

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Also sent to:

IFW Committee -  
Sen. David L. Carpenter  
Rep. Matthew Dunlap



# Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund

67 Leighton Road  
Pownal, Maine 04069

Natural Resources Committee  
Sen. John L. Martin  
Rep. Scott W. Cowger

**JO D. SAFFEIR**  
Secretariat

December 14, 2001

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Maine Natural Areas Program

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Department of Conservation

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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 sixth annual report. Submission of this information is required under TITLE 12, MRSA c. 714, section 7788.

The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund was established in 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.

Every six years, the Heritage Fund is required to update its strategic plan that outlines its funding priorities. This year, the Board underwent a public process to solicit feedback on the Heritage Fund program's first five years of operation. It incorporated much of this feedback and recently adopted a new strategic plan, a copy of which is attached.

State agencies and non-profit organizations were consistently positive about the program. For instance, the statewide land trust organization Maine Coast Heritage Trust wrote, "MCHT has found the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund strategic plan and application materials extremely helpful as we

Phone: (207) 688-4191  
FAX: (207) 688-4860  
email: saffeir@javanel.com  
www.state.me.us/ifw/outdoorheritage

*have prepared numerous proposals.”* The Saco River Corridor Commission wrote, *“The Outdoor Heritage guiding principles are clear and succinct. It would be difficult for any qualifying natural resource agency working within their state approved and mandated strategic plan to apply for funds and not meet at least one of the stated principles.”* The Lower Kennebec Regional Land Trust wrote, *“The process by which the grant from MOHF was made was straight-forward and unencumbered by bureaucratic red tape. You are to be congratulated on a program that effectively accomplishes its objectives.”* Finally, a letter from The Nature Conservancy is enclosed which provides similarly positive feedback on the program.

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 new Strategic Plan.

Since the program began, seventeen Heritage Fund lottery tickets have been issued. Four tickets were issued this year with the current ticket being “Squirrel Away Cash.” Voided tickets of this year’s ticket designs are attached.

Heritage Fund revenues from lottery ticket sales since the program's inception in January 1996 total \$35.5 million (as of 11/30/2001). Total revenues during the last fiscal year totaled \$8 million. Approximately 74 percent of this revenue is allocated toward winnings and program expenses. The remaining 26 percent is transferred to the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund. The Fund has received \$9 million including interest since the program began. The Fund received \$1.4 million during the last fiscal year (see financial statements attached). Annual revenues are holding steady.

Grants are awarded semi-annually to natural resource agencies in response to grant proposals. To date, there have been eleven grant cycles, in which the Heritage Fund received 545 grant applications requesting a total of \$19.1 million. Applicants include state natural resource agencies in partnership with non-profit conservation organizations. In response, the Heritage Fund has awarded \$8.8 million in grants to 319 conservation projects. The

grant sizes have ranged from \$561 to \$110,000. A brief description of the 63 grants awarded this year is attached.

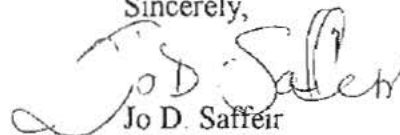
Grant recipients have included the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife; the Department of Marine Resources; the Department of Conservation; the Department of Environmental Protection; the Department of Agriculture; the State Planning Office; the Land for Maine's Future Board; the Maine Conservation Corps; the Atlantic Salmon Commission (and formerly 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. Each year, the Fund staffs a booth at the Maine Sportsman's Show. In addition, several articles about the Fund have appeared in major dailies this year, copies of which are attached.

The Heritage Fund Board is 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. If you would like any additional information, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jo D. Saffier". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Jo D. Saffier  
Secretariat