger accounts
- Deposited into the State Treasury
- Additional in-house revenue systems maintained for:
 - Hunting and fishing license sales
 - Park user fees
 - Lake sales

Employee Training

- Conducted various training classes throughout the fiscal year to educate employees on:
 - State procurement rules and regulations
 - Purchasing processes
 - Travel policies

Asset Management

- Utilized a **barcode property tracking system** for compliance with State Auditor guidelines
- Employed an **electronic filing/indexing system** to track property-related documents, such as purchasing, invoicing, and warrant details
- Maintained and reported records on equipment, land, and buildings to the **State Auditor's Office-Bureau of Property Control**
 - Total asset value (as of June 30, 2024): \$592,005,160.50.
 - Total items: 24,749.
- Conducted periodic audits in conjunction with self-audits at regional offices

Fleet Operations

- Verified and maintained operational costs for all agency vehicles:
- **Fuel Usage:** \$1,500,427
- **Repairs & Maintenance:** \$643,322
- **Fleet Updates**
 - Purchased 35 new vehicles.
 - Sold 22 used vehicles (no loans or transfers)
- **Incidents**
 - Processed 6 accident/incident reports.
 - Responded to 22 wrecker service calls
- **Responsibilities included**
 - Maintaining vehicle titles and Jackson Headquarters motor pool
 - Ordering fuel service credit cards
 - Acquiring vehicle license plates

OUTREACH, COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA

Brand Strategy Overview

- Developed a comprehensive brand book to define MDWFP's core values, mission, and vision
- Provided clear visual and messaging guidelines to ensure consistency across platforms and communications.
- Positioned MDWFP as ambassadors for Mississippi's natural resources

Branding Campaign

- Introduced dynamic internal and external communication strategies, combined with cohesive visual elements
- Unified messaging across the agency, emphasizing conservation, recreation, and community engagement

Impact and Future Focus

- Elevated MDWFP's visibility and credibility as a trusted leader in conservation and outdoor recreation
- Future efforts will refine messaging, expand outreach, and attract new audiences to support conservation goals

Mississippi State Parks Branding Initiative

Mississippi State Parks undertook a rebranding effort in 2024, including the introduction of a new logo to strengthen its unique identity

Logo Overview

- **Shield Design:** Symbolizes the protection of Mississippi's natural, historical, and cultural treasures.
- **Horizontal Lines:** Represent land, water, and sky, showcasing the beauty of Mississippi's parks.

- **Pinecone Icon:** Reflects Mississippi's natural heritage and origins, symbolizing preservation and growth.

Purpose and Impact

- Unified all parks under a cohesive brand while celebrating each park's unique charm.
- Enhanced public engagement and emotional connection with Mississippi State Parks.

Mississippi Outdoors Media Initiative

The creation of Mississippi Outdoors Media unified the agency's media efforts, enhancing awareness and outreach.

Mississippi Outdoors Magazine

- A flagship publication with over 12,000 print subscribers
- Sportsman's License holders access an online version, delivering trusted insights on hunting, fishing, and conservation

Mississippi Outdoor Digest

- Distributed 340,000+ copies statewide as the authoritative resource for regulations, WMAs, and parks

Mississippi Outdoors TV

- Award-winning program with 104 episodes broadcast on MPB and YouTube, generating 8.4M+ impressions.
- Ranked as the second-highest-rated show on MPB in 2024

Mississippi Outdoors Podcast

- Launched in 2024, nominated for a People's Choice Podcast Award.
- Weekly episodes available on YouTube, Spotify, and Apple Podcasts

Additional Print Publications Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) Regulations and Maps

- Updated annually with key information on regulations and boundaries for all 53 WMAs

Harvest Reports and Disease Management

- Annual reports for deer, turkey, and alligator hunting, complemented by CWD reports to educate the public

Wildlife and Fisheries Brief

- Covers developments in conservation, habitat restoration, and ecological research

MDWFP Pocket Guide and Season Cards

- Compact resource detailing hunting and fishing seasons, moon phases, and seasonal tips

Annual Sportsman's Calendar

- Features captivating photography, hunting/fishing seasons, moon phases, and peak activity times

Video and Multimedia Content

- Educational videos on wildlife and fisheries management, event highlights, and scientific studies
- Monthly lecture series for the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science on Mississippi's biodiversity
- Online videos accessible on the MDWFP website and YouTube to promote conservation and outdoor recreation

Outreach and Engagement

Public Relations and Media Engagement

- Issued 100+ press releases and newsletters
- Utilized CISION for media monitoring and engagement
- Strengthened partnerships with Mississippi Tourism and other agencies

Community Engagement

- Participated in events, exhibits, and programs to connect with communities and encourage outdoor activities

Website Relaunch

- A user-friendly redesign, offering easy access to licenses, regulations, parks, and educational resources

Social Media Impact

- Increased followers by 20%.
- Launched educational videos and campaigns that garnered 500,000+ views
- Successful campaigns included CWD awareness, Deer Harvest, Fishing Rodeos, and the MSO Podcast

Key Achievements in 2024

- Unified and elevated MDWFP's brand identity across all platforms
- Created targeted campaigns and outreach efforts to boost conservation and engagement
- Expanded media presence through print, video, podcasting, and digital platforms
- Strengthened connections with the public, fostering support for Mississippi's natural resources



STAY CONNECTED WITH MDWFP

Whether you're planning your next outdoor adventure, seeking assistance with licenses and permits, or looking to learn more about conservation efforts in Mississippi, we're here to help. Reach out to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks using the contacts below. Our team is dedicated to serving hunters, anglers, outdoor enthusiasts, and conservationists across the state. Let's work together to preserve and enjoy Mississippi's natural treasures.

Purchase a License	1-800-5GOHUNT
Report a Violation.....	1-800-BE-SMART
Park Reservations	1-800-GOPARKS
Boat Registration.....	601-432-2055

MDWFP Main Office.....	601-432-2400
Law Enforcement	601-432-2176
Wildlife Biologist of the Day	601-432-2199
Fisheries Biologist of the Day	601-432-2212
Government Affairs	601-432-2266
Public Relations	601-432-2239
Mississippi Outdoors Magazine	601-432-2244

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