

FISCAL 2024-25

Annual Report



Pennsylvania
Game Commission

FISCAL 2024-25

Annual Report

PRESENTED BY THE

PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION



Pennsylvania
Game Commission

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COMMISSIONERS



OUR MISSION

Manage and protect wildlife and their habitats while promoting hunting and trapping for current and future generations.



PENNSYLVANIA HUNTERS, TRAPPERS, AND WILDLIFE ENTHUSIASTS:



It is my honor to present the 2024-25 Annual Report of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, an agency with a distinguished legacy and a mission that is as important today as it was at our founding more than a century ago.

This report highlights a year of significant progress. Within these pages, you will see our continued advancement in wildlife research, habitat restoration across tens of thousands of acres, the strategic expansion of our State Game Lands system, and meaningful investments in both public and private shooting ranges. You will also see our continued emphasis on maintaining a strong law enforcement presence, recognizing the critical role our state game wardens play in protecting wildlife and serving communities across the Commonwealth. Together, these efforts represent forward-looking investments designed to meet today's needs while preparing the agency for the challenges of tomorrow.

Accomplishments on this scale do not happen by chance. They are a direct result of the professionalism and dedication of Game Commission staff, the strategic guidance of the Board of Commissioners, and the continued support of Pennsylvania's hunters, trappers, and conservation partners.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to our mission of conserving wildlife and their habitats while promoting Pennsylvania's rich hunting and trapping heritage. Through responsible management and strong partnerships, the Game Commission will continue to lead in conservation, ensuring wildlife thrives and the Commonwealth's wildlife resources are protected for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen P. Smith".

Stephen P. Smith
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Game Commission



History OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

1895

BOARD OF GAME
COMMISSIONERS CREATED

1906

WHITE-TAILED DEER
FIRST STOCKED

1913

RESIDENT HUNTING
LICENSE ESTABLISHED

1920

FIRST STATE GAME
LANDS PURCHASED

1936

FIRST CLASS OF WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION OFFICER
SCHOOL ENROLLED

1958

FIREARMS AND HUNTER
SAFETY EDUCATION
PROGRAM CREATED

1968

FIRST SPRING GOBBLER
SEASON

1981

FIRST BEAR HUNTING
LICENSE ESTABLISHED

2001

PENNSYLVANIA ELK
HUNTING SEASON
RETURNED

2002

ANTLER RESTRICTIONS
PUT INTO EFFECT

2015

OPERATION GAME
THIEF STARTED

2025

SUNDAY HUNTING
BAN LIFTED



GOAL 1

PROACTIVELY MANAGE WILDLIFE





WHITE-TAILED DEER

In 2024, Pennsylvania ranked 1st in deer harvest density and 2nd in overall harvest behind Texas.

ESTIMATED TOTAL ANNUAL WHITE-TAILED DEER HARVEST IN PA

2024-25	476,880
2023-24	430,010
2022-23	422,960
2021-22	376,810

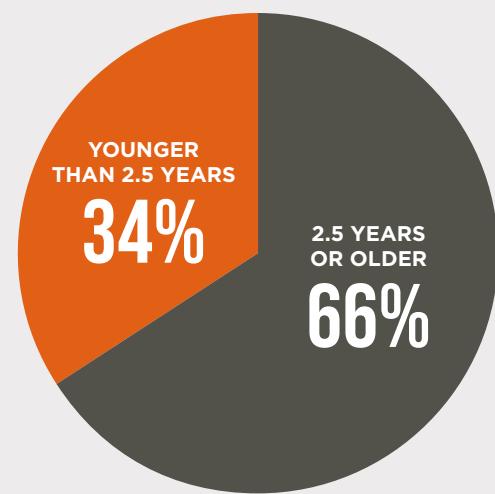
2024 DEER AGING

75+ DEER AGERS

300+
DEER PROCESSORS
VISITED

DATA COLLECTED FROM
27,000+
DEER

ANTLERED DEER AGE DATA



As a result of antler-point restrictions, antlered deer aged 2.5 years or older accounted for 66% of the buck harvest.

ADDRESSING CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE



To manage chronic wasting disease (CWD), the Game Commission worked to increase antlerless harvest while providing more hunter opportunity with the addition of an extended firearms season for January 2025 in Wildlife Management Units 4A, 4D, and 5A. For 2026, that extended season also included 4C as well as all DMAP properties.

The Game Commission is also in the midst of a multi-year research project to better understand the effects on deer behavior, survival, and mortality. Research is focused on Bedford and Fulton counties, where CWD prevalence is highest.

Deer used for this study are equipped with a GPS collar and ear tags, allowing biologists to compare movements and survival between infected and uninfected animals.

290 DEER CAPTURED

235 COLLARS DEPLOYED



ELK

In February, the Game Commission located elk using a thermal camera mounted to the belly of a plane to count elk and estimate the current population.

11,000 MILES FLOWN

**MORE THAN
1 MILLION ACRES COVERED**

133 ELK GROUPS OBSERVED

1,400 ESTIMATED POPULATION

ELK RESEARCH

Throughout the winters of 2024 and 2025, the Game Commission captured yearling elk (1 year old) and fitted them with radio collars to track and determine survival rate. Final results of the study will be available in late 2026, when all captured elk will be considered adults.

52 YEARLINGS FITTED
WITH COLLARS

86% YEARLING
SURVIVAL RATE

YEARLINGS
MONITORED FOR
1 YEAR



ELK HUNTING 2024 SEASON

TOTAL APPLICATIONS: 55,778

140 LICENSES

65 ANTLERED

75 ANTLERLESS

TOTAL HARVEST: 106

ANTLERED HARVEST: 59

ANTLERLESS HARVEST: 47



BLACK BEAR

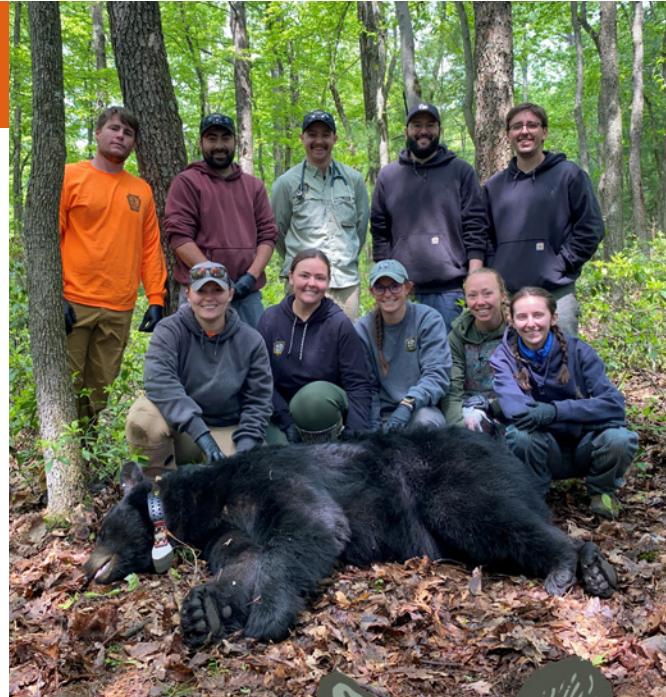
As part of the black bear survival project, the Game Commission is analyzing movement patterns and survival of collared bears — including yearlings, adults, males, and females — in each region of the state.

238 BEARS CAPTURED
273 TIMES

133 GPS COLLARS
DEPLOYED

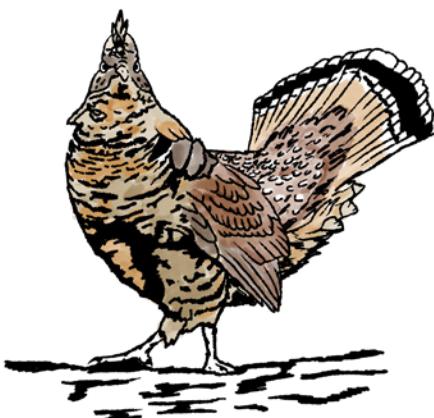
HUNTERS HARVESTED 2,642 BEARS DURING THE 2024 SEASON.

4 IN EARLY SEASON	756 IN ARCHERY SEASON	634 IN MUZZLELOADER AND SPECIAL FIREARMS SEASON
823 IN GENERAL SEASON	425 IN EXTENDED SEASON	



RUFFED GROUSE

The Game Commission collaborated with Indiana University of Pennsylvania to assess the presence of ruffed grouse in managed young forest stands across the Commonwealth.



Autonomous recording units **DETECTED GROUSE DRUMMING IN 232 OF THE 307 SAMPLED SITES (75%)**, with the highest occurrence in connected forest landscapes, at more northern latitudes, and where fewer short woody stems inhibited movement and limited overhead cover.





WILD TURKEY

From 2022-2025, the Game Commission trapped hens across four WMUs representing different habitat types then released them on site with radio transmitters to gather data on survival, reproduction, movement, and habitat use. Results from the study are expected by September 2026.

AS OF JUNE 2025:
528 EQUIPPED
HENS WITH RADIO
TRANSMITTERS
3.1 MILLION GPS
LOCATIONS
COLLECTED



2024 FALL HARVEST:

67,984 hunters
8,466 turkeys harvested
12.4% of hunters
harvested a turkey

2025 SPRING HARVEST:

170,265 spring turkey hunters, including
10,701 junior hunters
42,543 turkeys harvested
1,299 turkeys harvested during the junior season
6,362 turkeys harvested with a special license
Approximately **22.9% of hunters** harvested 1 bird



CAVITY-NESTING BIRDS

To support rapidly declining cavity nester populations amid loss of natural tree cavities and competition with invasive species, the Game Commission began deploying man-made boxes to provide nest sites on public lands for these birds in 2025.

19 PURPLE MARTIN STRUCTURES
6 CHIMNEY SWIFT TOWERS
60 PROTHONOTARY WARBLER BOXES

Already, 13 purple martin gourds and 6 prothonotary warbler boxes have confirmed nesting.

The agency also created partnerships with more than 50 municipalities across the state to install nest structures and educational signs in local parks.

WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN REVISION

Following a 10-year review and revision, Pennsylvania's third Wildlife Action Plan will be published in 2026 to guide management of Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

After gathering input from partners and the public, the Game Commission assessed habitat needs and priority management recommendations, analyzed wildlife health threats, and expanded information on invasive species.

STATUS OF 218 BIRDS AND 66 MAMMALS UPDATED

The approved plan will also allow the agency to maintain eligibility for State & Tribal Wildlife Grant funding.





HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA

As waterfowl migrated through Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth's wildlife faced a resurgence of highly pathogenic avian influenza (bird flu) beginning in late 2024.

Over the next few months, the Game Commission received thousands of wildlife health reports, with many resulting in field responses from law enforcement, biologists, and agency partners. Out of an abundance of caution, the agency also temporarily closed some recreational spaces at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area. Snow geese, black vultures, Canada geese, bald eagles, and red-tailed hawks were most impacted.

The Game Commission's robust management and surveillance efforts, as well as its close work with state and federal agencies, mitigated bird flu's impact on wildlife, domestic animals, and human health. Research into the short- and long-term impact of diseases is ongoing.

THIRD BIRD ATLAS



In 2024, Pennsylvania completed its first year of data collection for the Third Bird Atlas, a 5-year effort to document the distribution, abundance, seasonal patterns, and long-term trends of bird populations. The most comprehensive survey of birds in Pennsylvania is critical for guiding science-based conservation policy in the Commonwealth.

NEARLY 2,000 VOLUNTEERS

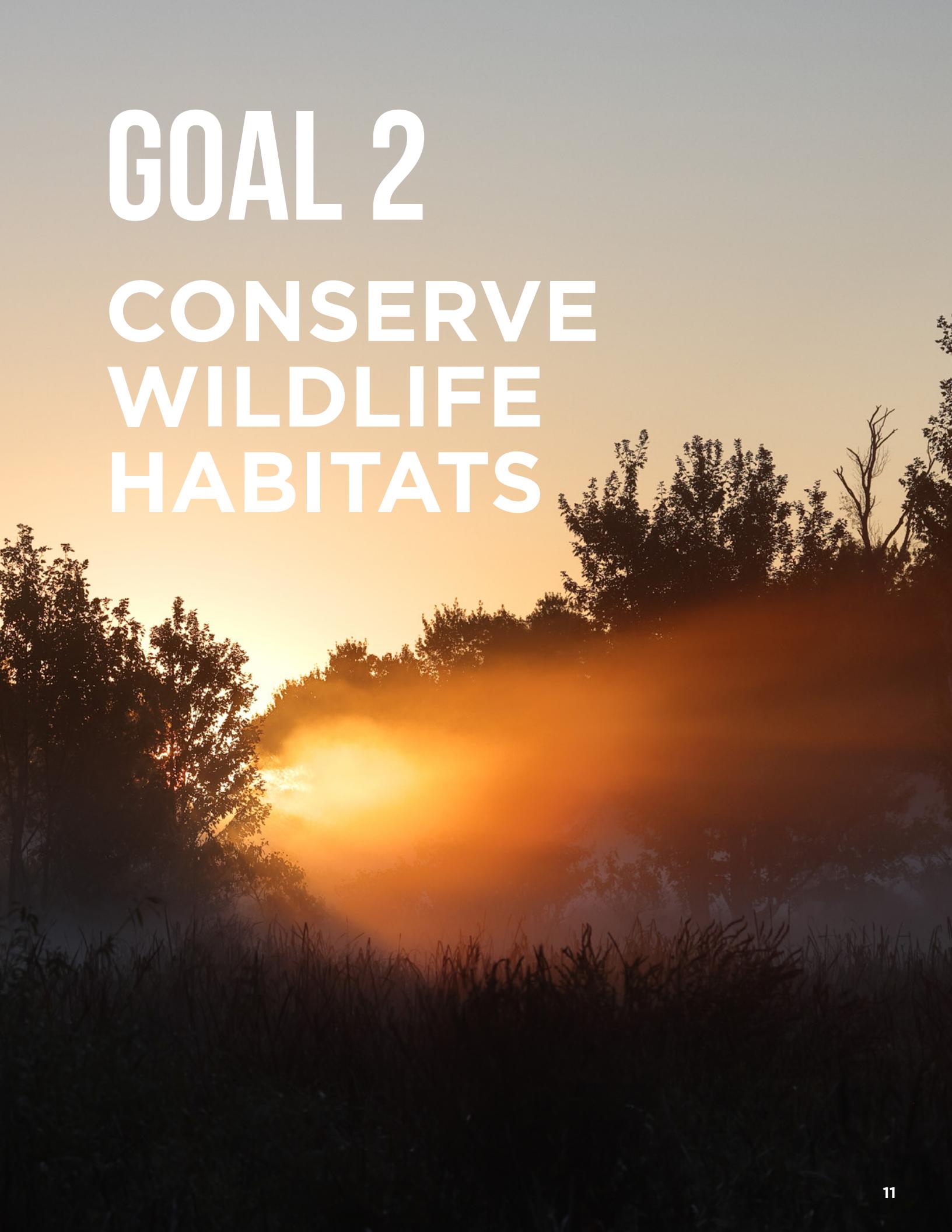
150,000 SURVEYS

NESTING ACTIVITY CONFIRMED FOR OVER 170 SPECIES

The bald eagle, osprey, and peregrine falcon — all formerly endangered in Pennsylvania — have made strong recoveries, already exceeding their totals from previous atlas efforts.

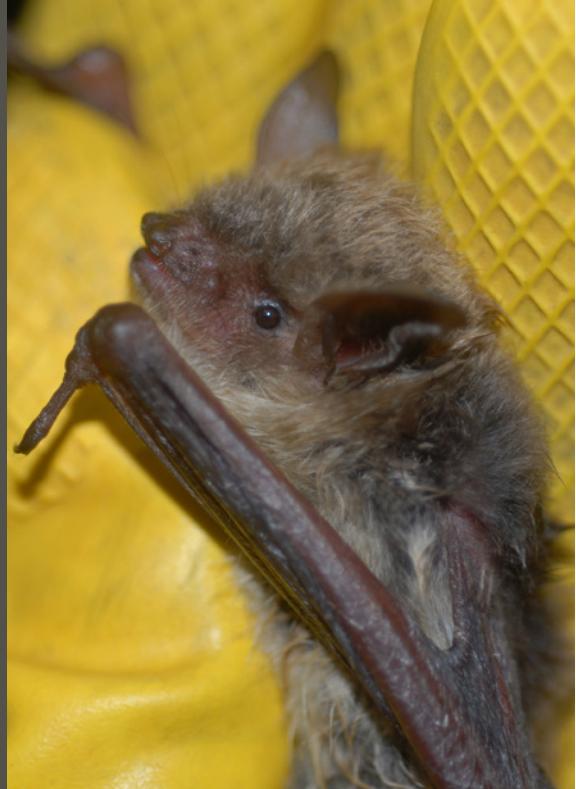
GOAL 2

CONSERVE WILDLIFE HABITATS



STATE LANDS BAT HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

The Game Commission and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) continued work on the 30-year Habitat Conservation Plan, which allows the agencies to proactively plan for the conservation of Indiana and northern long-eared bats across a combined 3.8 million acres of state lands. Game Commission staff led a workshop for professionals across the nation on constructing safe bat cave gates.



STATE GAME LANDS MANAGEMENT

Efficient and sustainable habitat practices for each state game lands are guided by comprehensive management plans (CMPs). These plans are updated every 10 years, with reviews at the halfway point.

48 APPROVED CMPs

7 APPROVED REVIEWS

The Game Commission developed a new Species of Greatest Conservation Need habitat management compatibility tool, which allows staff to plan habitat improvements that better support species such as the ruffed grouse and American woodcock.





DIVERSE HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

MORE THAN 1,250 ACRES

of herbaceous openings planted in perennial clovers and other legumes

MORE THAN 100,000 TREES AND SHRUBS

planted to improve food and shelter availability for wildlife

MORE THAN 10,000 ACRES

of actively managed wetlands maintained

As part of the Pennsylvania Wetland Habitat Initiative, the Game Commission continues to partner with Ducks Unlimited to rejuvenate managed wetland impoundments across more than 20 state game lands over the next 3 years. After several years of preparing more than 40 project sites, the initiative saw construction work completed on its first impoundments last year, improving wetland management capability on more than 30 acres.

HABITAT IMPROVEMENT ON PRIVATE LANDS

The Game Commission, in collaboration with Pheasants Forever and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, implemented farm bill programs to improve wildlife habitat and sustain agricultural production across the state's private lands.

- **10 FARM BILL BIOLOGISTS WORKED IN 31 COUNTIES**
- **2,111 LANDOWNERS CONTACTED**
- **496 LANDOWNERS VISITED**
- **338 CONSERVATION PLANS DEVELOPED OR MODIFIED**
- **22,829 ACRES IMPACTED**

The Game Commission's private lands forester assisted the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in implementing farm bill forestry projects to promote healthy forests and benefit wildlife.

- **82 SITE VISITS ACROSS 22 COUNTIES**
- **56 FORESTRY PLANS REVIEWED OR COMPLETED**
- **7,482 ACRES IMPACTED**

The Game Commission also partnered with Pheasants Forever and Indiana University of Pennsylvania on a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant to prioritize grassland habitats in three focal areas.

- **19 LANDOWNERS COORDINATED WITH ON POTENTIAL PROJECTS**
- **8 PROJECTS CHOSEN**
- **274 ACRES OF GRASSLANDS INVOLVED IN MANAGEMENT PLANS**
- **12 ADDITIONAL PROJECTS RANKED FOR POTENTIAL FUNDING NEXT YEAR**

PRESCRIBED FIRE

**46 BURN DAYS
ACROSS 294 UNITS**

11,559 ACRES

- **70%** forest
- **28%** grassland
- **2%** mix of grassland and forest

To help the Game Commission maintain prescribed fire efficiency, **29 EMPLOYEES** achieved qualification advancements with a total of **306 PERSONNEL** holding a qualification to participate in the prescribed fire program.

The agency also assisted Ft. Indiantown Gap and Letterkenny Army Depot with burns as well as helped the DCNR contain multiple wildfires, including the fire at Michaux State Forest in April of 2025.



In May 2025, the Game Commission completed its largest-ever prescribed fire on SGL 108 in the Southwest Region. A highly trained team of 39 prescribed fire members, who operated 12 wildland fire engines and 2 ignition UTVs, completed the aerial burn via helicopter on 2,271 acres in a single day.

FORESTRY FOR WILDLIFE

NEARLY 34,000 ACRES of forested habitat were improved to provide food and cover for wildlife.

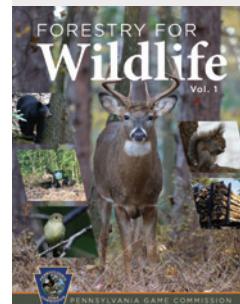
4,666 ACRES TREATED WITH SELECTIVE HERBICIDE

21,280 ACRES ACRES OF FOREST HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

7,597 ACRES OF TIMBER SALE HARVEST

The Game Commission sprayed **37,442 acres** across **4 regions** in **May 2025**, successfully completing its spongy moth spray program with the collapse of the insect population.

The Game Commission worked with three universities to assess the impacts of young forest management techniques, evaluate the potential for woodland restoration, and mitigate declines in Allegheny hardwood forests.



The Game Commission developed a Forestry For Wildlife publication, highlighting work on game lands and explaining implementation for the forestry industry and academic institutions.

INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

The Game Commission invested in a variety of infrastructure updates to strengthen agency capabilities and broaden access to state game lands.

8 BUILDINGS BUILT FOR CREWS, STORAGE, AND OPERATION SUPPORT

PHEASANT CATCHING PEN AT SOUTHWEST GAME FARM BUILT

5 ROOFS REPLACED

44 ROAD PROJECTS FOR **71 MILES** OF NEW OR MAINTAINED ROADS

45 BRIDGES AND WATERWAY CROSSINGS



Pymatuning Wildlife Learning Center construction started in April 2025 and is scheduled for completion in late spring 2026.

Construction of office and conference room space at the Game Commission headquarters building is slated for completion in early 2026.

RIGHT-OF-WAY PROGRAM

9 LICENSES/PERMITS ISSUED

20 LICENSES/PERMITS TERMINATED OR AMENDED

1,358 TOTAL ACTIVE LICENSES

\$5,907,315 GENERATED IN REVENUE FOR WILDLIFE



PAYMENT-IN-LIEU-OF-TAX PROGRAM



The Game Commission paid \$4,588,529.84 in lieu of taxes, in equal amounts, to the counties, townships, and school districts where state game lands are located. The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board paid an additional \$9,177,059.68 for a total of \$13,765,589.52 paid to local governments.

OIL, GAS, AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

**166 AGREEMENTS ENCOMPASSING
234,172 ACRES ON STATE GAME LANDS**

**\$94,472,618.49* DEPOSITED INTO THE
GAME FUND**

**ADDITIONAL \$4,026,049.60 FOR THE
PURCHASE OF WILDLIFE HABITATS,
LANDS, OR OTHER USES INCIDENTAL TO
HUNTING, FURTAKing, AND WILDLIFE
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

*This was an increase of \$6,046,556.32
from the previous year, as a result of
slightly higher and more stable oil
and gas prices.



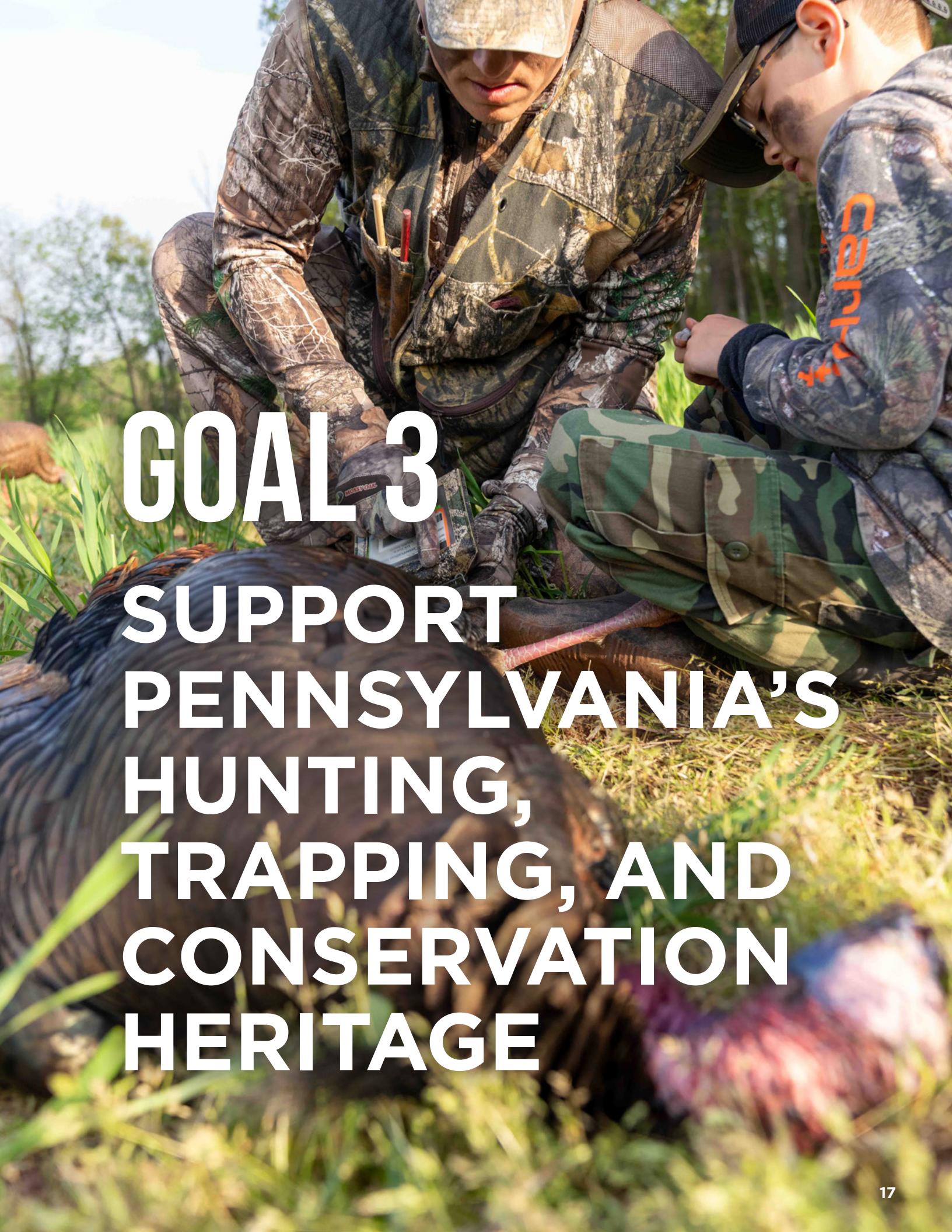
LAND SURVEYING AND MAPPING

**NEARLY 240 MILES OF STATE
GAME LANDS BOUNDARY AND
2,150 PROPERTY CORNERS
CREATED OR RECOVERED.**

HOWARD NURSERY

115,175 SEEDLINGS FOR SCHOOLS PROGRAM

**76,250 SEEDLINGS DISTRIBUTED TO STATE
GAME LANDS AND PARTNERS**

A photograph of two hunters in camouflage gear examining a large deer carcass in a field. One hunter is in the foreground, crouching over the deer, while the other is partially visible behind him. The deer is a large buck with a prominent antler. The hunters are wearing hats and sunglasses, and one has a "GEO" logo on their sleeve.

GOAL 3

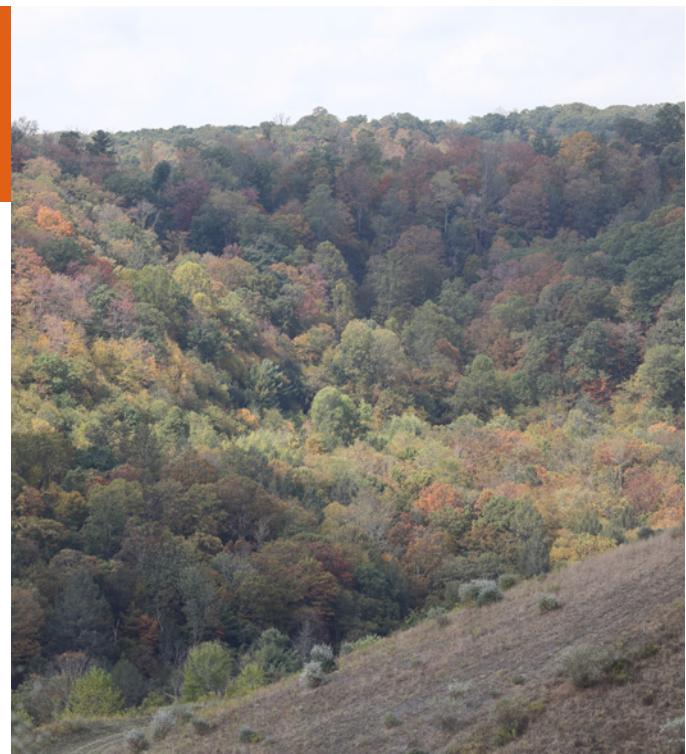
SUPPORT PENNSYLVANIA'S HUNTING, TRAPPING, AND CONSERVATION HERITAGE

LAND ACQUISITIONS

The Game Commission continues to increase access and opportunity by enhancing the state game lands system via land acquisitions.

7,406 ACRES ADDED THROUGH 35 TOTAL CONTRACTS, INCLUDING 1 DONATION, AND 4 INDENTURES

15 ACQUISITIONS COMPLETED THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH LAND CONSERVANCIES



HUNTER ACCESS PROGRAM

SINCE

1936



HUNTER ACCESS PROGRAM

The Game Commission's Hunter Access Program helps landowners manage wildlife populations on their property while expanding opportunity for hunters and trappers.

313 BLUEBIRD NEST BOX KITS AND 47,650 TREE AND SHRUB SEEDLINGS PROVIDED TO COOPERATING LANDOWNERS TO IMPROVE WILDLIFE HABITAT

The cooperative is relaunching with several major upgrades for both hunters and landowners for the 2026 hunting season:

- Mapping center displaying boundaries of enrolled lands, season or species restrictions, and access requirements
- Reservation system where hunters can reserve available properties
- Landowner portal where landowners can view their agreements, access past and current reservations, and communicate directly with Game Commission staff

HUNTER-TRAPPER EDUCATION PROGRAMS



HUNTER-TRAPPER EDUCATION COURSE

CERTIFIED STUDENTS: 28,297

- In-person: 14,053
- Online: 14,244

*Capitalizing on Act 27 of 2000, 48 Hunter-Trapper Education Courses were taught in public schools across the state.

SUCCESSFUL BOWHUNTING

CERTIFIED STUDENTS: 373

- In-person: 74
- Online: 299

ARCHERY SAFETY

CERTIFIED STUDENTS: 73 (Online Only)

SUCCESSFUL FURTAKING

CERTIFIED STUDENTS: 51 (In-person Only)

CABLE RESTRAINT

CERTIFIED STUDENTS: 355

- In-person: 135
- Online: 220



HUNTING-RELATED SHOOTING INCIDENTS (2024)

19
TOTAL

17
NONFATAL

2
FATAL

With 843,200 licensed hunters recorded in 2024, the incident rate was 2.25 per 100,000 participants.



MENTORED HUNTS

The Game Commission partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, National Deer Association, and Delta Waterfowl to host 8 mentored hunts.

95 NEW HUNTERS

**63 DEER,
9 SQUIRRELS, AND
1 DUCK HARVESTED**

**55 VOLUNTEER
MENTORS
INCLUDING
14 PREVIOUS
MENTEES**

LEARN TO HUNT PROGRAM



LEARN TO HUNT: DOVES (VIRTUAL)

277 people registered

LEARN TO HUNT: TURKEYS (IN-PERSON)

14 people registered

The Game Commission partnered with Pennsylvania Trappers Association and Iron Senergy Properties to host a 3-day hands-on beginner trapper program for 17 participants.

YOUTH FIELD DAYS

The Game Commission partnered with sportsmen's clubs to host youth and family field days, where participants learned about fishing, recreational shooting, hunting, and trapping.

2,670 PARTICIPANTS



PHEASANT PROPAGATION PROGRAM

248,285

TOTAL PHEASANTS STOCKED ON 208 PROPERTIES IN 62 COUNTIES (MOST SINCE 1992)

66,610

RELEASED FOR WINTER SEASON

280,975

HUNTER DAYS SPENT PURSUING PHEASANTS (GAME TAKE SURVEY)

56,668

ADULT PERMITS

19,971

YOUTH PERMITS

375 YOUTH REGISTERED FOR 20 JUNIOR PHEASANT HUNTS





SHOOTING RANGES

Under the Pittman-Robertson Act, federal excise tax dollars generated from the sale of firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment directly support the Game Commission's mission. The agency continues to invest in shooting ranges to facilitate the millions of recreational shooters in the Keystone State and ensure the future of wildlife conservation.

Recreation opportunity at
75 PUBLIC SHOOTING RANGES
on 42 separate state game lands

3 NEW ARCHERY RANGES
completed in the fiscal year



SHOOTING RANGE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Game Commission developed the Shooting Range Improvement Program to increase opportunity and access at sportsmen's clubs throughout Pennsylvania. In the 2024 pilot year, the program awarded \$313,000 in grants for 11 projects to update aging infrastructure, construct new facilities, and enhance safety at clubs in each region.

**FOR 2025, THE PROGRAM WILL AWARD
A TOTAL OF UP TO \$500,000, WITH A
MAXIMUM OF \$50,000 PER PROJECT.**

NATIONAL ARCHERY IN THE SCHOOLS PROGRAM



>400 PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOLS offered the archery curriculum for more than 100,000 students



>40 STATE PARKS offered archery programs with certified staff



>1,000 STUDENTS AND 50 SCHOOLS competed in the PA NASP Bullseye and IBO 3D State Tournaments



\$22,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED



Pennsylvania NASP archers podiumed at national and world championships for third consecutive year



ENVIROTHON

The Game Commission designed wildlife station tests and provided resources for the Pennsylvania Envirothon.

- 5-MEMBER TEAMS FROM 64 PENNSYLVANIA COUNTIES**
- 320 TOTAL STUDENTS**
- PENNCREST HIGH SCHOOL, DELAWARE COUNTY, WON THE STATE EVENT AND PLACED 7TH OVERALL AT THE NATIONAL COMPETITION**

WILDLIFE VIEWING

Over 1 million people tuned in to 4 different livestreamed wildlife cams to see elk, snow geese, bald eagles, and more in their natural habitats through HDOnTap.

The Game Commission completed construction of a viewing deck at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area, providing access to an area previously unviewable to the public. Overlooking the second largest impoundment on the property, the viewing platform features a scenic walkout, viewing scopes, and binoculars with colorblindness enhancing technology.





CONSERVATION EDUCATION

2,071 CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAMS CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT THE STATE

The Game Commission updated its popular Pennsylvania wildlife kits, featuring pelts, skulls, tracks, and scat of 12 Pennsylvania mammals as well as a lesson plan booklet filled with activities. Since 2022, the kits have reached more than 7,000 adults and nearly 25,000 students.



SUNDAY HUNTING

A ban on Sunday hunting was one of the last remnants of “blue laws” in Pennsylvania, but new legislation ended the ban and brings more opportunity to hunters in the Commonwealth.

Governor Josh Shapiro signed House Bill 1431, introduced by Rep. Mandy Steele, into law as Act 36 of 2025 on July 9. The historic legislation fully repealed the ban on Sunday hunting and authorizes the Game Commission to provide additional Sunday hunting opportunities.

The Board of Game Commissioners approved 13 Sunday hunting dates within the already established 2025-26 seasons.



GOAL 4

EXPAND AGENCY RELEVANCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

WILDLIFE PROTECTION



2024-25 LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

155

FULL-TIME
GAME WARDENS

145

DEPUTY STATE
GAME WARDENS

46,000+

SQUARE MILES
PATROLLED

CITATIONS, WARNINGS, AND PROSECUTIONS

TOP 10 VIOLATIONS

UNLAWFUL TAKING OF GAME OR WILDLIFE	1,266
HUNT OR TAKE GAME OR WILDLIFE WITH BAIT OR ENTICEMENT	466
LICENSE VIOLATION	421
POSSESS A LOADED FIREARM IN A VEHICLE (IN MOTION OR STATIONARY)	338
RANGE VIOLATION	250
TAGGING VIOLATION	236
OPERATE A MOTORIZED VEHICLE ON SGL OR CO-OP PROPERTY	207
FLUORESCENT ORANGE VIOLATIONS	172
USING A VEHICLE TO HUNT GAME	168
DRUGS AND ALCOHOL ON SGL OR CO-OP PROPERTY	154

**WARNINGS
6,314**

**TOTAL PROSECUTIONS
5,966**

**DISMISSED AND WITHDRAWN
740**

**UNSUCCESSFUL
150**

**SUCCESSFUL
5,076**

**PROSECUTION RATE
97%**

OPERATION GAME THIEF

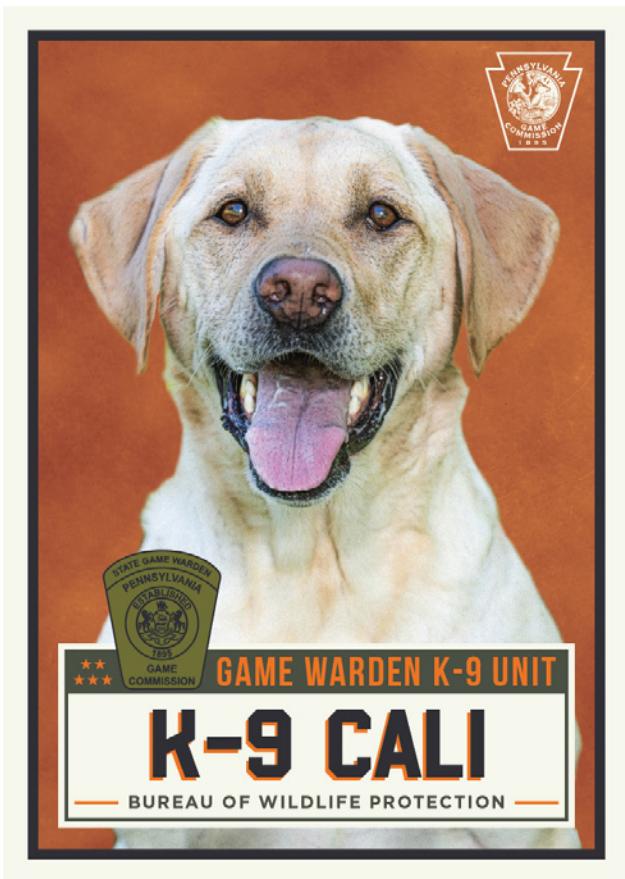
The Operation Game Thief program serves to protect wild birds and wild mammals and encourages those who have information related to wildlife crimes to report details as soon as possible.

TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AVAILABLE 24/7/365

1,232 SUBMISSIONS FOR 2024-25

**5-MINUTE AVERAGE TURNAROUND TIME FROM
OGT SUBMISSION TO OFFICER BEING DISPATCHED**



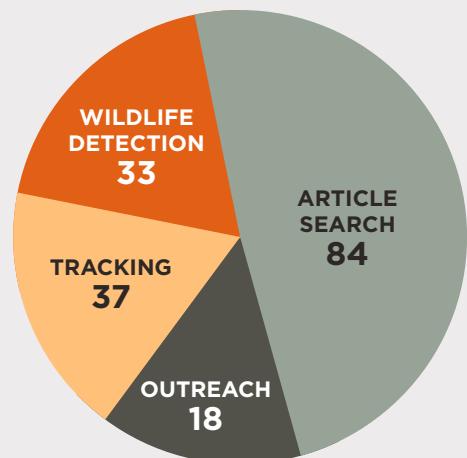


K-9 UNIT

The Special Operations Division maintains a K-9 team in each region to help find small pieces of evidence and solve complex cases. The K-9s, which are all Labrador retrievers, are trained in several disciplines and can detect Pennsylvania's four big game species.

6 K-9 teams throughout the state
194 deployments in 2024-25

K-9 DEPLOYMENTS



EXPAND AGENCY RELEVANCY AND SUSTAINABILITY



CENTRALIZED DISPATCH CENTER

Located at Game Commission headquarters in Harrisburg, the Centralized Dispatch Center is available 24/7/365, providing operational coverage and support to game wardens, field staff, and the public.



204,140
TOTAL CALLS RECEIVED



100,096
CALLS FOR SERVICE



98.95%
ANSWER RATE



4:09
AVERAGE CALL HANDLE TIME

SHOP WITH A COP

Pennsylvania state game wardens participated in the Shop with a Cop program, which partners children from low-income families with law enforcement officers to purchase Christmas gifts.



STATE GAME LANDS DRIVING TOURS

In October 2024, the Game Commission hosted 10 free driving tours through state game lands across the Commonwealth to showcase the agency's habitat work and opportunities available to the public.



HUNTERS SHARING THE HARVEST

The Game Commission is a proud partner of Hunters Sharing the Harvest, Pennsylvania's premier venison donation program.

Thanks to a network of 110 participating processors, Hunters Sharing the Harvest has distributed 3 million pounds of venison to hungry Pennsylvanians since 1991.

PENNSYLVANIA LED THE NATION IN VENISON DONATIONS FOR THE 2024-25 SEASON:



**RECORD-BREAKING
283,789 LBS
RECEIVED**

**1.1 MILLION
SERVINGS OF LEAN, HIGH-PROTEIN
VENISON PROVIDED**

DONATED:

7,855 DEER 9 ELK



JUNIOR GAME WARDEN CAMPS

The Game Commission hosted junior game warden camps in each region during the summer of 2025, giving campers an inside look at what it takes to be a state game warden.

**6 JUNIOR GAME WARDEN CAMPS
209 CAMPERS AGES 12-15**



PENNSYLVANIA GAME NEWS

In addition to 27,826 paid subscribers, complimentary subscriptions of the Game Commission's monthly magazine were distributed to Hunter Access cooperators, libraries, deer processors, and Hunter-Trapper Education instructors and graduates.

77,500
TOTAL CIRCULATION

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Game Commission continued to expand its social media presence, with a significant year-over-year increase in engagement.

FACEBOOK REACH: 96.6 MILLION



TOP POST

Reach:

2,414,475

Reactions, comments, shares, and clicks:

101,980

Reached **91.1%** non-followers and generated **410 new followers**

FOLLOWERS AS OF DECEMBER 2025

Facebook

- Pennsylvania Game Commission: **300K**
- Operation Game Thief: **18K**
- Pennsylvania NASP: **3.4K**
- Northwest Region: **6.5K**
- Southwest Region: **5K**
- Northcentral Region: **6.5K**
- Southcentral Region: **7.1K**
- Northeast Region: **4.9K**
- Southeast Region: **7.1K**
- Middle Creek WMA: **6.4K**



Instagram: 49K

YouTube: 43.3K

X: 18.3K

LinkedIn: 6K

CALL OF THE OUTDOORS

The agency's podcast, Call of the Outdoors, more than doubled its year-over-year reach.

13 NEW EPISODES

MORE THAN 59,000 VIEWS/LISTENS

447,591 YOUTUBE IMPRESSIONS



PENNSYLVANIA SPORTSMAN LICENSE PLATE

During a National Hunting and Fishing Day celebration at the Capitol, the Game Commission, Fish and Boat Commission, and Department of Transportation announced the Pennsylvania Sportsman license plate. \$14 from each plate sold is deposited into a restricted account to promote youth hunting and fishing programs into the future.

GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOOR SHOW

In addition to introducing families to NASP and connecting with tens of thousands of outdoor enthusiasts, the Game Commission hosted two new featured events during February's Great American Outdoor Show.

71 PENNSYLVANIA BUCKS SCORED AT SCORING EVENT

387 PEOPLE SCREENED WITH A FREE HUNTER HEALTH ASSESSMENT, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LEBANON VALLEY COLLEGE





CERTIFIED HUNTER PROGRAM

The Game Commission piloted a new Certified Hunter Program in the Southwest Region in 2025. The program connects landowners with qualified hunters with advanced certification in safety, ethics, and effectiveness to support the agency's deer management goals, reduce crop damage, and give hunters more opportunities to harvest deer.

Following a successful pilot year that generated positive feedback from both landowners and hunters, the Game Commission is working to expand the program for the 2026-27 season.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The Game Commission is required to maintain a system to respond to citizen complaints against agency staff and volunteers and to release information relating to the number and nature of those complaints on an annual basis.

**6 FORMAL COMPLAINTS AGAINST
LAW ENFORCEMENT FROM
JULY 1, 2024, TO JUNE 30, 2025**

3 EXONERATIONS

2 NOT SUSTAINED

1 WITHDRAWN





GOAL 5

RECRUIT, DEVELOP, RETAIN, AND SUPPORT AGENCY STAFF

ROSS LEFFLER SCHOOL OF CONSERVATION

Following 44 weeks of intensive training, including 10 weeks in the field, the Game Commission's Ross Leffler School of Conservation (RLSC) graduated its 36th class in February 2025.

18 OFFICERS ADDED TO THE RANKS
800 TOTAL RLSC GRADUATES SINCE 1936

The 37th class of game warden cadets began training in March and graduated on January 31, 2026.

In 2025, 17 deputy game warden candidates completed a basic training course at RLSC. These candidates will continue their training to ultimately serve as an extension of state game wardens.



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Game Commission hired dozens of paid interns across all 6 of its regions, exposing students to the agency's conservation work. Interns gained experience in wildlife research, habitat management, educational outreach, and more.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Game Commission participated in a variety of job fairs across the state to support recruitment efforts, fill hard-to-recruit vacancies, and educate the public about available career opportunities.

Human Resources staff also scheduled open house sessions at Harrisburg headquarters, all six regions, two game farms, and Howard Nursery to increase accessibility, improve customer service, and enhance transparency to build stronger relationships with staff.



STAFF RECOGNITION



NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION CONVENTION

Wildlife Officer of the Year:

Dan Puhala, Southwest Region

Joe Kurz Wildlife Manager of the Year:

Brian Williamson, Northeast Region

Members of the Marketing & Strategic Communications and Information & Education Bureaus claimed awards at the **2025 Association of Conservation Information Conference**.

FIRST PLACE, Graphics: Logos/Illustrations

SECOND PLACE, Conservation Post of the Year

THIRD PLACE, Best Social Media Presence

THIRD PLACE, Magazine: Destination, Historical, or Cultural Article



Human Resource Director Delynn Steffen and Hunter Education and Outreach Division Chief Courtney LaCivita were selected to represent the Game Commission at the **2025 Leadership Development Institute**. They participated in eight months of classes, assignments, and collaborative learning experiences to further develop exemplary leadership skills to drive excellence within the agency.

Hunter Education and Outreach Division Chief Courtney LaCivita and R3 Coordinator Evan Mock accepted third place in the **R3 Symposium Challenge at the Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports 2025 National R3 Symposium**, where they presented the team's innovative Learn to Hunt program guide.

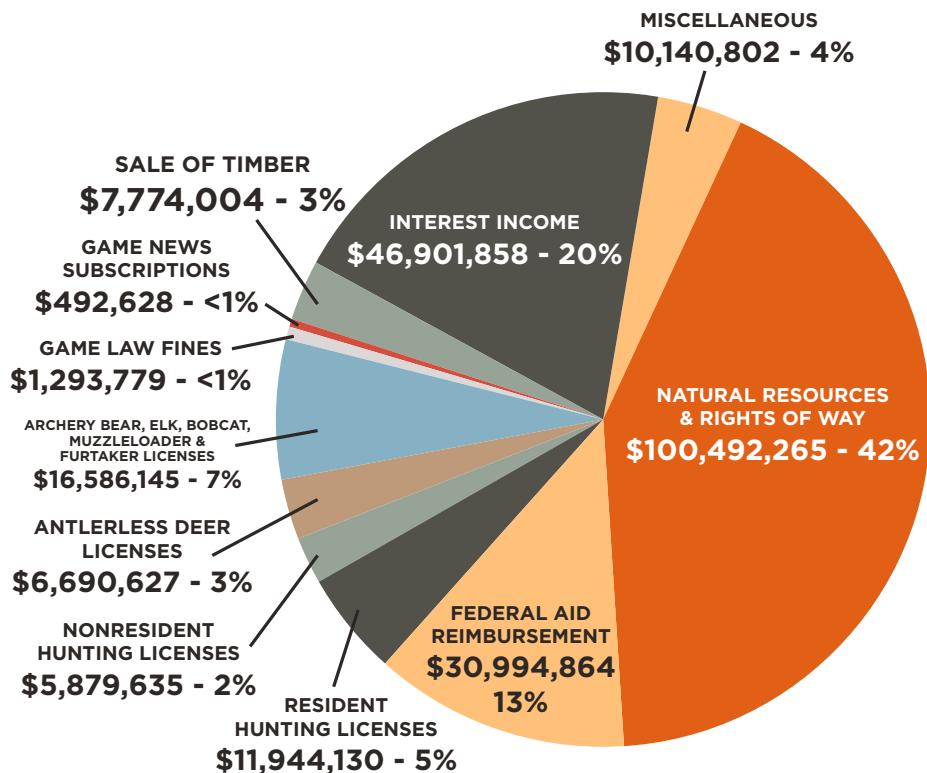


In April, the Game Commission recognized several volunteers and staff members for their excellence, including the Geographic Information Systems team who received the **Executive Employee Recognition Award**.

2024-25 FINANCIALS

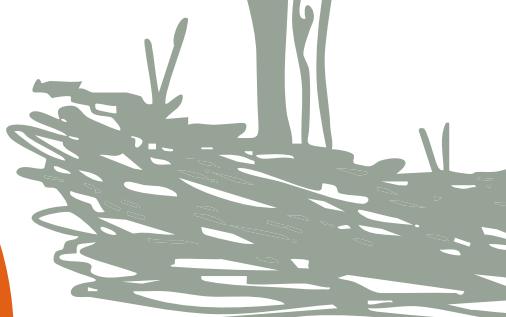
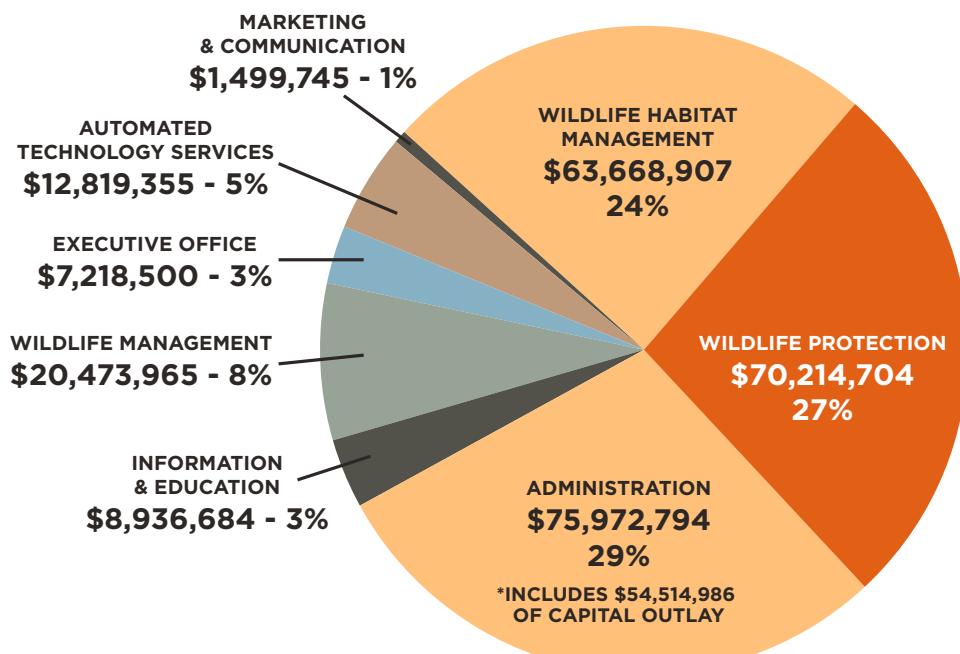
GAME FUND 2024-25 REVENUE

FISCAL YEAR END JUNE 30, 2025



GAME FUND 2024-25 EXPENDITURES

FISCAL YEAR END JUNE 30, 2025



2024-25 FINANCIALS

The following report outlines the Pennsylvania Game Commission's financial stewardship during fiscal year 2024-25. Expenditures increased from the prior fiscal year, reflecting deliberate and strategic investments in land acquisition, habitat restoration, infrastructure development, capital improvements, equipment purchases, and compliance with expanded legislatively mandated payments to local municipalities. As a result of these planned investments, **the Game Fund's Restricted Fund Balance totaled \$504.3 million at fiscal year-end, a decrease of \$21.6 million, 4.1%**. The Game Commission continues to take a comprehensive, forward-looking approach to budgeting that prioritizes long-term sustainability while fulfilling the agency's mission.

The accompanying statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balance was prepared using the modified accrual basis of accounting, whereby revenues are reported when they become both measurable and available to finance expenditures of the current period. Expenditures are recognized when the fund liability has been incurred; that is, they will be paid with current financial resources.

Using the modified accrual method, revenues for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, were \$239.2 million. This represents a decrease of \$2 million or less than 1% from the prior year's revenues of \$241.2 million.

Hunting and trapping license revenue was \$36.4 million, up 0.3% compared to the prior year's revenue of \$36.3 million. Sales of adult nonresident

hunting licenses increased this year, up \$76,788 over last year, or 1.39%. Revenue from adult resident hunting licenses fell \$264,996 this year.

Natural resource revenue was \$100.4 million, up 7% from the prior year. This revenue increase was driven by gas and oil lease royalties that correlates closely with a worldwide increase per unit of energy prices, as well as the opening of more wells in the prior fiscal year. Another factor was an increase of sales of timber and other wood products, correlating with the quantity and quality of timber sold. Right-of-way license revenue increased by 12.6% to \$5.9 million compared to the prior year.

The agency received federal reimbursements in the amount of \$30.9 million, down approximately 20.5% from the previous year.

Total expenditures for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, were \$260.8 million. This represents an increase of \$45.2 million, or 21% over the prior year's expenditures of \$215.5 million.

Expenditures for salaries and wages increased 9.52% to \$63.4 million and the state share of employee benefits and training costs increased by 7.86% to \$47.8 million. These increases were caused by statewide step and cost of living salary and wage adjustments as well as the agency continuing to add and fill vacant positions.



2024-25 FINANCIALS

Specialized services expenditures increased 14.06% or \$5.2 million to \$42.6 million. The agency's expansion in land and growth in personnel necessitate habitat restoration efforts and the development of supporting access roads to service these newly acquired areas.

Purchases of equipment and machinery increased \$8 million. These purchases are directly related to the consistent growth of both land and personnel and the need to adequately outfit the newly established land management groups with equipment.

Maintenance, rental, and improvement of building, grounds, and machinery increased \$7.2 million. This increase is attributed to the development of several new agency facilities and the addition of a new wing at the agency headquarters building.

The agency initiated more land acquisitions resulting in a \$9.8 million increase in land purchases and acquisition costs in this fiscal year compared to the prior fiscal year.

There was a \$3.1 million increase in payments to local municipalities in-lieu-of-taxes, driven by recent legislation which mandated an increase in the agency's per-acre share from \$1.20 to \$3.00. Additionally, this figure includes the settlement of a prior fiscal year obligation that was paid retroactively during the current fiscal year.

Payments to other state agencies for specialized services increased \$2.8 million due to funding being transferred to the Department of General Services for the construction of several new buildings. This funding is held in restricted accounts and then transferred as needed to cover construction expenditures.

Act 138 of 2002 amended the Game Code sections relating to mandatory spending. The Game Code stipulates that a minimum of \$4.25 from each resident and nonresident license, and a minimum of \$2 from each antlerless deer license issued for which the full fee has been paid, is to be used for habitat improvement, development, maintenance, protection, and restoration conducive to increasing natural propagation of game and wildlife on all lands under the control or operations of the Commission, including lands enrolled in the Commission's Hunter Access program and other public lands open to hunting under agreement with the Commission. The monies collected for the above are deposited into a separate account.

The Game Commission reported that during fiscal year 2024-25, the number of resident and nonresident licenses sold totaled 1,431,791 and the number of antlerless deer licenses sold totaled 1,182,864. This level of sales mandated that a minimum of \$8.45 million be expended and appropriated into a separate restricted account for the above-mentioned habitat improvement purposes. This year \$9 million was committed in the restricted account, an excess of \$549,160 over the requirement.



**GAME FUND STATEMENT OF REVENUES,
EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE**
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

REVENUES

LICENSES AND FEES	\$52,752,957
FEDERAL REVENUE	\$30,994,864
CHARGES FOR SALES AND SERVICES + NATURAL RESOURCES	\$104,398,079
INVESTMENT INCOME	\$46,901,859
MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE	\$4,107,610
CAPITAL LEASE/INSTALLMENT PURCHASE	\$35,368
TOTAL REVENUE	\$239,190,737

EXPENDITURES

RECREATION AND CULTURAL ENRICHMENT	\$206,251,551
CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$54,514,986
INTEREST	\$38,117
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$260,804,654

NET CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	(\$21,613,917)
FUND BALANCE JULY 1, 2024	\$525,927,223
FUND BALANCE JUNE 30, 2025	\$504,313,306

PENNSYLVANIA BOARD OF GAME COMMISSIONERS

DISTRICT 3:

Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Jefferson, McKean, and Potter counties

Commissioner Foradora grew up in Brockway in Jefferson County, where the hunting tradition runs deep in his family. He's been hunting since he was 12, more than 40 years. He enjoys hunting all game and trapping in Pennsylvania, but, like many hunters, deer are his favorite, followed by turkeys. When he's not hunting, fishing, or trapping, Foradora can be found in his insurance business office in DuBois, where he puts his accounting and economics degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania to use.

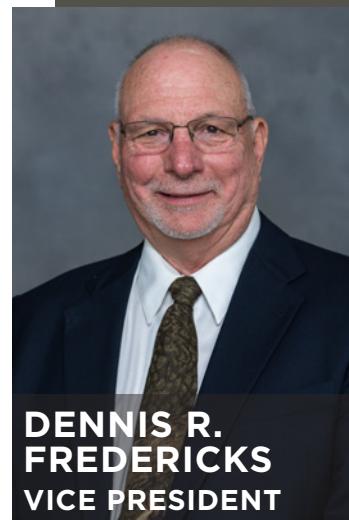


**SCOTT H.
FORADORA
PRESIDENT**

DISTRICT 2:

Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington, and Westmoreland counties

Only the sixth commissioner to serve a second term, Commissioner Fredericks previously served from 1991-99 and acted as chairman of the Wildlife Management Bureau committee for six of those years. Fredericks has lived his entire life in Washington County. He's a lifelong hunter and trapper and has hunted all big and small game but now really enjoys hunting for ruffed grouse. Fredericks graduated from Penn State Mont Alto campus in 1972 with a degree in forest technology. In 1992, he attended Colorado State University for a structured course in wildlife management designed for individuals who have been politically appointed to a position to affect management policy for wildlife resources. Now retired, Fredericks had a 42-year career as an environmental engineer and manager of conservation properties and activities for CONSOL Energy, where he was responsible for coordinating natural-resource management on 500,000 acres in several states.

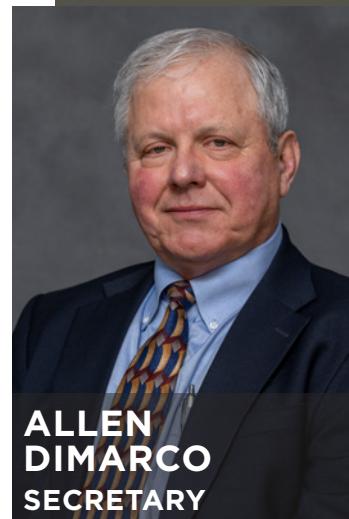


**DENNIS R.
FREDERICKS
VICE PRESIDENT**

DISTRICT 5:

Bradford, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Sullivan, Tioga, and Union counties

Originally from Elimsport, Commissioner DiMarco grew up on a dairy farm and has been a hunter since 1959. He's a member of the Grays Run Hunting and Fishing Club, has mentored three sons in the hunting and trapping traditions, and has been a Hunter Access Program cooperator since 1974. DiMarco graduated with a bachelor's degree in business education from Shippensburg College in 1969 and went on to earn a master's degree in student personnel management in 1972 from Pennsylvania State University. DiMarco began his career in 1969 as a teacher in the Loyalsock Township School District. He became assistant high school principal in 1989 then principal in 1994, before retiring in 2009 with 40 years in public education. DiMarco also purchased his home farm in 1974 and gradually rented and leased additional acres, raising corn, soybeans, squash, and alfalfa as well as 75 head of Angus steers annually. He currently owns and operates 330 acres.



**ALLEN
DIMARCO
SECRETARY**



**KRISTEN
KOPPENHAFER**

DISTRICT 1:

**Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence,
Mercer, Venango, and Warren counties**

Commissioner Koppenhafer of Warren, Pennsylvania is a dedicated mother, hunter, conservationist, and small business owner. A lifelong resident of Pennsylvania, she has served on the Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners since her confirmation in November 2019, nominated by Governor Tom Wolf. With extensive experience as a wildlife biologist for various conservation-based NGOs, including the National Wild Turkey Federation, Koppenhafer has managed significant funding resulting in thousands of acres impacted on the Allegheny National Forest. Passionate about preserving outdoor traditions, she actively engages her family (husband and two children) in hunting and supports hunter recruitment, retention, and reactivation programs.

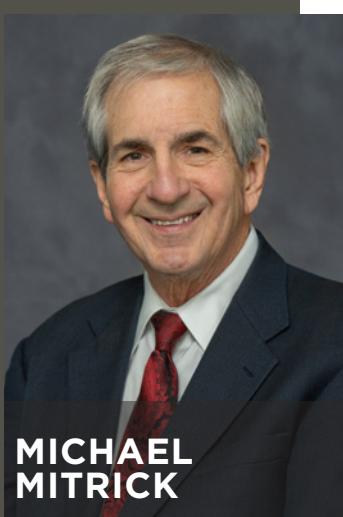


**HALEY
SANKEY**

DISTRICT 4:

Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset counties

Commissioner Sankey grew up in Clearfield County, and she spends the bulk of her free time outdoors. She enjoys hunting, hiking, fishing, boating, skiing, and biking. Sankey learned about managing soil and water resources, fish migrations, and wildlife tagging and tracking in high school environmental science and biology classes, which further piqued her interest in conservation. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in environmental practice and policy from Juniata College in 1999. She then earned a master's degree in project management from Pennsylvania State University. Since 2011, Sankey has been teaching in the Energy and Sustainability Policy Program at Penn State's University Park campus.



**MICHAEL
MITRICK**

DISTRICT 6:

**Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lancaster,
Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, Snyder, and York counties**

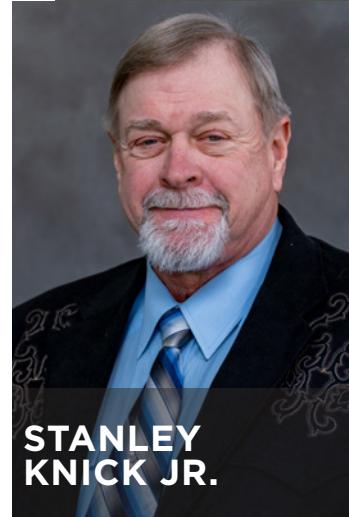
Commissioner Mitrick grew up in Illinois, where his father introduced him to rabbit and pheasant hunting. He continued to hunt pheasants throughout his college years. When he moved to Pennsylvania in 1981, deer hunting quickly became his new passion. He has held a Pennsylvania hunting license every year since moving to the state. Mitrick is a member of several sportsmen's organizations, including Starview Sportsmen's Association, York Riflemen, and S&M Hunting Lodge. When he's not enjoying the outdoors, Mitrick can be found working as an orthopedic surgeon at OSS Health in York. In addition to hunting in Penn's Woods, Mitrick has hunted and participated in outdoor recreational activities in several other states and countries.

PENNSYLVANIA BOARD OF GAME COMMISSIONERS

DISTRICT 7:

Lackawanna, Luzerne, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming counties

Commissioner Knick has been an avid hunter and angler for 54 years and enjoys hunting on state game lands in northeastern Pennsylvania. He has also hunted in New York, Wyoming, and Alabama. Knick was raised on a dairy farm and believes the lessons learned there helped him better understand animal management and habitat. Knick retired from Knick Fence Company in Dupont and also worked for Northeast Arborists of Pittston and Mark's Landscaping of Dupont. As a commissioner, Knick wants to focus on Pennsylvania's youth.



**STANLEY
KNICK JR.**

DISTRICT 8:

Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties

Commissioner Pride, of Cochranville, Chester County, is the first African American appointed to the board and founder of Legacy Land & Water Partners. He's also lead coach with the Mid-Atlantic Youth Anglers and Outdoor Partners, which strives to grow diverse participation in outdoors and conservation activities by introducing and training urban, suburban, and rural area youth and their supporting adults in fishing, boating, archery, hunting heritage, agriculture, conservation, and wildlife education activities. His 17 years of experience with the organization serve him well on the board, where he focuses on recruiting new hunters from all backgrounds.

Pride, who is an alumnus of the Episcopal Academy and attended Temple University's Fox School of Business for economics and marketing, grew up in Philadelphia and has a solid grasp on the diverse population of Pennsylvania's largest city, where many have come from areas where hunting and the outdoors were important.

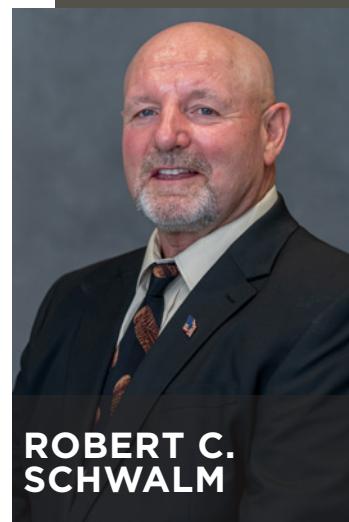


**TODD A.
PRIDE**

DISTRICT 9:

Carbon, Berks, Lehigh, Monroe, Northampton, and Schuylkill counties

Commissioner Schwalm grew up in Branchdale, Schuylkill County and has extensive experience in the outdoors. He has been a hunter in Pennsylvania for 52 years and has hunted in 20 states and three Canadian provinces. He is a Hunter-Trapper Education instructor and actively involved in mentoring youth hunters, in addition to involvement in many conservation organizations. He is especially proud of his involvement with the Jerry Zimmerman National Wild Turkey Federation Chapter JAKES event. Schwalm has a bachelor's degree from Bloomsburg University in education and is employed by LB Water in Selinsgrove as a sales consultant, where he'll put his business experience and sense of responsibility to work on the board.



**ROBERT C.
SCHWALM**

