

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund: Purpose, Operation and Financial History

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Purpose:

The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund (MOHF) was established by PL 1995, c. 494. The MOHF is funded through receipts of specific lottery games administered for the fund by the Maine State Lottery. As stated in 12 MRSA § 7783, the purpose of the fund is for “maintaining, improving and expanding state and local natural resource conservation programs and associated compatible public uses...”. The statute also requires that the fund’s purpose be achieved through the use of a strategic plan.

Operation:

The MOHF is administered by the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund Board (MOHFB) which is located for administrative purposes within the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (12 MRSA § 7788). The board consists of 7 members:

1. the Commissioner of Conservation;
2. the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife;
3. the Coordinator of the Natural Resources Information and Mapping Center;
4. a citizen member representing a state sportsman’s organization;
5. a citizen member representing a state wildlife conservation organization;
6. a citizen member who works in a field related to natural resources; and
7. a citizen member with an unspecified background.

The citizen members are appointed by the Governor to not more than 2 consecutive 4 year terms and

each citizen appointment is subject to review by the Joint Standing Committee on Natural Resources and confirmation by the Senate. The Governor also appoints one of the citizen members as Chair.

The board is charged with developing the strategic plan to administer the fund. Current law (12 MRSA § 7789) requires that the plan address four specific categories:

1. fisheries and wildlife habitat conservation;
2. acquisition and management of public lands, parks, wildlife conservation areas, and public access and outdoor recreation sites and facilities;
3. conservation of endangered and threatened species and their habitats; and
4. natural resources law enforcement.

Each of these statutorily established categories includes specific criteria that the board must use in making decisions to award grants within each category. Subject to available funding (discussed below), the board must distribute grants according to the following formula:

1. 35% for fisheries and wildlife habitat conservation;
2. 35% for public lands and access;
3. 15% for endangered and threatened species; and
4. 15% for natural resources law enforcement.

Current law (12 MRSA § 7784) also requires that grants awarded by the board are intended to supplement funding provided to state natural resource agencies and may not be used as a substitute for current funding. The board awards grants to 16 natural resource agencies which, in turn, are authorized to contract with nongovernmental entities to deliver these programs. In many instances, the natural resource agencies merely act as a conduit through which nongovernmental entities receive grants.

Although the board is established within the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the department's sole link to the board in this context is to provide an administrative vehicle by which funds can be allocated to the board. In practice, an Executive Director who is currently employed by the board on a contractual basis accomplishes the board's day-to-day activities.

Funding and Financial History:

The board is primarily funded through revenues received from a dedicated conservation ticket administered by the Maine State Lottery (8 MRSA § 387). Expenditures of the board are made to support staff, administrative costs and grants awarded to non-state agencies. Grants made to state agencies are recorded as transfers from the board and as expenditures of the receiving state agency. The following table depicts recent financial activity of the board:

	FY 1995-96	FY 1996-97	FY 1997-98	FY 1998-99
Revenues:	\$1,631,455	\$1,196,033	\$1,178,439	\$1,805,799
Board Expenditures:				
Personal Services	0	\$2,640	\$688	\$935
All Other	\$288	\$146,462	\$121,310	\$287,128
Capital	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditures (Includes grants to non- state agencies)	\$288	\$149,102	\$121,998	\$288,063
Transfers (Grants to State Agencies)	0	\$1,015,954	\$1,523,217	\$1,477,821
Ending Balance (Carried Forward)	\$1,631,167	\$1,662,144	\$1,195,368	\$1,247,411

Sources: MOHFB and MFASIS

As of June 30, 2000, the MOHF has received a total of \$6,985,087 in revenues from lottery proceeds. The board has distributed these funds in the form of grants; as of May 2000, the grants have been disbursed at 8 different times in the following manner:

December 1996- a total of \$1,021,082 was disbursed for 32 different projects funded through the following natural resource agencies:

- Dept of IF&W (14 projects, \$516,728);
- Dept of Marine Resources (2 projects, \$118,537);
- Dept of Environmental Protection (1 project, \$34,720);
- Dept of Conservation (5 projects, \$139,900);

- Atlantic Salmon Authority (2 projects, \$36,500);
- Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District (1 project, \$9,073);
- Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District (1 project, \$2,000);
- State Planning Office (2 projects, \$83,054);
- Land for Maine's Future Board (1 project, \$46,000);
- Oxford County Soil & Water Conservation District (1 project, \$8,600); and
- St. Croix International Waterway Commission (2 projects, \$25,970).

April 1997- a total of \$999,062 was disbursed for 32 different projects funded through the following natural resource agencies:

- Dept of IF&W (14 projects, \$521,640);
- Dept of Marine Resources (4 projects, \$94,982);
- Dept of Environmental Protection (2 projects, \$67,800);
- Dept of Conservation (7 projects, \$212,147);
- Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District (1 project, \$1,753);
- Aroostook County Soil & Water Conservation District (1 project, \$55,000);
- Land for Maine's Future Board (1 project, \$12,708); and
- Maine Conservation Corps (2 projects, \$33,032).

October 1997- a total of \$815,281 was disbursed for 31 different projects funded through the following natural resource agencies:

- Dept of IF&W (16 projects, \$391,974);
- Dept of Marine Resources (2 projects, \$56,235);
- Dept of Environmental Protection (1 project, \$31,830);
- Dept of Conservation (7 projects, \$178,608);

- Saco River Corridor Commission (1 project, \$1,930);
- Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Authority (1 project, \$25,154);
- Atlantic Salmon Authority (2 projects, \$54,550); and
- Dept of Agriculture, Food & Rural Resources (1 project, \$75,000).

May 1998- a total of \$745,098 was disbursed for 26 different projects funded through the following natural resource agencies:

- Dept of IF&W (8 projects, \$161,335);
- Dept of Marine Resources (3 projects, \$155,413);
- Dept of Environmental Protection (3 projects, \$81,231);
- Dept of Conservation (7 projects, \$268,010);
- Atlantic Salmon Authority (1 project, \$4,000);
- St. Croix International Waterway Commission (1 project, \$15,000).
- York County Soil & Water Conservation District (1 project, \$11,390); and
- State Planning Office (2 projects, \$48,719).

November 1998- a total of \$707,109 was disbursed for 27 different projects funded through the following natural resource agencies:

- Dept of IF&W (14 projects, \$301,623);
- Dept of Conservation (6 projects, \$208,678);
- Maine Conservation Corps (2 projects, \$57,327)
- Dept of Marine Resources (2 projects, \$52,000);
- Dept of Environmental Protection (1 project, \$22,310); and
- State Planning Office (2 projects, \$65,171).

May 1999- a total of \$852,234 was disbursed for 37 different projects funded through the following

natural resource agencies:

- Dept of IF&W (16 projects, \$372,092);
- Dept of Conservation (7 projects, \$206,566);
- Dept of IF&W and Dept of Conservation (1 project, \$20,798)
- State Planning Office (4 projects, \$73,486);
- Dept of Marine Resources (4 projects, \$97,632);
- Atlantic Salmon Authority (1 project, \$30,350);
- Hancock County Soil & Water Conservation District (1 project, \$30,000);
- Dept of Environmental Protection (1 project, \$10,350); and
- St. Croix International Waterway Commission (1 project, \$5,900); and
- Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Authority (1 project, \$5,060).

November 1999- a total of \$499,603 was disbursed for 18 different projects funded through the following natural resource agencies:

- Dept of IF&W (9 projects, \$240,820);
- Dept of Conservation (4 projects, \$93,546);
- Dept of Environmental Protection (2 projects, \$84,775)
- Dept of Marine Resources (1 project, \$50,000);
- Oxford County Soil & Water Conservation District (1 project, \$17,922); and
- State Planning Office (1 project, \$12,540).

May 2000- a total of \$799,981 was disbursed for 30 different projects funded through the following natural resource agencies:

- Dept of Conservation (9 projects, \$305,303);
- Dept of IF&W (14 projects, \$282,294);

- Dept of Conservation/Dept. of IF&W (1 project, \$90,000)
- State Planning Office (4 projects, \$71,149);
- Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (1 project, \$35,235); and
- Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District (1 project, \$16,000).

A detailed list of all grants awarded and funds disbursed is on file at the Office of Fiscal & Program Review and can also be accessed through the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund Board website at www.state.me.us/ifw/outdoorheritage/.

Prepared by the Office of Fiscal and Program Review

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