

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Also sent to: Natural Resources Committee  
Sen. Martin, Rep. Koffman  
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Sen. Bryant, Rep. Dunlap



## Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund

67 Leighton Road  
Pownal, Maine 04069

JO D. SAFFEIR  
Secretariat

December 17, 2003

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George Smith  
Sportsman's Alliance of Maine

Sally Stockwell  
Maine Audubon Society

The Honorable John E. Baldacci  
Office of the Governor  
1 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0001

Dear Governor Baldacci:

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

By way of history, 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 the Maine State Lottery.

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 enclosed Strategic Plan.

Phone: (207) 688-4191  
FAX: (207) 688-4860  
email: saffeir@rcn.com

[www.maine.gov/ifw/outdoorheritage](http://www.maine.gov/ifw/outdoorheritage)

Since the program began, twenty-one Heritage Fund lottery tickets have been issued. Two tickets were issued this year: "Catch a Winner" and our current ticket "Black Fly Bucks." Voided tickets of this year's designs are attached.

Approximately 75 percent of Heritage Fund lottery ticket revenue is allocated toward winnings and ticket distribution and advertising expenses. The remaining 25 percent is transferred to the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund. This profit figure has totalled over \$10.5 million since the program's inception. During the last fiscal year, the Fund's profit was \$811,296, an amount \$308,837 below budget (see attached financial statements).

The shortfall of over \$308,000 was the result of a decision by the former Administration to help balance the State budget by denying release of a new Heritage Fund lottery ticket. By restricting the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund to only two lottery tickets during FY'03, the Maine State Lottery was permitted to issue another of its own tickets instead, the proceeds of which supported the General Fund.

Grants are awarded semi-annually to natural resource agencies in response to grant proposals. To date, there have been fourteen grant cycles, in which the Heritage Fund received 659 grant applications requesting a total of \$22.4 million. Applicants include state natural resource agencies in partnership with non-profit conservation organizations. In response, the Heritage Fund has awarded over \$10.5 million in grants to 385 conservation projects. The grant sizes have ranged from \$561 to \$110,000. A brief description of the 20 grants awarded this year is attached.

The negative impact of denying release of a third Heritage Fund lottery ticket in FY'03 was significant. For the first time since the program's inception, there was only enough revenue to justify one grant cycle instead of the standard two. Roughly half of the number of conservation projects typically funded in a year were funded in FY'03.

Since the Heritage Fund program began, 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,

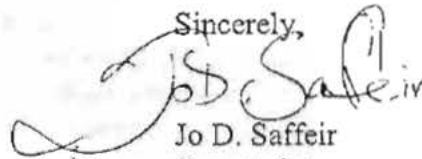
Oxford, Piscataquis, Washington and Central Aroostook Counties Soil and Water Conservation Districts; the Wells Reserve; and the Saco River Corridor Commission. These state natural resource agencies have partnered with scores of non-governmental organizations to accomplish their projects, so the impact of these grants reaches well beyond the scope of these agencies alone.

The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund is continually building public awareness of the Program. In the past year, it has worked with Ursus Productions to produce more than a dozen television segments highlighting specific conservation projects funded by the Heritage Fund. These segments are airing regularly on commercial stations throughout Maine as well as on public television. A radio ad featuring Maine comedian Gary Crocker recently aired, promoting the Fund's current lottery ticket, Black Fly Bucks.

The Heritage Fund Board continues to implement 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. Saffair". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jo D. Saffair  
Secretariat