

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund

67 Leighton Road
Pownal, Maine 04069

JO D. SAFFEIR
Secretariat

December 22, 1999

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Chairman

Molly Docherty
Maine Natural Areas Program

Richard A. Fortier

Ronald Lovaglio
Department of Conservation

Lee Perry
Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

George Smith
Sportsman's Alliance of Maine

Sally Stockwell
Maine Audubon Society

The Honorable Angus S. King, Jr.
Office of the Governor
#1 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0001

Dear Governor King:

I am pleased to submit the enclosed information as the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund's fourth annual report. Submission of this information is required under TITLE 12, MRSA c. 714, section 7788.

The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund was established July, 1995 after a campaign by Maine Audubon Society and the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine generated more than 53,000 signatures on petitions to place the lottery issue on the November, 1995 ballot. Due to the strong support among Maine residents, the Legislature enacted the proposal into law, bypassing the need for a referendum.

The Fund's sole purpose is for "maintaining, improving and expanding state and local natural resource conservation programs and associated compatible public uses." Revenue is generated exclusively by a dedicated Instant Lottery ticket distributed by Maine's Lottery Commission.

The first task of the Heritage Fund was to develop a Strategic Plan to outline its funding priorities for the next six years. A copy of the Strategic Plan is attached. The Heritage Fund law requires that funds raised by the lottery be expended in four general categories: for fisheries and wildlife, and habitat conservation projects (35%); for acquisition and management of public lands, parks, and wildlife conservation areas (35%); for endangered and threatened species conservation projects (15%); and for natural resources law enforcement (15%). Priorities within each of the four funding categories are described in the Strategic Plan.

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Since the program began, ten Heritage Fund lottery tickets have been issued. Three tickets were issued this year, one depicting canoeists on the Allagash, another modeled after the loon license plate, and the third sporting a hunting theme. Voided tickets of these recent designs are attached.

Heritage Fund tickets are selling very well: the public is developing an understanding that proceeds from Heritage Fund tickets are funding hundreds of projects that protect Maine's natural resources. They are excited about supporting a program that has very tangible results.

Heritage Fund ticket sales since the program's inception (January, 1996) total \$23.5 million. Ticket sales during the last fiscal year totalled \$7.2 million. Approximately 77% of this revenue is allocated toward winnings and program expenses. The remaining 23% percent is transferred to the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund. As a result, the Fund has received \$6.2 million including interest since the program began in early 1996. The Fund received \$1.7 million during the last fiscal year (see financial statements attached).

Grants are awarded semi-annually to natural resource agencies in response to grant proposals. To date, there have been seven grant cycles, in which the Heritage Fund received 394 grant applications requesting a total of \$14.3 million. Applicants include state natural resource agencies in partnership with non-profit conservation organizations. In response, the Heritage Fund has awarded \$5.6 million in grants to 203 conservation projects. The grant sizes have ranged from \$561 to \$110,000. A brief description of the 55 grants awarded this year is attached.

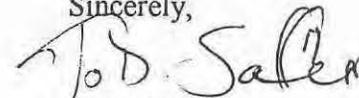
Grant recipients have included the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife; the Department of Marine Resources; the Department of Conservation; the Department of Environmental Protection; the Department of Agriculture; the State Planning Office; the Land for Maine's Future Board; the Maine Conservation Corps; the Atlantic Salmon Authority; the St. Croix International Waterway Commission; York, Cumberland, Oxford, Washington and Central Aroostook Counties Soil and Water Conservation Districts; the Wells Reserve; and the Saco River Corridor Commission. These state natural resource agencies have partnered with scores of non-governmental organizations to accomplish their projects, so the impact of these grants reaches well beyond the scope of these agencies alone.

Public awareness of the Heritage Fund program is growing as valuable conservation projects are being implemented throughout Maine. The Fund is publicized through various trade shows throughout the year, including the Maine Sportsman's Show and Common Ground Fair. In addition, a brochure has been produced that provides an overview of the program (see attached).

The Heritage Fund Board is making progress in implementing its Strategic Plan by ensuring that all funded projects substantively address one of the four funding categories established in the Fund's enabling legislation. I am confident you will find that the projects funded to date, whether evaluated individually or as a group, make a substantial contribution to the protection of the State's natural resources.

The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund Board looks forward to its ongoing role in providing an alternative source of funding for innovative conservation projects. Please feel free to contact me if you would like any additional information.

Sincerely,



Jo D. Saffair
Secretariat