



05-06

Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources

ANNUAL REPORT

Honorable Bob Riley
Governor of Alabama
State Capitol
Montgomery, AL 36130



Dear Governor Riley:

I am pleased to submit the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2005-2006. As you will see, the Department was involved in many projects during the year.

We continue to find more efficient ways to communicate and conduct business with our constituents. Many functions are now available through the Department's Web site, www.outdooralabama.com such as purchasing hunting and fishing licenses, reporting deer harvest data and registering for the Oak Mountain Archery Deer Hunt and the Alligator Hunt.

Alabama's first-ever regulated alligator hunt, held in the southern part of the state in August, was extremely successful in helping control the overpopulation of alligators. A total of 43 alligators were bagged this year.

Education is a major function of the Department. Last year more than 32,765 persons successfully completed the Basic Boating Course; more than 200 women completed the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Program; the Community Fishing Program conducted 60 events with over 15,808 participants; and the Youth Dove Hunting Program included 29 sites across

the state with approximately 1,427 participants. The number of schools participating in Alabama's National Archery in the Schools Program has increased to an all time high of 85. Additionally, teachers from 175 schools have been certified to teach the curriculum. We also saw the addition of the state's 10th shooting sports facility at the Upper Delta Wildlife Management Area.

Work continues on renovations at several of Alabama's state parks. The demolition of the old Gulf State Park Hotel has begun with the concrete debris being recycled to the state's highly successful inshore reef program. A new pier, new cottages on Lake Shelby and a new beach pavilion were added to Gulf State Park. Additionally, the new State Parks Gift Card was introduced for the convenience of park visitors. Work on the Lake Guntersville Lodge is moving along and new lakeside cabins at Lakepoint Resort have been completed.

I am extremely proud of the Department's accomplishments and I appreciate your support and leadership to the State of Alabama.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Barnett Lawley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

M. Barnett Lawley
Commissioner

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	5
Conservation Advisory Board	6
Organizational Chart	7
Administrative	8
Marine Police	16
Marine Resources	20
State Lands	26
State Parks	30
Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries	36

Department Overview

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is an executive and administrative department of the State of Alabama created by statute. The Commissioner, appointed by the Governor as a member of his cabinet, advises the Governor and Legislature on management of freshwater fish, wildlife, marine resources, waterway safety, state lands, state parks, and other natural resources.

SCOPE OF OPERATIONS

The Department's scope of operations includes the administration, management and maintenance of 22 state parks, 23 public fishing lakes, three freshwater fish hatcheries, 34 wildlife management areas, two waterfowl refuges, two wildlife sanctuaries, a mariculture center with 35 ponds, and 645,000 acres of trust lands managed for the benefit of several state agencies, the General Fund and Alabama Trust Fund. Other departmental functions include maintenance of a State Land Resource Information Center and administration of the Forever Wild land acquisition program.

ORGANIZATION

During Fiscal Year 2006, the Department had five operational divisions and eight support sections. The operational divisions were Marine Police, Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries. Support sections were Accounting, Diversity and Recruiting, Engineering, Information and Education, Information Technology, Legal, Personnel and Payroll and Property Inventory. The Commissioner was advised by a 10-member Conservation Advisory Board appointed by the Governor.

Division directors managed the Department's programs under their jurisdiction through authority delegated by the Legislature and the commissioner. Concerted efforts were made to balance needs and requirements against resources and available funding to satisfy present and future public and resource requirements. Active public education and voluntary participation programs were expanded and new plans were implemented to achieve maximum multiple-use benefits consistent with resource conservation.

DEPARTMENT GOALS

The Department's major goal is to promote the statewide stewardship and enjoyment of Alabama's natural resources, and to ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy these resources.

FUNDING

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources receives no General Fund support. Funding for the Department is generated through special revenues,

which include federal money, cigarette taxes, user and license fees, and mandated interest from endowment and federal regulations. The Forever Wild Program received interest income from the Alabama Trust Fund. Specific revenue sources for the five operational divisions are as follows:

Marine Police: Boat registration fees, fines, marine gas tax and federal grants.

Marine Resources: Saltwater fishing licenses, fines, marine gas tax and federal grants. Marine Resources also has an endowment but it has not grown enough as of date to enhance operations.

State Lands: Management fees from the sale of timber, minerals and various leases on state lands administered under the Land Based Asset Management Program. Further, the division receives additional federal grants which support specific programs.

State Parks: User-generated funds in the form of entrance, rental, lodging, golf and other recreational fees. State Parks received a modest amount of funding from cigarette tax revenue.

Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries: Fishing and hunting licenses and permits; fines; waterfowl stamps; federal allocations from excise taxes on sporting arms, ammunition, archery gear and some fishing tackle; and federal grants. Interest income, although at slightly declining interest rates, continues to be generated by the Game and Fish endowment fund for resident lifetime hunting and fishing licenses. Direct donations and voluntary state income tax refund check-offs for the Nongame Wildlife Program continue to decrease from previous fiscal years.

CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

The Conservation Advisory Board, created by statute, is composed of 10 members appointed by the governor for alternating terms of six years, and three ex-officio members in the persons of the Governor, the Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries, and the Director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. The Commissioner of Conservation and Natural Resources serves as the ex-officio secretary of the board.

The Advisory Board assists in formulating policies for the Department of Conservation, examines all rules and regulations and makes recommendations for their change or amendment. By a two-thirds vote of the members present and with the Governor's approval, the board can amend, make any changes, repeal or create and promulgate additional rules and regulations. The Board also assists in publicizing the Department's programs and activities.

MEETINGS

The Advisory Board met three times during FY 2006:

- February 18, 2006 at Shelton State Community College, Tuscaloosa
- March 11, 2006 at Auburn University Montgomery
- May 20, 2006 at the Gulf Shores Senior Activity Center

CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

<u>Members</u>	<u>Home Town</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Dan Moultrie, Chairman	Birmingham	March 28, 2009
Louis Coles	Enterprise	March 28, 2009
George Harbin	Gadsden	May 20, 2011
Bill Hatley	Gulf Shores	May 20, 2011
Johnny Johnson	Tuscaloosa	March 28, 2009
W. Grant Lynch	Talladega	May 9, 2007
Wayne May	Eutaw	March 28, 2009
James W. Porter, II	Birmingham	May 9, 2007
Ross Self	Gulf Shores	March 28, 2009
Warren Strickland	Huntsville	May 20, 2011

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Bob Riley, Governor
Gaines Smith, Auburn University Cooperative Extension System Director
Ron Sparks, Department of Agriculture and Industries Commissioner

EX-OFFICIO SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

M. Barnett Lawley, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Commissioner

Administrative Division

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

The Commissioner is the executive officer of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and provides overall direction and guidance for carrying out the Governor's directives and implementing enacted legislation. The Commissioner establishes goals, policies and directions; approves programs and budgets; delegates authority; and provides support to administer the Department efficiently and effectively.

The Chief of Operations acts as liaison to the Alabama Legislature and other state agencies and serves as the Department's chief of staff. Two support personnel assist the Commissioner and Operations Chief.

The Commissioner's administrative staff includes seven sections that provide administrative support for the Commissioner and the Department's operational divisions. The administrative support sections are Accounting, Diversity and Recruiting, Engineering, Information and Education, Information Technology, Legal, Personnel and Payroll and Property Inventory. The operational divisions fund the Commissioner's office and administrative staff.

ACCOUNTING

The Accounting Section is the central clearinghouse for all departmental financial data. Accounting maintains and records all receipts and disbursements for the commissioner's office, staff sections and each of the five operating divisions. Accounting is responsible for seven internal functions: General Accounting, Auditing, Budgeting, Administrative Procurement, Hunting and Fishing License Sales and Reporting, Boater Registration, and Agency Office Supplies/Central Mail.

General Accounting includes daily deposits of departmental funds, recording of all expenditures, preparation of monthly financial reports and statements, development of fiscal policies and procedures, reconciliation, coordination and preparation of the annual budget request.

Auditing is responsible for auditing all Conservation Department funds, including royalty and commission contracts. Additionally, the section performs fiscal audits of the individual state parks.

Procurement provides purchasing assistance to each administrative section.

Hunting and Fishing License Sales and Reporting is responsible for revenues totaling over \$15 million annually and certifying

them into the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries and Marine Resources funds.

Boat Registration is responsible for revenues totaling over \$3 million annually and certifying them into the Marine Police fund.

Agency Office Supplies and Central Mail maintain a central supply room for daily office supply needs. One accounting staff member maintains the central mailroom.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Central Accounting's audit personnel continue to assist the State's attorneys in litigation efforts against Exxon Mobil and help monitor the royalty practices of all offshore producers. The State won a \$3.4 billion verdict in November of 2003, \$107 million of which was compensatory damages (underpayment of royalties) and interest. Both the State of Alabama and Exxon prepared and submitted appellant briefs to the Alabama Supreme Court during 2005. The court has tentatively set February 2007 to hear oral arguments.

Central Accounting's audit personnel continue to work with State Parks on a comprehensive review of the business practices utilized throughout the system.

The Internet and agent point-of-sale system for hunting and fishing licenses continues to be a success. Thirty-six percent of our 604 license agents are electronic and sell fifty-six percent of licenses.

The Information Technology Section began work on a point-of-sale system for boater registration. It is currently in the early stages with the main focus being on the cleanup of historical data with an archive system in place. With the new system, all interested parties should have current as well as historical data available to track the recreational boats in the Alabama.

FUTURE PLANS

Currently there are several automated hunting and fishing license systems and a manual system. Efforts are continuing to convert all systems into one point-of-sale system. Although the automated systems are allowing the capture of demographic information of users of the state's recreational resources, consolidation of the information and retrieval mechanisms must be devised. Without such action, the automated system will be unable to provide valuable statistics for management, contact resources to find out what user needs or concerns are, and feedback on current and ongoing projects.

During Fiscal Year 2006, a point-of-sale system for the Internet and probate offices was explored. Several probate offices have been selected for a pilot that is scheduled for Fiscal Year 2007.

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
& NATURAL RESOURCES**

**DCNR Total
ACTUAL
2005-2006**

**DCNR Total
BUDGETED
2006-2007**

**DCNR Total
REQUESTED
2007-2008**

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	1,267	1,455	1,440
UNENCUMBERED CASH BALANCE FORWARD	27,293,510	33,964,407	21,288,858
Total Federal Funding	56,876,691	24,025,510	56,002,193

Hunting Licenses	8,525,810	8,679,904	8,723,619
Fishing Licenses	5,948,818	6,350,661	6,331,946
Land Management Fees	6,078,270	6,000,000	6,000,000
User Fees	20,969,310	23,163,667	29,463,803
Boat Registration	5,029,803	5,202,187	5,100,000
Timber Sales	728,117	700,000	700,000
Fines	849,992	810,000	810,000
Trust Fund Interest	0	0	0
Other	6,797,777	1,665,534	1,394,650
Total Departmental Related Receipts	54,927,897	52,571,953	58,524,018

Cigarette Tax	3,631,717	3,500,000	3,500,000
Gasoline Tax, Would go to DOT if DCNR did not Receive	3,653,081	3,625,000	3,675,000
Use Tax Discount Cap, All but State Lands Required, State Lands Coastal Program discontinued if funding lost.	1,561,961	2,290,195	2,403,032
Sales Tax Discount Cap	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
General Fund (Je Co. Recreational Facility-Pass Through)	0	0	0
DCNR Transfers	50,000	50,000	50,000
Forever Wild Land	375,000	375,000	375,000
Total Other Receipts	14,271,759	14,840,195	15,003,032

Administrative Transfer	7,882,106	8,040,727	8,700,562
Actual All Receipts	133,958,453	99,478,385	138,229,805
BFY 2006-2007 Expenditures	127,287,556	112,153,934	147,048,956
Revenues verses Expenditures--Over(Under)	6,670,897	(12,675,549)	(8,819,151)

UNENCUMBERED CASH BALANCE	33,964,407	21,288,858	12,469,707
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DIVERSITY AND RECRUITING

The Diversity and Recruiting Section develops and implements programs designed to increase the pool of qualified applicants needed to hire and promote a work force that reflects the cultural and ethnic diversity of the state of Alabama. This section maintains the department's Affirmative Employment Plan, does statewide recruiting, and contracts diversity training for the Department.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Natural Resources Law Enforcement Training program combined Internet and classroom meetings to introduce urban students to natural resources law enforcement. The experimental class combined in-person conservation departmental experts with the criminal justice and technology staff of Auburn Montgomery (AM) and used the Internet to deliver a cutting edge technology driven model. The class recruits/trains students at AM, Troy State University Montgomery, Alabama State University (ASU), and Tuskegee University. The class will be available in 2007 as an Internet-only class through AUM and will be available to interested students anywhere. We believe that it will become the most effective recruiting tool that we have used.

- Continue developing statewide recruiting using field employees as a recruiting resource.
- Develop partnerships with elementary, junior high, and high schools through our Adopt a School program; increase awareness in urban school districts of careers in conservation, and provide a link to outdoor recreational opportunities available in the state of Alabama.
- Enlarge our college internship program to include most four-year schools in Alabama where logistically possible.
- Maintain our commitment to the Student Aide Program.
- Maintain our commitment to the Welfare to Work partnership with the Alabama Department of Human Resources.
- Continue the Natural Resources Law Enforcement Training program to include instructors from ASU, AM, Alabama A&M University, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region IV, U.S. Treasury Department's ATF Division, and instructors from the Department of Conservation's five operating divisions.

- Provide diversity training for managers and employees on a continuing basis.
- Increase community input into the Conservation diversity committee working group.
- Continue to work with the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and our Legal Section to get an approved Affirmative Employment Plan.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

The Information and Education Section (I&E) provides an array of creative services for the Department. Informational services include print media such as *Outdoor Alabama* magazine for paid subscribers; *Outdoor Alabama* television, which airs weekly in syndication across the state; news releases distributed to media outlets; brochures for various Department programs; and special video productions.

Educational services include comprehensive K-12 conservation education curricula and teacher training programs; in-school conservation programs; and hands-on field trips for students. Last year 836 educators completed inservice workshops offered by the Department. This is a significant increase over the past few years.

Outreach services include the Governor's One-Shot Turkey Hunt; STEP OUTSIDE, a mentor-based program to introduce newcomers to hunting, fishing and other nature-based recreation; and two Becoming an Outdoors-Woman weekend workshops.

In addition, I&E provided public relations and publishing consultation as well as editorial, proofreading, and copy writing services for departmental staff; responded to information requests from the public, media and other agencies; drafted documents for department administrators and the Governor's office; coordinated special projects; and acted as liaison to the Governor's Press Office and to Luckie and Co.

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

I&E had 12 authorized and filled positions during FY 2005-2006: a Biologist V who served as section chief; a Public Information Manager who served as managing editor; one Public Information Specialist who served as a staff writer; one Artist-Illustrator II and one Artist-Illustrator I who served as graphic artists; two Conservation Education Specialists who coordinated workshops within assigned regions;

DIVERSITY AND RECRUITING

Continue the Natural Resources Law Enforcement Training program to include instructors from ASU, AM, Alabama A&M University, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region IV, U.S. Treasury Department's ATF Division, and instructors from the Department of Conservation's five operating divisions.

one Audio-Visual Specialist III, one Audio-Visual Specialist II and one Audio-Visual Specialist I who served as videographers and video editors; and two Administrative Support Assistant IIIs who provided clerical support for the section.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I&E provided service, material and coordination for promotion of the Governor's One-Shot Turkey Hunt, statewide youth wildlife art contests, Becoming an Outdoors-Woman workshops, the Outdoor Alabama Expo and many other special projects. Photographic and audiovisual services were provided as needed. Ninety-three press releases were written in support of Department activities and posted to the web site.

Outdoor Alabama magazine published five issues including the annual Calendar and Conservation Directory. Subscriptions numbers showed record growth due to promotions targeted at potential new subscribers and the option of purchasing subscriptions online with a credit card.

The state celebrated The Year of Outdoor Alabama in 2006 as designated by the Bureau of Tourism and Travel. Several events coincided with the celebration including the Outdoor Alabama Expos.

The Outdoor Alabama Nature Shop is available online offering products that range from wildlife pins to t-shirts, caps, books and toys.

The *Outdoor Alabama* television show added a new Alabama station to its syndication. It now airs weekly on stations in Birmingham, Dothan, Huntsville, Montgomery, Mobile and Columbus, Georgia.

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue the popular Outdoor Alabama photo contest with winners published in the magazine. Next year the winning artwork will also be displayed in different venues around the state.
- Begin publishing a weekly outdoors column on the Department's Web site, outdooralabama.com.
- Produce a training video for Department law enforcement officers.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information Technology Section provides computer hardware, software and networking services for the Department. Hardware services include set up and installation of new desktop and notebook computers, management of departmental servers, and installation and support for printers, monitors and scanners.

Software services include new Web-based application development, analysis, design and support for the Department's E-Gov applications, support for all mainframe applications, including ad hoc reporting from the accounting and personnel systems, and support and maintenance of the Department Web site.

Networking services include support for all wired and wireless technologies used throughout the department.

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

Information Technology is located on the sixth floor of the Folsom Administrative Building. The staff of eight includes an IT Manager, Programmer/Analysts, Systems Specialists and Technicians. During FY06, a contract position was used to assist with E-Gov application design and support.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Information Technology provided service, coordination, consultation and support for many Department projects including the Hunting and Fishing License Point-of-Sale system, the Marine Resources License Point-of-Sale system, the Hunter Education online registration system, the Oak Mountain Archery Hunt registration system, the Delta Alligator Hunt registration, State Parks property management and online reservation systems, State Lands Heritage data collection and reporting system, the Unified Citation application and the Outdoor Alabama Web site. Significant improvement was made in streamlining production and ad hoc mainframe jobs.

FUTURE PLANS

- The section continues to develop Web-based applications to provide better public access and reduce paper driven processes.
- The section will research possible uses of wireless technologies in State Parks, Enforcement, and the district offices.
- Develop online Boat Registration Renewal system and an agent Point-of-Sale system.

ENGINEERING

The Engineering Section continued to provide on-site professional and technical support in response to the extensive damage caused by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 and the residual damage of Hurricane Ivan in September 2004 and coordinated with FEMA, local communities and other federal, state and local agencies in the cleanup and reconstruction of storm devastated facilities.

LEGAL

The Legal Section provides advice and counsel directly to the Commissioner and Operations Chief, and as a staff function, provides legal services to the directors of the five operational divisions and other Department staff.

The drafting of contracts, deeds, leases, patents, permits and attorney general opinions are also responsibilities of the Legal Section. Litigation against the Department and employees as well as litigation initiated by the Department is handled by the legal staff. The staff has assisted the Department in the acquisition of several large tracts of land.

The Legal Section drafts, reviews and monitors legislation affecting the Department. Regulations for management and enforcement efforts of divisions are drafted and approved for execution and followed through the adoption process. The section is responsible for real estate transactions involving land owned or managed by the Department and for the legal work association with the state's oil and gas leasing activity.

PERSONNEL AND PAYROLL

The Personnel and Payroll Section provides personnel-related support services to the Commissioner's office, Division Directors, and Section Chiefs.

The section serves as liaison to the State Personnel Department for the Department's personnel actions and activities.

The section is responsible for processing all payrolls, as well as maintaining all employee files and payroll records, for the Department's hourly and bi-weekly personnel.

ENGINEERING

The Engineering Section provides professional planning and programming, engineering, architectural, landscape architectural, surveying, Cartographic, and related administrative services to the various divisions of the department. These professional services best protect the state's natural resources by providing parks, recreational opportunities and services. The section's professional staff of engineers, architects, landscape architect and land surveyors ensure that solutions to conservation planning and programming, design and construction problems and the development of departmental

projects are integrated with ecologically functional and aesthetic aspects within the confines of economic feasibility.

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

The Engineering Section had 20 employees during FY 2005-2006: one Chief of Engineering Services, one Architect II, one Professional Land Surveyor III, one Conservation Engineer I(vacant), one Landscape Architect, one Design Technician Supervisor, one Professional Land Surveyor I/II, one Clerk Stenographer III, one Conservation Construction Inspector I, three Land Survey Technicians, three Design Technicians, one Survey Assistant, three Utility Laborers and one retired state employee. The section's facilities are located in Montgomery and at Oak Mountain State Park.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Engineering Section continued to provide on-site professional and technical support in response to the extensive damage caused by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 and the residual damage of Hurricane Ivan in September 2004 and coordinated with FEMA, local communities and other federal, state and local agencies in the cleanup and reconstruction of storm devastated facilities. Over \$30 million in contracts related to storm events was initiated and coordinated in FY 2005-2006.

Engineering Section programs consist of providing the necessary professional expertise required to reach department goals. These programs include capital improvement, using both out-sources and in-house design and in-house construction, master planning and site planning for department facilities. General technical assistance is also performed including construction document preparation, project status reports, annual reports, replies to correspondence, feasibility studies, advisement on proper repair and operation manuals, providing field information, technical field assistance, emergency project involvement, dam inspections, specification writing for material and equipment purchases, field maintenance and training assistance. Engineering was also involved with surveying assistance and technical advice on construction projects boundaries and property corners for State Parks, delineation and location of oyster reefs, public access areas, wildlife management areas (WMAs), public lakes and other state managed property. Approximately 30 percent of Engineering Section time was spent on technical assistance of a general nature involving various department activities requiring engineering input.

The Engineering Section prepared new and updated management area maps, updated and produced new state park

trail maps and completed numerous banners, posters, retirement certificates and appreciation awards. The section continued communication between the Department of Transportation and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the purpose of relaying digital information and continued the process of converting state maps, state park boundaries and WMAs, new state park brochure/map and other related data to digital form. The section produced a digital archive of record plans and maps that previously was only in paper format. This digital archival record includes files produced dating back to in the early 1800's, though CCC plans and present day projects.

The Engineering Section continues to assist the Commissioner's Office and the State Parks Division in the advertising for, and selection of private architectural/engineering firms to prepare documents for the State Parks Restoration Program. The section remains as a coordinating liaison between the Department and these private firms to communicate the needs of the Department and to ensure their inclusion into the completed plans.

ADMINISTRATIVE

General: Provided location maps; continued work on the Engineering Section's USGS quad maps; initiated updating the Engineering Section's filing (placing all information in the computer); provided assistance and support in the State Parks renovation program; continued section's complete archival file scanning and production of digital format plan archives. Assisting in deed reviews and acreage estimation for the purchase of new lands and/or lease procurements.

Marine Police:

- Orange Beach and Baldwin County: Performed property line and topographical surveys.

Marine Resources:

- Dauphin Island: Produced plans for re-landscaping Little Billy Goat Hole Public Access.
- Claude Petet: Performed surveys.
- Gulf/Mobile Bay: Performed visual, property line and topographical surveys of hurricane damage.
- Inshore and offshore fishing reefs: Completed four new reefs.

State Lands:

- Freedom Hills Management Area: Performed

property line surveys.

- Wet Debris Removal: Significant coordination of debris cleanup and emergency projects were required to be done at all coastal areas.
- Mobile-Tensaw Forever Wild Tract: Performed property line surveys.
- Bullock County: Completed construction of satellite toilet facility at the Wehle Nature Center.
- Performed plan development for new dormitory facilities.
- Forever Wild: Surveyed property in Jackson and Lauderdale counties.
- Greene County (Eutaw Tract): Performed survey.
- Ono Island: Performed topographical surveys.
- 5 Rivers Environmental Center: Coordinated construction of utilities, roads and buildings for this \$10 million facility.
- General: Performed property line surveys on school lands statewide; located mean high tide lines in Baldwin County; assisted in navigability research and provided plans for oil and gas lease tracts with acreage estimation; continued to perform surveys of hurricane damage.

State Parks:

- **Cathedral Caverns:** Completed construction phase and project management of new pedestrian facility for cave entrance; did preliminary studies and site investigations for gift shop addition and gem mining concession; coordinated with park crew for future construction.
- **DeSoto:** Continued to produce boundary line survey for segment of park; completed construction phase of rustic cabin renovations.
- **Chewacla:** Completed work on construction documents for new office, entrance to new bathrooms and pavilions at upper and lower areas; continued coordination of phase two of renovation work; performed property line and topographical surveys.
- **Joe Wheeler:** Administered work in continuing improvements; prepared plans for covered boat slips and coordinated design phase of swimming pool and cabin construction with consultant architect.

- **Lakepoint:** Continued administration of work with consultants for renovation of lodge, cabins, marina, and site improvements.
- **Meaher:** Completed construction of boardwalk and pier area.
- **Oak Mountain:** Continued administration of work with consultants preparing design documents for master plan and improvements; completed golf course renovation; completed design of trailhead for Peavine Falls Trail; coordinated plans with Samford University for renovation of structure for Interpretive Center; completed design of new sewer system and received proposals on same; evaluated erosion and sediment control at Shing lake.
- **Lake Gunterville:** Continued to administer work with ongoing overall lodge and park improvements-construction phase; coordinated new intake for Golf Course Irrigation; provided additional survey and topographic information for state park improvement projects; performed property line surveys.
- **Gulf:** Continued to administer/work with consultants preparing design documents for park improvements; participated in master planning and lodge/conference center improvements; worked with consultant and redesigned intake structure for salt water feed line; continued to provide survey and topographic information for state park improvement projects. Performed property line surveys; completed construction of dune enhancement habitat restoration, and facility improvements at Florida Point, Cotton Bayou, Romar Beach and County Road 2 sites and opened these sites for public use; completed campground renovation. Completed construction of new beach pavilion; produced construction documents for reforestation and landscaping at campground; continued to work with local authorities concerning trail improvements and links to city trails and state park trail systems.
- **Wind Creek:** Assisted Parks with construction of new cabins.
- **General:** Conducted research/plans for various other state parks; performed preliminary investigations and project scope for various park improvement projects working with consultants; continued production/update of brochure maps for State Parks; produced and administered aerial mapping project of all state parks and continued to provide assistance in consultant selection for ongoing Parks Renovation Program; provided assistance for State Parks master

planning program.

Because of two catastrophic hurricane storm events (Hurricanes Ivan 2004 and Katrina 2005) ongoing projects and design phases of renovations and new work were greatly impacted. Over \$30 million of projects responding to this destruction were started significant coordination of debris cleanup and emergency projects were required to be done alongside ongoing construction efforts at this facility and all coastal areas. This required intensive participation by the Chief of Engineering Services and other Engineering staff

Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries:

- Continued to perform property line surveys in Jackson County.
- Landowner Incentive: Did preliminary site investigation and scoping on future stream bank restoration projects.
- State Lakes: Began construction of new concession building at Lee County Lake.
- Swan Creek: Completed work on New District Office Complex.
- Hatcheries: Started additional renovations for facilities at the Marion State Fish Hatchery Fisheries; completed Projects at Waterloo Boat Ramp and Pickwick Boat Ramp in Lauderdale County.
- Pelican Point: Reconstructed Boat Ramp Parking Lot.
- Mount Vernon Boat Ramp: Coordinated with consultant for production of construction documents.
- Law Enforcement: Provided digital files for hunter education and location maps and digital state WMA map for the Department of Transportation; performed property line surveys for numerous properties under the control of this division.
- Stockton Shooting Range: Assisted with construction and completed project.
- Wildlife: Continued GIS discussion and application work. Updated/produced all state WMA maps; produced statewide management area map inserts; aided in other various projects for this section including digitizing and acreage determination and continued surveyed property line at the James D. Martin/Skyline WMA; performed property line surveys.

FUTURE PLANS

The Engineering Section plans to continue assistance and coordination of Hurricane Ivan damages including hurricane repairs, debris cleanup coordination with FEMA and insurance settlements.

Surveying will continue of property lines for State Parks, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries and other critical locations involving the Department. The section also plans to provide master planning, programming, design and contract administration for future construction projects including the ongoing renovation program of the State Parks Division and other divisions, surveys of public access areas, maintenance of existing department facilities, and design and construction of new facilities when possible.

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & NATURAL RESOURCE PROPERTY INVENTORY

Number of items on inventory and value at end of FY2005-06 are as follows:

Division	Number of Items	Value
Parks	5,227	\$14,024,164.73
Marine Resources	746	\$2,963,926.58
Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries	5,532	\$18,945,062.44
Administrative	840	\$1,711,738.39
Lands	549	\$2,031,204.35
Marine Police	1,334	\$5,553,475.90
TOTAL	14,228	\$45,229,572.39

Marine Police Division

The Marine Police Division's mission is to enhance safety and promote responsible use of resources on Alabama's waterways through enforcement, education and community activities for approximately one million boaters on the state's 1.3 million acres of recreational waters.

Functions of the Marine Police Division, in addition to routine safety patrol, include registration of all pleasure boats, licensing of all boat operators, boat and marine accessory theft, a statewide Boating Education Program, and assisting other state, local and federal officers in enforcement activities relating to homeland security, maritime and waterway smuggling, drug interdiction, and other serious crimes committed in the marine environment. The Marine Police Division also administers the waterway hazard and control marking program, presently overseeing 1,518 hazard and control markers and zones.

This program is handled in the field by less than 60 Marine Police Officers using one-officer patrol craft who each cover over 23,000 surface acres. Field enforcement officers are responsible for all patrol activities, regulatory/navigational markers, and public education within their assigned areas. Administration of the Marine Police Division is the responsibility of its Director, M. N. Pugh. The Director's staff consists of the Chief Law Enforcement Officer, who oversees all activities of the patrol officers and district supervisors, and the Chief of Operations. An education officer, a supply/inventory officer and the administrative unit, which provides budgetary, fiscal, logistical and maintenance support, comprise the Chief of Operations staff.

The boat registration unit assists the Marine Police Division by overseeing registration and records retention of approximately 400,000 boats. The boat registration unit, along with other Marine Police administrative personnel, also supports the boat theft unit, which consists of three Marine Police officers assigned statewide. Recovery of stolen property such as boats, motors and accessory equipment is a function of the boat theft unit.

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

The Marine Police Division maintains headquarters, a maintenance shop and warehouse in Montgomery. A training facility at Orange Beach is used for training and in service training. The state is divided into four districts for enforcement purposes. Four district headquarters are maintained at Lake Guntersville State Park, Alpine, Wind Creek State Park, and Alabama Point. These headquarters provide contact sites for the boating public, education program locations, and training facilities for district personnel. In FY 2006, the Marine Police Division operated with 79 employees statewide. This included

67 uniformed officers, six clerical personnel, three marine mechanics, one painter, two laborers, and the Division Director. Seven new Marine Police Officers were hired June 2006.

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

For Fiscal Year 2006, the Marine Police Division was authorized a budget of \$7,740,620. Total expenditures amounted to \$7,389,133. These funds were generated from boat registration fees, enforcement fines, marine fuel tax, and the boating safety assistance program from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security/U.S. Coast Guard.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- More than 32,765 persons successfully completed the Basic Boating Course taught by Marine Police officers in 2006.
- Boat operator licenses were issued to 26,659 boat operators in 2006. A total of 597,785 operator licenses are currently on file.
- In May 2006, Marine Police Officers assisted the U.S. Coast Guard, the State of Florida and other state and federal agencies with crowd control during the sinking of the USS Oriskany.
- Assisted the Marshall County District Attorney's Office and the Marshall County Sheriff's Office with the Bryne Drug Sweep, a nation-wide drug round-up, resulting in numerous arrests on various charges.
- In August 2006, Marine Police Officers provided enforcement and crowd control at the Alabama-based Onshore Super Powerboat Race. There were 2,000 spectators in boats and approximately 12,000 more on shore for this event.
- Alabama Power Company contributed a \$25 thousand grant to be used to promote public safety on the 12 Alabama Power Company impoundments.
- In August 2006, Marine Police officers assisted TVA Police by maintaining a security zone up and down stream of Wilson Dam on the Tennessee River. A barge carrying hazardous materials struck the lock and damaged it.

ENFORCEMENT

In 2005-2006, Marine Police Officers were on patrol for 33,749 hours. There were 21,282 vessel contacts that resulted in 3,064 arrests and 6,057 written warnings. A total of 111 arrests were made for boating or driving under the influence of alcohol. A total of 101 hours were spent assisting with drug interdictions resulting in 18 arrests for illegal possession of drugs. Ninety-seven arrests were made for illegal possession of alcohol and 173 citations were written for careless/reckless operation of a vessel or personal watercraft.

Marine Police officers performed 859 hours of search and rescue and assists to boaters. Marine Police officers were called upon by other law enforcement agencies for 484 hours of assistance with various duties. There were 70 marine events permitted by the Division, resulting in 380 hours of security patrol.

Marine Police officers are still under orders to patrol all critical infrastructure sites on the water that are considered to be potential terrorist targets. All officers have received training on the deployment of special teams in the event of a terrorist threat. Approximately 3,703 hours were expended on Homeland Security patrols

The Boat Theft Investigators opened 99 new cases of boat theft in 2006. Officers investigated 118 boating accidents that resulted in 23 fatalities for the fiscal year. In addition to routine patrol, Marine Police Officers can volunteer for duty on specialized teams, such as the Disaster Response Team (DRT), The Dive Team, and The Tactical Team. The DRT is comprised of 21 officers from all areas of the state. The DRT responds to emergency situations such as floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes or by an activation call from Emergency Management Services. The Dive Team consists of two officers from each district plus the officers that work along the coast. The Dive Team works cases from body recovery to stolen weapon drops. The Tactical Team is a six-man team specializing in high-risk boardings and clearing of suspicious vessels.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Education Section of the Alabama Marine Police Division is continuing a joint cooperative venture with the Alabama Department of Education's Driver Education Section, with the

implementation of boating education taught in driver education classes. Compliance continued to increase during the 2005-2006 school year, with both departments working hard to achieve the 100 percent participation, which was mandated by the *Boating Safety Reform Act of 1994*. Marine Police furnishes training to the driver education instructors and participates in a series of workshops at various sites throughout the state and also supplies instructional materials such as manuals, pamphlets, videos and speakers to ensure a successful program.

The Marine Police Division and the Alabama Department of Public Safety's (ADPS) Driver's License Division continue to work together to license the boaters of Alabama. The Marine Police Division provides training for the driver license examiners and study guides for citizens to study for the written exam, which is conducted by the ADPS. Because the state-approved online boating course, www.boat-ed.com, which was implemented as another alternative for the vessel license requirement, continues to receive a healthy response, the Division is looking at implementing an additional online course to allow additional boaters access to course materials. Additional printed materials and videos were acquired for use in providing public education for the marine community, and a concentrated radio, TV, and media blitz has continued to encourage the boating community to come in to compliance with the vessel license requirement.

Marine Police personnel taught a total of 77 boating courses during the year 2006. Officers conducted 554 public education programs and presentations with 137,299 persons in attendance. Marine Police patrol equipment and static displays were manned at public schools, boat shows, safety fairs, and other functions throughout the state. T-shirts with a boating safety message were given out to encourage children to wear lifejackets and proved to be very popular with boaters across the state.

Radio and television appearances by Marine Police officers amounted to 182; in addition, 449 newspaper articles and magazine articles were published statewide. Time expended on educational functions by the officers totaled 5,294 hours with 90,000 units of boating literature distributed to the public. Officers conducted surveys on the regulatory/navigational markers in their patrol areas and dedicated 912 hours to placing, replacing, and repairing 253 aids to navigation on Alabama's waterways.

Marine Police Officers have continued to work closely with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) in the implementation of the *Marine Sewage Act of October*

MARINE POLICE

More than 32,765 persons successfully completed the Basic Boating Course taught by Marine Police officers in 2006.

2005-2006 BOAT REGISTRATION STATISTICS

Total Number of Boats

Registered	271,523
Ownership Transfers Processed	27,395

Alabama ranks 17th in the nation for total number of vessels registered.

2005-2006 MARINE POLICE LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

- Routine Patrol33,749 hours
- Homeland Security Patrol.....3,703 hours
- Search and Rescue and Assists to Boaters... 859 hours
- Vessel Contacts 21,282
- Arrests..... 3,064
 - 111 for boating under the influence of alcohol
 - 97 for illegal possession of alcohol
 - 18 for illegal possession of drugs
- Written Warnings..... 6,057
- Boating Accidents118
- Fatalities23
- New Boat Theft Cases99

2003. The officers have been enforcing the *Marine Sanitation Act* as it pertains to the regulating of boat sewage discharge. This includes prohibiting the docking, storing, anchoring or mooring of vessels with a type III marine sanitation device (MSD) at marinas without a pump-out or waste disposal system (except in emergency situations). Although officers have found enforcement problems within the Act, 921 MSD inspections were conducted on both recreational and residential vessels and yearly inspection decals were issued.

A multi-agency program, *The Clean Waters Initiative*, was formed to address not only the *Marine Sewage Act*, but also the public's concerns for clean water. This initiative will help the general public understand how legislation like the *Marine Sewage Act* impacts them and the environment. Awareness efforts directed at the general public were done throughout the year at different public venues. Marine Police Officers have also been working closely with Lands' Coastal Section with the development and implementation of the *Clean Marina Act*.

BOAT REGISTRATION

The Boat Registration Section is responsible for registration and records retention of approximately 400,000 boats. The total number of boats registered in Fiscal Year 2006 was 271,523. Additionally, 27,395 ownership transfers were processed. The Registration Unit, working with the Information and Technology Section, are endeavoring to implement an online renewal system. Because of the built-in safeguards, utilization of this online system will not only be a benefit to the boating public, it will also facilitate in the cleaning up of old records.

In addition to the automated renewal system, future plans include an online registration system to be implemented in 2007-2008.

Alabama ranks 17th in the nation for total number of vessels registered. The boat registration unit also assists the boat theft unit, which consists of three Marine Police officers assigned statewide.

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

The most significant problems facing the Marine Police Division are a critical shortage of enforcement personnel and upcoming funding shortfalls. To address both these problems, a source of funding must be found.

Thirty additional officers will be needed over the next four years to bring the Division to an effective level. The cost to accomplish this is estimated at \$1.5 million. With a turnover of nearly 18 percent of experienced personnel (by FY 07) and the additional responsibility of providing security and surveillance for critical infrastructure sites on the water in partnership with the Homeland Security Department, at least a 50 percent increase in personnel is necessary. At the present time, no additional funding has been provided through Homeland Security.

As demands for additional officer presence on the water increase, funding issues will have to be looked at and appropriate revenue, through a boat registration increase, generated to maintain the Division's operations.

As enforcement of the *Marine Sanitation Act* continues, problems within the legislation have surfaced, resulting in a need for an amendment of this Act to provide clear enforcement authority.

FUTURE PLANS

The Division goals and objectives for Fiscal Year 2007 are as follows:

- Determine level of revenue needed to maintain and support division operations, then work toward securing legislation for increase.
- Reduce the number of boating accidents resulting in fatalities and injuries.
- Working with Accounting and Information Technology sections, update antiquated boat registration system and implement and refine new online renewal and registration system.
- Work toward amending the *Marine Sanitation Act* and inspect at least 50 percent of all vessels with a MSD.
- Implement and continue educating the public on the new law (*Act 2006-398*) which becomes effective this year.
- Replace worn out outboard motors on patrol vessels.

Marine Resources Division

The Marine Resources Division (MRD) is responsible for the management of Alabama's marine fisheries resources through research and enforcement programs. Two division facilities supported an average of 56 employees of the Administrative, Enforcement, and Fisheries Sections during Fiscal Year 2006.

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

A total expenditure of \$7,717,986 was made from the approved budget of \$8,093,144. Revenue of \$7,415,217 was made up from federal aid (67 percent), license fees (22 percent), marine gas tax (nine percent), and other sources (two percent). This plus a cash forward balance of \$412,588 provided funding of \$7,827,805 for the fiscal year.

The Administrative Section expended \$317,804 on salaries and benefits, \$297,447 on all other charges for an administrative expenses total of \$615,251. Other expenditures handled by this section included \$776,796 spent on hurricane related costs in 2006 and \$619,804 that was the total of administrative transfer payments to Montgomery. This represented a total of \$2,011,852.

Expenditures for the Enforcement Section totaled \$1,429,159 of which \$24,345 was reimbursable by a grant from the National Marine Fisheries Service and \$264,010 was reimbursable under a Joint Enforcement Agreement from NOAA/Office of Law Enforcement.

Fisheries Section expenditures were \$2,655,292, which consisted of funds from 17 federal aid programs and required state matching funds. Federal aid projects varied in state match requirements from 0 to 25 percent. Included in these expenditures, in addition to the normal expenditure were shell planting activities, boating access area upkeep, renovation, and construction.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Hurricanes Ivan (September 2004) and Katrina (September 2005) caused serious disruptions of services and unavoidable changes to Division plans throughout FY 2005. Boating access facilities and inshore reefs suffered greatly from both storms, and the saltwater pipeline for hatchery work has yet to be repaired from Ivan. FEMA and support sections of DCNR have been very helpful during this difficult time, and continue to be so. It will still take some time yet to repair damages from the storms; these repairs continue to decrease available state funds (FEMA match) which had been planned for other productive uses and services.

The lack of adequate quantities of high salinity, high quality water for rearing of marine fishes such as red snapper at the CPMC continues. Hurricane Ivan destroyed the intake structure, the pump station, and portions of the pipeline that supplied water to CPMC. This will be repaired with FEMA and insurance

monies after the Gulf State Park pier is rebuilt and relocated to serve for attachment of the intake structure. It is estimated that it will take two to three more years to rebuild.

There is a need for authority to allow offenses committed in the Gulf of Mexico outside of the state's territorial waters to be heard in state district court. This could be accomplished by amending regulation 9-12-4.

There currently is no way to track the recreational effort expended against the marine resources with the use of gig, castnet, recreational crab traps, or spearfishing. These fishing gears need to be added to the recreational fishing license.

At present commercial fishermen can not legally sell fish caught in cast nets or with gigs because of a lack of a commercial license for this activity. A commercial license should be established for these activities.

The issue of permitting of Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) facilities offshore from Alabama remains an issue particularly regarding the use of "open loop" systems to warm the liquid for transport to market.

ADMINISTRATION SECTION

The Administrative Section provides supervision, clerical, purchasing, and general administrative support for the two operational sections; supervises state seismic activities; and coordinates with other state, federal and regional agencies on fisheries and environmental matters.

Staff for the Administrative Section consisted of the division director, seven clerical, one accountant, one custodial worker, and one marine mechanic employee. Offices are maintained at Dauphin Island, and Gulf Shores.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 2006 edition of the popular Alabama Marine Information Calendar was produced and distributed. In addition, a calendar depicting conservation related artwork by coastal 4th – and – 5th graders was produced and printed by the division. The artwork for the calendar was selected through an art contest, hosted by the Division and judged by local specialists in coastal conservation and the arts. The winning selections were also displayed in art museums in both Mobile and Baldwin counties. Receptions were held at each museum for the winning students, their friends, and families.

Renovation of the Boggy Point Boat Ramp were completed in 2006. Repairs have been made to ramps damaged by Hurricane Ivan and repairs will be completed to those damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

FUTURE PLANS

- Plans are in place to continue work at the Pier Street ramp in Fairhope during the next fiscal year with the addition of a breakwater.
- The Division plans to continue development of the inshore artificial reef system particularly in Baldwin County. Demolition of the Gulf State Park lodge and hotel facilities will provide up to 20,000 tons of clean concrete rubble for the reef effort.
- Repairs are planned for the Cotton Bayou boating access facility in Orange Beach. The aging parking lot will be expanded and repaved.
- Attempts will be made to extend the jurisdiction of District Courts to offenses committed offshore from Alabama in addition to those committed fully within Alabama's territorial sea.

ENFORCEMENT SECTION

The Enforcement Section patrols Alabama's coastal waters, enforcing state and federal laws and regulations relating to the conservation and protection of marine resources. Officers also enforce laws and regulations relating to boating safety and freshwater fishing and hunting, conduct search and rescue missions, and participate in drug interdiction operations. Officers are cross-trained and deputized as National Marine Fisheries Service, U. S. Fish and Wildlife, and U.S. Customs agents. The Enforcement Section cooperates extensively with other local, state, and federal agencies in the coordination of joint enforcement operations, provides investigative and fisheries enforcement expertise, conducts training, and performs other public safety efforts.

Facilities for the Enforcement Section consist of headquarters at Dauphin Island and a district office in Gulf Shores. There are 17 enforcement officers in the section, ten stationed in Mobile County, six stationed in Baldwin County, and the Chief Enforcement Officer stationed at Dauphin Island headquarters. During FY 2005-2006 two enforcement officers were hired and are in the process of completing their extensive enforcement training.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Enforcement officers conducted 17,298.5 hours of boat and shore patrol, 14,458 boat checks, 1,753 seafood shop inspections, 30,606 recreational fisherman checks, and issued 1,495 citations and warnings for illegal activities. Thirty-seven percent of the citations and warnings (553) were for violations of recreational fishing laws and regulations. The 413 violations of commercial fishing laws and regulations comprised twenty-eight percent of the citations and warnings issued. Officers also issued citations and warnings for 339 violations of boating safety laws and regulations, 62 wildlife and freshwater fisheries, and 128 citations for other state and federal laws and regulations. A total of 14,634 hours was spent on administrative duties, court attendance, training, and equipment maintenance. Officers worked 2,415 hours with the National Marine Fisheries Services interjurisdictional fisheries enforcement program.

Enforcement officers continued to expand mechanisms to improve public outreach efforts to better communicate enforcement efforts and important information. These efforts have assisted with planning of enforcement patrols and deployment of manpower and other resources resulting in saved man-hours by not responding to inaccurate reports of violations.

The U.S. Department of Commerce appropriations budget for the 2005 – 2006 fiscal year contained \$17 million earmarked for cooperative enforcement initiatives between NOAA law enforcement and state fisheries law enforcement entities. The Marine Resources Division and NOAA Enforcement entered into a joint enforcement agreement pursuant to the initiative. As part of the agreement, federal dollars are dedicated to increase fisheries law enforcement efforts and compliance with federal fishery regulations along coastal Alabama and the Gulf of Mexico. Fisheries resources are cooperatively protected, managed, and conserved by state and federal governments. The MRD enforcement section received \$1,300,000.00 as part of the agreement. The money was used to purchase two offshore vessels, and surveillance equipment that will be strategically located in coastal Alabama. Additionally, it provided funding to increase patrol hours for MRD officers.

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue to develop mechanisms to improve the public outreach efforts to better communicate enforcement efforts and important information.
- Continue to develop procedures to enhance the Joint Enforcement Agreement with NOAA, assure that such

**2005-2006
MARINE RESOURCES
LAW ENFORCEMENT
STATISTICS**

Routine Boat and Shore Patrol	17,298.5 Hours
Boat Checks	14,458
Seafood Shop Inspections	1,753
Recreational Fisherman Checks.....	30,606
Citations and Warnings	1,495 Total
<i>Recreational Fishing Laws</i>	
	37% (553)
<i>Commercial Fishing Laws</i>	
	28% (413)
<i>Boater Safety Laws.....</i>	
	28% (339)
<i>Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.....</i>	
	3% (62)
<i>Other State and Federal Laws.....</i>	
	4% (128)
Administrative Duties, Court Attendance, Training and Equipment Maintenance.....	14,634 Hours
National Marine Fisheries Services Interjurisdictional Fisheries Enforcement Program.....	2,415 Hours

agreements are implemented in future years, and seek long term funding for agreements.

- Work with other Gulf States and the National Marine Fisheries Service to implement the Gulf-wide strategic fisheries enforcement plan.
- Continue to develop procedures and provide officers with training to enhance Homeland Defense activities.
- Continue to foster efforts to allow the prosecution of violations in federal waters in the District Court System in Alabama.

MARINE RESOURCES FISHERIES

The Fisheries Section will continue to collect appropriate data and work with recreational and commercial fishermen and other resource user groups to provide Division administrators with recommendations for strategies and regulations for management.

FISHERIES SECTION

The activities of the Fisheries Section are directed toward management of commercial and recreational fisheries in Alabama's marine and estuarine waters. These activities involve cooperative efforts with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in nearshore Federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico and with other Gulf of Mexico state agencies to develop cooperative fisheries management programs. These activities are mostly funded through federal aid programs of the U. S. Departments of Commerce (NOAA/NMFS) and Interior (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service). Biological programs not covered by federal aid such as fish kill evaluation, oyster management, shrimp management efforts, and pollution investigations are supported by commercial and recreational license fees. The Section personnel also assist in oversight of natural gas activities within Alabama's coastal waters, territorial sea, and adjacent federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico and comment on applications for U.S. Army Corps of Engineer permits in the coastal area.

Fisheries facilities consist of the CPMC in Gulf Shores and the MRD Laboratory on Dauphin Island. Personnel consist of one Biologist V, one Biologist IV, one Biologist III, four Biologist II's, one Biologist I, five Biologist Aide III's, thirteen Biologist Aides I/II's, and two temporary laborers.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The seventh year of a cooperative project with Auburn University has resulted in refined techniques for raising shrimp in ponds. These will be used to enhance the production of shrimp in the shrimp farms of north central Alabama.

The Alabama Marine Resources Division entered a joint venture with Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (NEP) to launch a new volunteer monitoring program, CrabWatch. CrabWatch is an effort to collect

capture data from the recreational crab fishery and incidentally monitor for invasive species. Currently, 37 volunteers are participating in this program collecting length, sex and mortality data for individual crabs. Identification and enumeration of bycatch is also compiled; data on invasive aquatic nuisance species is verified by AMRD staff. All volunteer data is submitted to NEP for synthesis. AMRD provides technical support for species identification and reviews data for trends.

Biologists from the Division continue to participate in the Alabama Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force created in conjunction with the Department of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries and authorized by the Governor's Executive Order. This group encompasses all state agencies with interest in or regulation of aquatic nuisance species. The goal of this task force is to produce an Aquatic Nuisance Species Response Plan by the end of 2006.

A total of 104 new concrete and steel pyramid reefs were deployed in a grid fashion offshore in Alabama's reef areas. This brings the total deployment of these specially fabricated modules to 451. These reef modules are about ten feet tall, weigh about 5,000 pounds each, and are covered on each side with perforated plate steel up to one inch thick. The modules were distributed from east to west and shallow to deep to spread out the fishing effort over the widest possible area. Material shortages due to the storms protracted the contract effort. Another 125 modules will be deployed in early 2006.

The initial effort to create new inshore fishery habitat in south Baldwin County was undertaken. Hurricane Ivan destroyed the Gulf State Park Lodge, and from the demolition, rubble has been made available for reefing. The pool deck and seawall were in the way of the beach renourishment project, so they were removed and used to start Bayou St. John Reef in Orange Beach. The clean concrete slabs were placed in the southwestern third of the nearly six-acre reef. The reef will be completed as the rest of the lodge comes down. Signs marking reef locations that were destroyed by the hurricanes have been replaced.

During the year, 841 fisheries assessment samples were taken. This data is part of a long-term database that lets managers review the populations of lower trophic level species to detect any changes before they reach the recreational and commercial important species. A total of 50 habitat assessments were performed, and 4,026 fishermen were interviewed during creel surveys.

The success of the electronic trip ticket computer program continues to grow. Currently 28 Alabama seafood dealers are actively using this program. These dealers contribute substantial amounts of landings data to MRD. The computer program allows seafood dealers to enter landings and trip information from commercial fishermen

and submit it electronically on a monthly basis.

During the past fiscal year, AMRD processed and submitted trip ticket data from 28,827 commercial trips reporting over 32.7 million pounds of seafood worth over \$48 million.

Following Hurricane Katrina, AMRD biologists worked with economists with NOAA Fisheries and the University of South Alabama to estimate losses to the seafood industry. The finished report is anticipated to be used to acquire financial aid for Alabama's struggling seafood industry. Losses to Alabama's seafood industry were calculated at \$112,250,000 in direct losses with additional potential losses of \$61,135,000 from defaulted personal loans.

During 2006, AMRD staff participated in four large outreach events in Alabama in an effort to inform and educate the public about Alabama's marine environment. Saltwater "touch tables" were set up at each event to allow children, both young and old, the opportunity to interact with and learn about marine animals commonly found in Alabama's waters. Literature concerning rules and regulations, calendars, posters, and other important issues was distributed. Children enjoyed the opportunity to color and complete activity books found in our children's art section. The events included the four-day Mobile Boat Show, the Department's Expo at Oak Mountain State Park, a one-day Conservation Expo at Historic Blakely State Park, and the one-day Conservation Bird Festival at Fairhope.

MRD hosted three youth fishing days at Claude Peteet Mariculture Center in 2006. A total of 31 children from Baldwin county were given the opportunity to fish in one of CPMC's ponds stocked with red drum 12-16" in size. Nearly all of the children caught fish, some for the first time in their lives. In addition to fishing, the children were given a tour of the hatchery operations at CPMC which included red snapper brood stock and juveniles, and the injection and algae rooms. Approximately 500 juvenile red drum 12-14" long, were donated by Auburn University for the purpose of restocking the pond at CPMC that is used in the public outreach program that enables children to be exposed to a fishing experience.

Portersville Bay oyster reefs were opened to dredging beginning on October 1, 2005 and remained open through January. Mid-bay oyster areas were opened the last week of May and remained open through mid-June. Buoy Reef was opened from mid-June through the end of July. Dredging activity was closely monitored and the dredges allowed were restricted to a certain type. The activity was successful as 14,286.5 sacks were harvested from Portersville Bay on 1,068 trips, 664 sacks were taken from the mid-bay on 54 trips, and 3,028 sacks were harvested from Bouy Reef on 258 trips.

FEDERAL AID

Wallop/Breaux: Wallop/Breaux funds are administered through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Funds used from this source by the MRD were directed toward a creel survey of Alabama's saltwater recreational anglers, production of the 2006 edition of the popular Alabama Marine Information Calendar, production of the new children's coastal conservation art calendar, construction of artificial fishing reefs in the Gulf of Mexico off Alabama, maintaining equipment and facilities in Gulf Shores and Dauphin Island, managing the public artificial fishing reef permit system in the Gulf of Mexico off Alabama, assisting individuals in designing artificial reefs, conducting mariculture research on red snapper, maintaining and enhancing boat ramps for boating access, conducting a study of the attraction of juvenile red snapper to small patch reefs, sampling coastal Alabama fishes to determine stock status, and testing various offshore artificial reef modules with respect to attractant qualities and durability. An additional project to coordinate all federal aid programs within the MRD and coordinate with other Gulf states was also funded from this source.

Personnel also revised the Alabama Marine Resources Activity Book, which provides an interactive format for educating elementary students about the life cycles and habits of local organisms.

Fisheries Assessment and Monitoring Program: Alabama's MRD continues to collect legacy data through the FAMP program. This program provides a contiguous database of fishes and invertebrates since 1981. This sampling monitors trends in fishes and invertebrates not necessarily targeted by commercial or recreational fishermen but providing forage for higher trophic levels. In 2006, 280 trawls, 66 seines and 77 beam plankton trawls were collected.

Adult Finfish Sampling Program: Alabama's MRD continues a fishery independent gillnet sampling program. The objective is to gather data on adult fish to be used in the management of important species. Sampling is being conducted through the use of two gillnet configurations and a stratified random design. A total of 212 net sets were conducted out of a target of 240. The program collected 8,139 fish representing six freshwater and 46 marine species. An assessment of the striped mullet stocks was submitted to the director.

MARINE RESOURCES

An experimental oyster dredging harvest was continued in Portersville Bay in the winter of 2006. The success of this effort led to the opening of additional reefs in Mobile Bay. There were 1,068 trips made to Portersville Bay reefs from October 2005-January 2006, 54 trips to mid-bay oyster areas in the summer of 2006, and 258 trips made to Buoy reef in the summer of 2006. The mid-bay and Buoy reef are areas that have been utilized sparingly by the tonging fishery in recent years.

MARINE RESOURCES FISHERIES

The seventh year of a cooperative project with Auburn University has resulted in refined techniques for raising shrimp in ponds. These will be used to enhance the production of shrimp in the shrimp farms of west central Alabama.

Cooperative Statistics: Federal aid funds for this program are administered by the Department of Commerce (NOAA Fisheries) and are utilized by the MRD to collect shery-dependent data on commercial shrimp, oyster, crab and n sh landings. Additionally, information on processed seafood such as crab meat and mullet is compiled. Biological information was collected on striped mullet, ounder, Spanish mackerel, grouper, and red snapper. Commercial seafood license data was forwarded to NOAA Fisheries under this grant.

Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP): Funds from this program are administered by the Department of Commerce (NOAA/NMFS) and are utilized in Alabama for the development of a long term shery-independent data base on recreationally and commercially important marine and estuarine shery stocks. This project provides funds to assist in management of the Alabama shrimp shery and evaluate spawning success and juvenile survival for important recreational and commercial species.

Inshore Roving Creel Survey: The survey uses non-uniform probability roving creel sampling based on aerial over ight counts to sample the marine recreational shery in coastal Alabama. Goals of the survey include characterization of Alabama's coastal recreational boat shers and their catch. Biological information from shermen's catch are helpful for deterring health of sh stocks.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

The Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS): Funding for this project is provided through a subgrant from the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission. The National Marine Fisheries Service utilizes this survey to gather catch and e ort information on a trip level for shore, charter and private boat anglers throughout the United States. Data generated from the survey is used by sheries managers throughout it's scope of coverage. MRD has a subcontract to conduct the portion of MRFSS which collects data from anglers after they have completed their shing trips and interview charter boat captains for e ort. Division personnel completed 2,200 shermen interviews for Fiscal Year 2006.

Otolith Sampling Program: Funding for this project is provided through a subgrant from the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission. Alabama's MRD continued collection of otoliths

(ear stones) primarily from red snapper, greater amberjack, king mackerel, and southern and gulf ounder caught by commercial and recreational shermen. Otoliths are used to age sh, important information used to determine the health of sh stocks. A total of 1,853 otoliths were collected in FY 2006.

Commercial Trip Ticket Program: Funding for this program is provided through the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC). This program is part of a Gulf-wide e ort to generate more speci c information for each commercial shery by collecting landings and e ort data from each shing trip. Trip tickets are printed in triplicate form and supplied to Alabama seafood dealers. Seafood dealers are required to complete the trip ticket for each transaction. An alternative form of submission is through an electronic entry program which allows seafood dealers to enter landings and trip information and submit it via the Internet on a monthly basis. Data from the completed trip tickets are scanned into a computer, veri ed and edited. Monthly data is sent to the GSMFC and will ultimately be supplied to NOAA Fisheries.

Hurricane Ivan Relief Funds: Funds obtained by the Marine Resources Division in the aftermath of the damage caused by Hurricane Ivan were used to plant 26,242 cubic yards of oyster cultch in the summer and fall of 2006. A total of 8,995 yards was planted in shallow area in Heron bay. A total of 17,247 cubic yards of cultch was planted along the western edge of Cedar Point Reef and along Pass-A-Bar.

Emergency Storm Recovery Funding: Late in the scal year, MRD worked with legislators, the Commissioner of Conservation, and neighboring state agencies to secure roughly \$29 million in NOAA shery recovery funds. The moneys are to be used to cleanup and restore oyster and shrimp grounds a ected by recent hurricanes, and to monitor the recovery of associated sheries over the next ve years.

At-Sea Head Boat Pilot Survey: Funding for this project is provided through a subgrant from the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission. This pilot program was initiated to determine the e eciency and e ectiveness of this program compared to an existing logbook program which had mandatory reporting requirements from the head boat operators. The pilot program was conducted to see if the estimates of catch and harvest were comparable to those estimates from the logbook survey while reducing the reporting burden for the captains.

NON-FEDERAL AID

Biological and enforcement personnel worked together to collect data at oyster checkpoints, enabling the development of sound management measures for sustaining the oyster resources. Data collected assisted in increasing the accuracy of assessment of the status of Alabama oyster stocks.

Personnel maintained and improved the home web page for the Division, which is associated with and accessed through the Departmental home page at www.outdooralabama.com. The feedback to this site has been extremely positive and has proven to be a tremendous asset in getting information and assistance to the public.

FUTURE PLANS

- The Fisheries Section will continue to collect appropriate data and work with recreational and commercial fishermen and other resource user groups to provide Division administrators with recommendations for strategies and regulations for management.
- Development of mariculture procedures for commercially and recreationally important marine organisms will continue. Cooperative projects will continue to be initiated with Auburn University, the Dauphin Island Sealab, and the University of South Alabama. This will be enhanced by the rebuilding of the saltwater supply pipeline from the Gulf State Park in Gulf Shores to CPMC. The Fisheries Section will produce larvae of commercially and recreationally important species for use in experiments by the Dauphin Island Sea Lab.
- Cooperative projects will continue to be initiated with Auburn University, the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, and the University of South Alabama to investigate artificial reef benefits and red snapper production enhancement. The Division will continue to construct inshore and offshore artificial reefs as materials and funding allow.
- Inshore assessment and monitoring work will be continued monthly in order to provide a more comprehensive depiction of Alabama's marine waters and resources.
- Continuation of the MRFSS in Alabama to include creels of anglers on charter boats, private boats, and shoreline and to continue the telephone survey to better define effort within the charter fishery.

- Continue collecting Alabama commercial seafood landings data via Alabama's Trip Ticket Program and to continue the collection of commercial biological fishery dependent data.
- Continuation of cooperative offshore reef creation effort with the Red Snapper World Championship organization.
- Resurfacing Cotton Bayou boat ramp parking lot.

State Lands Division

The State Lands
Division (SLD) manages
undeveloped, state-owned
trust lands that are specific
as to their identity as well as
to the income beneficiary.

The State Lands Division (SLD) manages undeveloped, state-owned trust lands that are specific as to their identity as well as to the income beneficiary. The lands are currently identified as Sixteenth Section and Indemnity School Lands of approximately 30,000 acres; approximately 7,000 acres of Mental Health/Mental Retardation Department trust lands; Muscle Shoals Grant Lands of approximately 8,000 acres; and other lands, including submerged lands (inland and coastal) of approximately 600,000 acres. In addition, the SLD manages certain resources on University of Montevallo, Auburn University and Department of Transportation lands. Resource uses include oil and gas exploration and development, timber harvesting, farming, coal mining, hunting leases and commercial uses.

The SLD maintains the State Land Resource Information Center, which is the database of all lands owned by the State of Alabama and its departments, agencies and institutions. These records reflect lands acquired, owned, managed or disposed of by all state agencies and institutions. Records are submitted by each agency, checked against individual county tax assessment records and entered into the division's Geographic Information System database.

The Forever Wild Public Land Acquisition Program is managed by the SLD at the direction of the program's Board of Trustees. Division personnel provide administrative support including coordination of the assessment and appraisal process, purchase negotiations, land purchase transactions, budget preparation and annual reporting to the governor and legislature.

The SLD conducts sales of excess state lands pursuant to the State Land Sales and Leasing Act. This law establishes a procedure aimed at assuring that the state receives full fair market value for lands that it sells or leases and that the procedure is open, competitive and subject to public scrutiny.

Alabama's official natural heritage database is maintained by the SLD. Animal and plant species and areas of biological significance that make up the rich natural diversity of our state are identified and inventoried. This effort provides important biological information to conservation organizations, developers, governmental agencies and the public in general. It also complements the goals of Forever Wild.

The SLD fosters conservation education and research through programs offered at the Wehle Nature Centers in Bullock County and Baldwin County, the Weeks Bay Reserve in Baldwin County and the Foster Wetland Conservation Tract in Mobile County.

The SLD conducts coastal resource management and planning through the Alabama Coastal Area Management Program (ACAMP). The ACAMP purpose is to promote, improve and safeguard the lands and waters located in Alabama's coastal area through a comprehensive and cooperative program designed to preserve, enhance and develop such

valuable resources for the well-being of present and future generations. This program works in cooperation with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, and is federally funded by the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the Department of Commerce. This function complements the Division's responsibilities for management of submerged lands.

The SLD implements the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) for the State of Alabama. The CIAP is a federally funded program under NOAA designed to mitigate for impacts from Outer Continental Shelf activities. Specifically, the State of Alabama CIAP is comprised of 35 projects, approved by the Governor and the Secretary of Commerce, aimed at conserving and enhancing natural resources in the two coastal counties – Baldwin and Mobile. The SLD administers all contracts associated with CIAP and coordinates closely with NOAA to ensure program compliance.

The SLD coordinated the Department's environmental review and comment process through the management of the Department's environmental review and comment database.

The SLD manages these responsibilities through three sections: Administrative, Natural Heritage and Coastal.

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Processed numerous nominations for sales and leases of state-owned land pursuant to the provisions of the State Land Sales and Leasing Act. Included in this activity was trust land leased for purposes of hunting.
- Processed requests for oil, gas and mineral leases on state-owned lands including submerged water bottoms.
- Supported statewide educational activities through sales of timber on school trust lands managed by the Division.
- Implemented, permitted and monitored a now completed beach nourishment project for Gulf State Park in conjunction with the municipalities of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach.
- Processed five federal land acquisition grants totaling \$5.9 million, in support of the Forever Wild Program.
- Administered the Forever Wild Land Trust program and facilitated the acquisition of the following seven tracts of land around the State totaling 11,115 acres:

STATE LANDS DIVISION

Sources of Receipts	Total Income
Commercial Leases	\$80,129
Oil and Gas Leases (Royalties)	\$356,613,332
8(g) Payments (Federal offshore shares)	\$18,147,059
Timber Sales	\$610,230
Coal Leases	\$684,174
Coal Gas	\$784,298
Misc., Easements, Fees and Permits	\$1,403,420
TOTAL	\$378,322,642

Distribution of State Lands Division Receipts

Alabama Trust Fund	\$369,399,910
Department of Education	\$23,270
School Trust Lands	\$1,481,553
Auburn University	\$6,486
Mental Health/ Mental Retardation Department	\$80,295
Department of Conservation	
State Lands Division	\$6,143,230
State Parks Division	\$25,231
Marine Resources	\$1,719
Other State Agencies	
Forestry Commission	\$12,178
Department of Transportation	\$511,498
Historical Commission	\$418,966
Forever Wild	\$218,306
TOTAL	\$378,322,642

- Perdido River Longleaf Hills Tract (Baldwin County) 3,988 acres;
- Mobile-Tensaw Delta Coastal Land Trust Addition Tracts (Baldwin and Mobile Counties) 1,533 acres;
- Coldwater Mountain – Rowan Tract (Calhoun County) 20 acres;
- Bayou Sara Tract (Mobile County) 684 acres;
- Post Oak Flat Tract (Jackson County) 3,656 acres;
- Certain Tract (Madison County) 340 acres; and
- Lillian Swamp West Tract (Baldwin County) 894 acres.
- Continued the planning and implementation of recreational programs on Forever Wild Tracts.
 - Maintained existing horseback riding and hiking trails, opened new hiking trails and initiated planning of future horseback riding and hiking trails at the Walls of Jericho Forever Wild Tract in Jackson County.
 - Maintained existing horseback riding and hiking trails at Shoal Creek Preserve Forever Wild Tract in Lauderdale County.
 - Maintained existing horseback riding and mountain bike trails at the Wehle Forever Wild Tract in Bullock County.
 - Completed parking lots to provide public access at the Grand Bay Savanna, Splinter Hill Bog and Lillian Swamp Forever Wild Tracts in Baldwin and Mobile counties.
 - Continued the management of the Bartram Canoe Trail.
 - Maintenance and monitoring of the trail system.
 - The various boating platforms were reserved 44 nights during this reporting fiscal year.
- Began planning activities associated with a newly authorized Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP). Accomplishments include:
 - Commenting on CIAP program federal guidelines.
 - Coordinating with the minerals management service for program development.
 - Coordinated with the two coastal counties regarding program development.
- Coordinated Departmental activities relating to the Natural Resource Damage Assessment program including site inspections and participation in Natural Resource Trustee Council meetings.
- Initiated planning activities related to the **3rd Annual Alabama Outdoor Heritage Day**.
- Conducted the **1st Annual Plant Festival** at the Wehle Land Conservation Center in Midway, Alabama.
- Completed construction of four restroom facilities at the Wehle Land Conservation Center in Midway, Alabama.
- Provided 41 public education and/or recreation opportunities at the Wehle Nature Center and the Wehle Land Conservation Center in Midway, Alabama.
- Staff assisted in the coordination of several education opportunities at the Minkin Fossil Site.
- Staff constructed trails and conducted the removal of thirty acres of exotic plant species (Chinese tallow tree) from the 5 Rivers Delta Resource Facility.
- Staff conducted oversight of construction activities at the 5 Rivers Delta Resource Facility.
- Initiated sponsorship and planning activities for the **3rd Annual Coastal Birdfest**.
- Responded to numerous requests from agencies and the public regarding information contained in the Land Resource Information Center (LRIC) database. Staff also worked with a number of state agencies to update information regarding state land ownership.
 - Coordinated the development and implemented the addition of a link to the LRIC database for public and agency use on the Department's web page.
- Field staff continued routine land management activities including boundary marking, timber cruising, prescribed burning, exotic treatment and law enforcement.

NATURAL HERITAGE SECTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

**STATE LANDS DIVISION
COASTAL SECTION**

Worked with the five Gulf States to form a Gulf of Mexico Alliance, as called for in the President's U.S. Ocean Action Plan. The alliance developed a Governor's Action Plan for healthy and resilient coasts (to view this report, go to: www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org).

- Designs are underway to begin maintaining the Natural Heritage Section (NHS) Database in a sequel server format that will increase accessibility. The database is currently composed of 350,000 records.
- State biologists continued collecting detailed GPS/GIS data of the Forever Wild tracts to aid with the management and research of these tracts. Management action implementation included prescribed burns, sensitive species re-introduction, and hydrology restoration.
- Monitoring of trail planning to maximize public opportunity to appreciate Alabama's rich biodiversity while protecting unique natural resources on the Walls of Jericho Forever Wild Tract. These trails will soon be available for public use.
- Personnel completed field work on an ACAMP \$50,000 grant to develop a baseline of the biodiversity of Lillian Swamp, and implanted wetland restoration actions at the Weeks bay reserve and Lillian Swamp as a part of a Baldwin County wetland restoration project with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.
- Personnel completed extensive field surveys in cooperation with two Alabama universities in the Cumberland Plateau as a part of a \$250,000 federal research grant from the State Wildlife Grant Program through the Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.
- State assisted in the preparation of a Forest Legacy Program grant applications funding for a tract within the Mobile-Tensaw Delta (N.Q. Adams).
- State assisted in the preparation of a Coastal Estuarine Land Conservation Program grant applications funding for an area in Baldwin County that would assist in linking the Perdido River System with the Mobile Tensaw Delta.
- Personnel continued implementation of task items associated with the state's Coastal Impact and Assistance Program.
- State continued the process of reviewing new Forever Wild land nominations for biological diversity, ascertaining the status of all tract nomination's availability, and providing this information for Forever Wild meetings during the past year.
- State supplied information from the NHS database, along with

numerous maps and other GIS products, in an effort to improve thorough review of development projects within the state.

- State continued active partnership with federal agencies including conducting BBS routes.
- The NHS botanist completed a flora of the Coon Creek Forever Wild Tract.
- NHS state continued routine biodiversity survey work on Forever Wild tracts including documenting some crayfish species range extensions.
- NHS state implemented a Gopher Tortoise restoration project on the Wehle Forever Wild Tract.

COASTAL SECTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

ALABAMA COASTAL AREA MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

- Worked with the five Gulf States to form a Gulf of Mexico Alliance, as called for in the President's U.S. Ocean Action Plan. The alliance developed a Governor's Action Plan for healthy and resilient coasts (to view this report, go to: www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org).
- Worked with various government organizations on the development and inventory of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), including the Baldwin County Commission to acquire the most recent 2006 aerial photos and LiDar dataset of Baldwin County and the NOAA Coastal Services Center and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to host two Intro to GIS training sessions in Mobile, Ala.
- Continued to work with the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) in the implementation of the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan, including participation in the MBNEP Coastal Habitat Coordinating Team to develop a plan for the long range protection and preservation of pristine coastal habitat.
- Conducted the 19th Annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup in which approximately 3000 volunteers cleaned 250 miles of Alabama's coastal shoreline and removed 80,000 pounds of marine debris. State continued the monthly National Debris Monitoring surveys at Fort Morgan as part of a program sponsored by The Ocean Conservancy.

- Continued to work with local governments to update comprehensive and hazard mitigation plans and zoning, subdivision and local resource protection ordinances.
 - Worked with the Natural Heritage Section to submit a grant application to NOAA for the Coastal Estuarine Land Conservation Program. This grant will be used in conjunction with the Forever Wild Program to acquire pristine lands in the coastal area.
 - Continued to work with the Gulf of Mexico Foundation and Program and other Gulf States on a Community Restoration Program to restore and enhance coastal habitats.
 - Continued to work with the Alabama Gulf Coast Convention and Visitors Bureau on important coastal projects including a Sustainable Tourism Initiative, Scenic Byways Program and Sea Turtle Volunteer Program.
 - Reviewed numerous U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and ADEM permits for impacts to State submerged lands.
 - Continued to fund research studies in the coastal area. The following were funded:
 - The South Baldwin County Groundwater Study (University of Alabama)
 - The Fort Morgan Groundwater Study, Phase II (University of Alabama)
 - Historical Water Chemistry of Choccolatta Bay & Mobile Bay (The University of Alabama)
 - Trophic Dynamics of Created Salt Marsh (Dauphin Island Sea Lab)
 - Alabama Coastal Observing System (Dauphin Island Sea Lab)
 - Effects of Oyster Restoration on the Quality of Alabama Coastal Waters (Dauphin Island Sea Lab)
 - Little Lagoon as an Incubator Site for the Harmful Bloom-Forming Diatom, *Pseudo-nitzschia* sp. (Dauphin Island Sea Lab)
 - Post-Storm Seagrass Monitoring and Robinson Island Restoration Efforts (Dauphin Island Sea Lab)
 - Wading Bird Breeding Survey (Dauphin Island Sea Lab).
 - Continued to fund public access construction and design projects. The following were funded:
 - Perdido Bay Park Boardwalk (Baldwin County)
 - Alonzo Landing Pier (Town of Dauphin Island)
 - Orange Beach Canoe Trail Access Points (City of Orange Beach)
 - Pier Street Beach and Boat Ramps Restrooms (City of Fairhope)
 - 5 Rivers, Alabama's Delta Resource Center PowerBoat Dock and Walking Trails (State Lands Division)
- WEEKS BAY NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE**
- Completed long range planning document for Reserve for next 20 years and a draft Management Plan.
 - Continued repairs and rebuilding of piers, docks, and laboratory due to hurricane damage.
 - Completed conceptual plans with engineers/architects to build two new buildings at the Fish River Marina site.
 - Facilitated the Reserve's 20th Anniversary celebration on Feb. 18, 2006.
 - Weeks Bay Film produced by Discovering Alabama and premiered on public television Aug. 20, 2006, with subsequent showings to follow.
 - Continued discussions with several landowners for possible acquisition purchases for the State of Alabama; received grant funds for purchase.
 - Reserve Interpretive Center visited by an estimated 23,000 visitors from 50 states and more than six countries.
- 12th Annual Plant sale held at Safe Harbor to promote landscaping with native plants.
 - Kid's Fishing Day held at Safe Harbor; over 250 young people participated.
 - Continued System-wide Monitoring Project (SWMP) and continued to coordinate with visiting researchers on various projects at the Reserve; Prepared regional report on hurricane effects as measured by SWMP equipment.
 - Continued educational programs for K-12 students in Baldwin County; over 3,500 students participated.
 - Constructed two wetland nursery beds at Safe Harbor site to grow freshwater plants for restoration projects; conducted dune restoration projects; removed exotic invasive species; planted pine trees.
 - Implemented marsh bird survey and historical ecology projects.
 - Provided boat tours for adults; produced boardwalk interpretive guide for visitors.
 - Held watershed workshops on docks and piers; managing visitor use in the coastal area; stormwater training; non-point source pollution, water quality and watersheds; stormwater runoff; watershed management; wetlands and realtors; and rain gardens.
 - Reviewed ADEM permit applications; performed ongoing mercury monitoring programs and monitored water quality.

State Parks Division

The State Parks
Division operates and
maintains 22 state
parks encompassing
approximately 48,000
acres of land and water
in Alabama.

The parks range from Gulf Coast beaches to Appalachian Mountains providing opportunities and facilities from basic day-use activities, to resort convention lodging, restaurant and golfing areas.

The mission of the Division is to acquire and preserve natural areas; to develop, furnish, operate and maintain recreational facilities; and to extend the public's knowledge of the state's natural environment.

The Division's goals are to manage and operate the State Parks system in an economically sound and efficient manner on the most self-sustaining basis possible; to provide and maintain high quality facilities and services to meet the needs of visitors; to provide an opportunity for personal growth and development of individuals through outdoor experiences; to promote use of State Parks facilities; to preserve unique natural features and integrity of State Parks for future generations; and to promote good will and enhance the public image of Alabama, and the Alabama State Parks through dedicated, courteous employees.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The division continued to operate and maintain 22 state parks serving more than 3 million guests annually on a constantly decreasing operational budget. Additional significant accomplishments were made in improving purchasing procedures, computer systems, operation and maintenance policies, financial management analysis, advertising and marketing, natural resource management and the continuous coordination, supervision and implementation of a comprehensive statewide, state parks renovations program.

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

Each of the 22 operational state parks has an internal park staff determined by size, development and operation of each area. Total employees for all parks vary from approximately 800 during peak season to approximately 600 during the off-season.

The Parks Division central office in Montgomery includes six sections: Administrative, Operations and Maintenance, Purchasing, Management Analysis, Natural Resources and Advertising/Marketing, and operates with 19 full-time and three part-time staff.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Lack of sufficient funds for total renovation and repair of aging facilities and replacement of worn out equipment as well

as basic operational needs is the major problem for State Parks. A source of steady funding to support facility maintenance and operations is the necessary solution to this problem. It is hoped that increased park utilization and revenue generated as stimulated by the progressing renovations will help this situation, but additional funding that keeps pace with increasing operating costs is required.

MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS SECTION

The responsibilities and functions of the Management Analysis Section are to provide general administrative direction and coordination for management control, administrative cost analysis, performance reporting, data processing, general accounting, budgeting, payables, receivables, and purchasing.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Section personnel received, processed and analyzed 2,184 performance reports for all state parks; prepared Park System Performance Reports as required by the Budget Management Act; received, processed and analyzed operations plans, budget reports and related reports; prepared Park System Operation Plans and fiscal year budgets; processed approximately \$39,619,890 in receipts and 16,745 payment vouchers; and disbursed approximately 32,092 warrants and payroll checks through and from the State Accounting System.

Section staff also continuously monitored data processing output, distributed it to statewide park cost centers, and monitored managerial audits as well as personnel actual versus budget for each state park. Management Analysis is continuing to work with Central Accounting Data Processing and developing detailed monthly financial statements as it relates to overall financial aspects of the State Parks System as well as specific operations. Management Analysis continued to revise resale inventory procedures to promote better accountability.

FUTURE PLANS

- Increase programming to streamline automated accounting at park level in order to monitor business and personnel.

- Continue to improve monthly financial reports generated through IT Data Processing to aid managers in making financial decisions relating to business and personnel.
- Analyze individual park facilities to determine the cost effectiveness.

NATURAL RESOURCES SECTION

The Natural Resources Section was created in 1982 to manage the natural, scientific and biological aspects of all State Park land and water areas. Administrative functions include managing, protecting and enhancing state parks' natural resources and providing opportunities for public access and enjoyment of natural resource areas via nature trails, environmental programs and special events. This section also coordinates in-house State Parks grants administration.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

State Parks are normally thought of as land and water areas, of some natural or scenic significance, set aside for public enjoyment. Thus, it is within this concept that the Natural Resources Section strives to provide opportunities for park guests to better understand and enjoy these various natural wonders. In this concept, many park guests are entertained and educated through interpretive recreational activity and environmental education programs each year. Interpretive naturalist programs are conducted at Gulf, Oak Mountain, DeSoto, and Lake Guntersville State Parks. In this effort Natural Resources personnel assisted with a variety of public outreach programs, audio-visual and live presentation programs on tree identification, waterfowl, songbirds, raptors and other environmental topics; updated hiking and nature trail maps; and assisted in upgrading trails at Oak Mountain State Park.

Natural Resources staff produced brochure and magazine materials, attended the 2006 State Park Naturalist Seminar, planned several Earth Day activities, maintained and improved the bi-weekly Park Naturalist Information Coordination Program, consulted with and served on boards of organizations, and implemented a plan to re-establish 128 acres of longleaf pine and the future enhancement of a pitcher plant/longleaf pine community at Gulf State Park.

Personnel expanded an introductory course in basic fire management in the spring for parks field personnel. Further planning toward establishing classes through the Wildland Fire Academy at

Oak Mountain State Park were finalized as were plans to establish prescribed burn areas in five other state parks. Section personnel also coordinated and conducted a variety of research programs pertaining to whitetailed deer over populations at Oak Mountain, Chewacla and Lake Guntersville, and assisted in conducting two deer population reduction public hunts at Oak Mountain State Park.

Natural Resources staff also participated in Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Nongame Wildlife program events, Forever Wild Land Acquisition evaluations, and National Fishing Day events. Staff also applied for and received grant funding extensions for beach habitat enhancement at Gulf State Park and Recreation Trails Program funds for Peavine Falls Trailhead and Eagle Trail at Oak Mountain State Park.

Natural Resources staff additionally coordinated the construction of three federally funded transient boat piers at Joe Wheeler State Park. Similar federal grant applications were prepared, submitted and approved for similar transient boat piers at Lakepoint Resort and Lake Guntersville State Parks, both to be constructed within the next 12 months.

Staff coordinated scientific collection permit requests for various park locations; aided in the Perdido Key Beach Mouse Study at Alabama Point and Gulf State Park; conducted fish management programs at park lakes; conducted aquatic vegetation reduction programs in various state park lakes; coordinated diseased timber removal statewide; assisted with forest insect and fungus research projects; conducted forest fire danger notification and suppression programs; and coordinated contract preparation, timber marking and removal following southern pine beetle damage at various state parks.

The Section also continued its successful timber management program designed to improve park recreational potential, forest health and improved wildlife habitat. In the past fiscal year, fuel reduction/wildlife habitat enhancement prescribe burns were completed in eight state parks and totaled 2,201 acres. In addition, timber stand improvement/wildlife habitat enhancement thinning and salvage operations were conducted in three parks that totaled 60 acres and generated \$76,312 in state park revenue. Tree planting initiatives on approximately 53 acres were also accomplished.

In 2004, Hurricane Ivan and in 2005 Hurricane Katrina had significant, devastating and prolonged impacts on the natural resources of Gulf State Park. As a result of these natural disasters, the Parks Natural Resource Section immediately began to evaluate the overall environmental damage. It has been determined that over 60 percent of the park vegetation (trees, woody understory, etc.) was

STATE PARKS NATURAL RESOURCES SECTIONS

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**STATE PARKS
NATURAL RESOURCES
SECTIONS**

**Manage healthy wildlife
populations compatible with
habitat carrying capacity
and enhance public wildlife
observation opportunities.**

either destroyed by wind, storm surge and/or saltwater intrusion into a normally freshwater environment. Additionally, it is anticipated that the prolonged effect of the saltwater intrusion will continue to kill vegetation for an undetermined period. One of the most immediate and detrimental problems encountered was that the storm killed, compressed and added to the pre-existing understory additional debris and vegetation resulting in a 65 to 80 percent increase in forest fuels susceptible to wildfire. With funding from an EPA grant, planning and coordination from the Parks Natural Resource Planner and assistance from Park staff, Forestry Commission staff, Lands Division staff, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff and both the Gulf Shores and Orange Beach Fire Departments, we were able to establish the necessary fire lanes to burn 566 acres between December 2004 and April 2005. Subsequently, 2.7 miles of wet fire lanes have been cleared and 3.5 miles of dry fire lanes have been marked to push. Also, many impacted park trails, rights of way and walkways have been marked/cleared under FEMA contract. Additional work continued into FY 2005-06 beginning with the planned prescribe burn of a 455-acre area north of the campground to reduce the wildfire potential in that public use area. Additional environmental concerns and actions will continue for years to come to repair the damage from these natural disasters. Also, as a result of the hurricanes damage, the Natural Resource Section has planned a detailed campground and longleaf pine planting/restoration planting program for Gulf State Park.

Natural Resources personnel reviewed and commented on hundreds of environmental compliance permit requests and reviewed and approved numerous collection permit applications where appropriate. Land encroachment, boundary line disputes/discrepancies and conflicts are handled continuously. In this effort, the section continues to upgrade Alabama State Parks deed files to establish procedures to maintain verified boundaries. Trapping and relocation of giant Canada Geese also continues, as necessary, in various State Parks.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

The section continues to face the problem of insufficient funding for serious problems such as correcting lake siltation at numerous parks, expanding the environmental education program, constructing much-needed nature centers, conducting whitetail deer overpopulation research programs and initiating a greatly needed and long overdue park boundary survey and marking program. Funds have not been available for these projects, and solutions are still being sought.

FUTURE PLANS

- Expand environmental education and interpretative facilities, activities and staff as needs and funds justify.
- Recommend construction of a nature center at Lake Guntersville; redesign Oak Mountain's nature center; add an interpretive program and possible facility at Joe Wheeler State Park, continue construction of natural habitat exhibits, and expand the nature center at Gulf State Park.
- Increase special winter events.
- Expand park timber and understory plant management to improve wildlife habitat carrying capacity, park aesthetics and timber production capability.
- Manage healthy wildlife populations compatible with habitat carrying capacity and enhance public wildlife observation opportunities.
- Manage aquatic programs for environmental quality and public enjoyment.
- Facilitate more training opportunities for parks' field personnel in wildland fire behavior and prescription burn practices.
- Seek greater awareness of State Parks through articles in magazines and other publications.
- Produce trail maps and natural resource management brochures and increase public communication to strengthen environmental responsibility among park guests.
- Explore the possibility of collecting field data through Geographical Information Systems to enable State Parks to more adequately inventory natural resources and produce color-coded maps of significant importance.

**OPERATIONS AND
MAINTENANCE SECTION**

The Operations and Maintenance Section provides daily supervision for park managers and superintendents to ensure that more than 3 million annual park visitors enjoy high quality recreation facilities and services. The Operations and Maintenance Section staff log many hours in the field inspecting facilities and equipment, investigating complaints and providing guidance to field personnel.

Section personnel reviewed, approved and forwarded to the personnel section more than 600 hourly employee personnel action

forms. Six merit system positions were filled after interviews and recommendations from the Operations and Maintenance Section.

Law enforcement training was conducted and coordinated by the operations staff for 40 state park officers.

More than 900 accident/incident/offense and arrest reports were submitted by the parks to this section for review and analysis.

Section staff investigated and made recommendations on 41 Board of Adjustment Claims that were filed against the State Parks Division. The section staff represented the Parks Division at Board of Adjustment hearings and testified concerning these claims before the Board.

Park Operations personnel worked closely with Department of Finance auditors and departmental Property Inventory and State Parks staff to complete a statewide on-site audit of 5,187 inventory items valued at \$14,156,099. The Operation Section processes the transfer, addition and deletion of inventory items.

Recovery continues at Gulf and Meaher State Parks from damages incurred from the September 15, 2004 landfall of Hurricane Ivan and the August 29, 2005 landfall of Hurricane Katrina. The insurance settlement for Gulf State Park was reached in August after an extensive arbitration process. Numerous collective man-hours of Operations Staff and Gulf State Park Staff were invested in collecting the required data. A minimal number of additional insurance claims were filed in 2006. Fortunately, no additional damages from hurricanes have occurred.

Significant changes to insurance coverage are in place for FY2007. Most notable are changes to reduce the deductible from \$5,000 to \$500 for Alabama State Parks Division. Additional changes to coverage for the division, stipulate that contents coverage is now determined individually by park. Continual review of insurance coverage is ongoing by Operations Staff to insure that adequate coverage is maintained on 824 Alabama State Parks structures.

The section staff continues an ongoing relationship with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Operations Staff attended a November meeting at Gulf State Park with FEMA and Alabama EMA. Demolition of the Hurricane Ivan destroyed Gulf Lodge and Hotel began in December 2006 after delay for an asbestos remediation process.

The FEMA sheltering program for Hurricane Katrina and Rita evacuees was concluded in Alabama State Parks in the spring of 2006. This joint effort coordinated with Operations Staff and the Alabama State Parks Division, provided a total of 1,886 sites and housed more than 600 evacuees displaced by Hurricane Katrina. In April 2006 FEMA

began providing alternative housing for the remaining evacuees housed within Alabama State Parks.

An equipment inspection and evaluation program is conducted by Operations Staff to determine equipment needs and priorities for the Alabama State Parks Division. This process has largely been on hold in 2006 because of the time required to collect data for the Gulf State Park arbitration process and other insurance related issues. The equipment inspection was accomplished in 2006 in some parks, however.

The section staff supervises a 17-man construction crew composed of a supervisor, carpenter supervisor, electricians, masons, and carpenters. The crew works on large and small projects in all parks that require more manpower or skill than is available at the park level. The Operation Section staff is involved in pre-construction meetings with architects planning renovation projects currently in progress and others already completed. The State Park Operations and Maintenance Section Staff and Construction Crew worked on or completed the following projects in 2006.

DeSoto – Ten new log cabins were built by a contractor. The construction crew installed the sewer lines and pumps for these cabins.

Cathedral Caverns – Electrical lines were dug up and moved and 21 path lights were installed in the new entrance to the cave. The road to the maintenance was rebuilt after being washed out.

Cheaha – A new sewer system was installed for the lower picnic and campground. The system consisted of 1,000 feet of field lines, a 1,000 gallon tank and two pumps.

Chewacla – The crew completed a project to install 1,000 feet of 6-foot fence around a sink hole area in the park.

Floral – The 23 campsites had new 50-amp electrical and TV cable hookups installed and five new campsites were built. New wooden boarders and gravel will be installed this winter.

Gulf – A project to repair and renovate the eleven campground bathhouses continues. The bath houses will have all new tile, partitions and fixtures. A 6-by 60-foot pier was built in the picnic area. A picnic area restroom that was flooded by Hurricane Katrina was repaired. A 20-by 40-foot concrete block entrance booth was built in the parking lot at the new beach pavilion. The activity building is being rebuilt after hurricane damage, in the campground.

Guntersville – A 6-by 90-foot pier with a 50-foot “T” was built in the Town Creek day use area.

Meaher – The park office, sewage lift station, campsites and maintenance shop were repaired after being destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

Lakepoint – Two shower stalls were installed in two of the three bedroom, one bath cottages. The roof was replaced on a 14-by 32 -foot golf course building. The pool skimmer and tile were repaired at the lodge pool.

Monte Sano – An 8-by 24-foot entrance building was built at the park entrance.

Oak Mountain – The two 20-by 40-foot pavilions with restrooms on the golf course have been renovated. The pavilion portion open ceiling was closed in and the restrooms were completely renovated to make them handicapped accessible.

Paul M. Grist – The roof and a window was replaced on the park manager’s staff house.

Rickwood – A new central gas heater was installed in the park office and snack bar.

Joe Wheeler – The crew dug up and repaired the pool plumbing and pump motor at the lodge. Sheet rock and tile were repaired in two campground bath houses.

Wind Creek – A 20-by 40-foot camping cabin, with a 14-by 20-foot deck was completed in the campground. This is the fourth camping cabin built by the parks statewide construction crew. A 6-by 60-foot pier was built in front of this cabin.

STATE PARKS PROMOTIONS

The Alabama State Parks Promotions Section was created in 1983 to coordinate the overall advertising, marketing and promotional efforts of the Alabama State Parks system. The section currently employs three people in the Montgomery office. Administrative functions include coordination of radio and television public service announcements; preparation and distribution

of promotional literature; coordination of print and photographic material for magazines, campground directories, and newspaper articles; cooperation and coordination with the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel, chambers of commerce, convention and visitors bureaus, tourist associations and special events promoters; evaluation of advertising opportunities; purchasing of advertising space; production of ads and advertising materials; assistance with individual State Parks promotional efforts; participation in travel shows, sport and boat shows, special events, and State Fair exhibits; continuous updating of photos; presentation of programs for various organizations; and the operation of the Central Reservations State Park service to the public.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This past year the Promotions Section coordinated, developed and assisted in the promotions of various State Parks ads and articles for print in mostly in-state and some out-of-state magazines and newspapers. These include *Alabama Golf*, *Alabama Vacation Guide*, and the *Birmingham Tourist Guide*. Ads are alternated between the nation's largest two campground directory guides. Last year our ad was placed in *Woodall's Campground*; next year it will return to *Trailer Life Directory*. Ads for Joe Wheeler, Lake Guntersville, Monte Sano, Cathedral Caverns and Buck's Pocket State Parks were placed in *Inspired Living*, a magazine from the greater Huntsville area. Ads were also placed in *Bama*, *Inside the Crimson Tide* and *Inside the Auburn Tigers*. These two magazines provide detailed and up-to-date information regarding these two school's sports programs. We continue to reach over 27,000 subscribers of these magazines plus another 10,000 who purchase them at newsstands. We have also advertised this past year in *SEEN Magazine*, the magazine of the southeast education network.

Promotions has continually improved and reprinted the individual state park resort brochures to satisfy the growing tourism industry and public. The comprehensive state parks booklet that was introduced two years ago will soon be in its third printing. The third printing will be updated to include current up-to-date information about the completion of the lodge at Lake Guntersville State Park.

A first time full color brochure for Florala State Park was produced this past year along with a new DeSoto State Park brochure.

The Volunteer In Parks (VIP) program continues to provide much-needed help throughout the year at a number of parks. Three positions are vital to our V.I.P. program's success. They are Seasonal Permanent Campground Hosts, Monthly Campground Hosts, and Activities Director. Every park that has 50 or more campsites is supposed to have these positions filled during the camping season. It is during these months of heavy camping activity that we need to utilize our volunteers for these positions.

The Promotions Section was involved with the grand opening/ribbon cutting ceremony at Gulf State Park this past summer. The new cottages at Lake Shelby were completed as well as the new beach pavilion. The day's events concluded with a cookout that night at the pavilion with live entertainment provided by the Alabama Department of Tourism and Travel.

The Promotions Section once again participated in the Alabama National Fair held in Montgomery each October. Over 1,500 people registered for gift cards given away by the Alabama State Parks. This year our display was moved inside the coliseum in an effort to reach individuals that may not always visit the exhibits building. We also participated in the 2006 Snowbird Extravaganza held annually in Lakeland, Florida. Thousands of snowbirds from a number of northern states and Canada were provided information regarding Alabama's tourist attractions.

The FLW Wal-mart® Bass Tournament was held in Birmingham this past summer. An information booth was made available regarding the parks and the wonderful fishing opportunities found throughout the park system.

The Promotions Section has also participated in state employees orientation programs whenever possible.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special Events at our State Parks is an area with endless potential. Each park should encourage groups and organizations to utilize a State Park as the venue for their special event. It brings added revenue to the

parks system and introduces our parks to individuals that otherwise might not visit. The Promotions Section could plan and conduct all type of events but limited personnel severely hinder the ability to do so. Last year a very successful car show was held at Wind Creek State Park. A second show was held in May of this year.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

There are numerous ways to promote the State Parks. The opportunities and ideas as to how to do this are unlimited. Lack of sufficient staff is the primary problem. Lack of funds is also a problem, although through the creative planning of special events and encouraging others to use the parks as their venue for special events, we can produce new and unique ways to introduce our parks to individuals who may not ordinarily visit them. Some state law restrictions make it difficult to have special events in our Alabama State Parks. By relaxing some of these restrictions, it will enable us to plan, finance and conduct these special events more frequently. Lack of sufficient advertising funds limits our ability to stay in front of the public's eye.

FUTURE PLANS

We will continue to increase public awareness and encourage patronage of the Alabama State Parks through a variety of advertising and promotional opportunities such as *Alabama Golf*, *Alabama Vacation Guide* and the Campground directories. Most likely we will continue to advertise in the *Inside Bama* and Auburn magazines because of their popularity and the interest our citizens have with these two institutions.

A continued effort will be directed toward revision of each resort state park brochure with Joe Wheeler, Cheaha, and DeSoto park brochures complete. Lakepoint brochures will be updated as renovations approach completion. Gulf State and Lake Guntersville brochures will be up-dated early next year. Wind Creek will receive a color brochure during the coming year. Other non-resort parks are being considered for color brochures.

We will be participating at the Snowbird Extravaganza

consumer show again in January 2007. We will once again produce a state parks calendar as our promotional item to use at the show. In May of next year we will hold another car show at Wind Creek and hopefully we will have our first at Oak Mountain.

Next year we will host the Southeastern State Park System Directors Conference. Tentative plans have us conducting the conference at Lake Guntersville State Park. We will certainly make every effort to hold a successful conference and showcase our beautiful Alabama State Parks.

The Promotions Section plans to become aggressively involved in soliciting and acquiring convention business during 2007. As Lake Guntersville Lodge nears completion and Lakepoint Resort begins renovations of their meeting and convention facilities, it is time to sell these facilities to the hundreds of associations and organizations that hold annual and semi-annual meetings. Attracting the conventions business to Alabama State Parks is very important.

PURCHASING SECTION

The State Parks Purchasing Section handles all purchasing activities for 22 State Parks, six golf courses and three motel and lodge complexes. (Gulf State Park Lodge and Lake Guntersville Lodge remained closed during the fiscal year.)

Money for these purchases comes from various sources, such as bond money, timber sales, donations, insurance, park revenues, FEMA, federal grants, and other funds.

The Purchasing Office maintains a record of purchases, assists in paying vendors and works with the Management Analysis Section to assure accurate accounting data. Our office works closely with the Operations and Maintenance Section on various projects, insurance claims and inventory data.

The Purchasing Section consists of one supervisor, one full-time clerical and one part-time clerical employee, and operates under the laws and guidelines established by the *Code of Alabama*, Title 41, and the policies and procedures established by the Alabama Department of Finance.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Accomplishments for the Purchasing Office for Fiscal Year 2006 include routine purchases, emergency purchases and annual agreements. Most purchases were of a routine nature to continue operations. Some purchases included: new golf carts, pedal boats, pontoon boats, furnishings, cash registers, mowing equipment, building materials, satellite TV equipment and a wide variety of commodities and services. A special project at Florala State Park involved writing specifications for lawn service; while one at Lake Guntersville involved sewage lift stations.

Another project concerning the Lake Guntersville renovations, involved a visit to a North Alabama mattress manufacturing plant, which resulted in a large purchase from an Alabama vendor.

Personnel of the Purchasing Section attended and assisted with various events, attended training classes during the year and attended meetings to improve the purchasing process.

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue to provide services to parks and lodges for their daily purchasing needs, as well as during renovations and ongoing maintenance projects.
- Continue to be of service to support the Alabama State Parks system in areas of need.
- Continue to work with the Finance Department and Purchasing Division to obtain products and services and provide payment to vendors in an efficient manner.

Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division

The Wildlife and
Freshwater Fisheries
Division, charged by
law with protection,
management and
enhancement of the
state's fish and wildlife
resources, is composed
of the Administrative,
Enforcement, Fisheries,
and Wildlife Sections.

The Division meets these responsibilities by carrying out coordinated, scientifically-sound enforcement, management, research, development, and educational programs designed to ensure protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife populations and habitats for the sustainable benefit of the people of Alabama.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Youth Dove Hunting program had 29 sites across the state with approximately 1,427 participants, 21.4 percent of which were first-time hunters. The Community Fishing Program conducted 60 events with over 15,808 participants. The first ever alligator season was initiated in the state to deal with the ever growing alligator population in the Mobile Delta with a 93 percent hunter success rate.

The "Take a Kid Fishing" license plate became available to the public in 2006. Proceeds will support the Division's water resource education activities, enhancement of fish habitat and restoration of Alabama's aquatic threatened and endangered species.

ADMINISTRATIVE

The Administrative Section carried out support services regarding personnel, budget, accounting, licenses, and property management. Activities were monitored and documentation maintained to ensure compliance with federal aid requirements. Planning and coordination of Division programs were conducted. Staff members served on committees, attended meetings and answered correspondence to coordinate activities with those of other organizations.

There are 12 staff members in the Section: one Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Director, one Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Assistant Director, one Aircraft Pilot II, one Conservation Management Analyst, one Biologist IV, two Biologist's II, one Accounting Technician I, one ASA III, and three ASA II's.

WILDLIFE DIVERSITY

State Wildlife Grants and the Landowner Incentive Program are two relatively new federal funding sources intended to focus management on declining wildlife species and avoid their

eventual listing under the Endangered Species Act. Federal funding to the State Wildlife Grants program in FY06 was \$937,391. These funds are used to support various research and species restoration efforts, including establishment of the Aquatic Biodiversity Center (administered by the Fisheries Section) and completion of the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, which was approved by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in November 2005. Federal funding to the Landowner Incentive Program in FY 2006 was \$856,141. These funds will be used for fish and wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration in the Paint Rock River basin. These programs are administered by two Biologists in the Administrative Section who work closely with Wildlife Section and Fisheries Section staff.

ENFORCEMENT

The Law Enforcement Section of the Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries assists in management and enhancement of Alabama's wildlife and freshwater fish resources through a sound enforcement program.

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

The Law Enforcement Section is headquartered in the Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries office in Montgomery. This office is staffed by the Chief Enforcement Officer, an Assistant Chief of Operations, an Assistant Chief of Administration, one Captain (vacant), two ASA II's, one ASA III, one Account Clerk, five Police Communications Officers I, and three part time radio operators (vacant). The Montgomery staff processes vehicle repairs; orders, receives, and issues supplies and equipment; issues permits; conducts investigations; coordinates training; provides information to officers and the public regarding laws and regulations; provides guidance to officers and the public on enforcement issues; and performs other duties involving the enforcement program. The field staff is organized into six districts with a captain as supervisor and two lieutenants as assistant supervisors. Each district supervisor is assigned to a district office. Each district varies in size from nine to 12 counties with two officers in most counties. The section's investigative unit is staffed with one lieutenant as supervisor and four investigator positions (two vacant) that have the rank of sergeant. A special task force consists of retired officers who are APOST certified. These officers are employed on a part-

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES FOR WILDLIFE AND FRESHWATER FISHERIES DIVISION

Section Name	Budgeted Amount*	Expenditures
Administrative	\$ 803,874	\$ 759,038
Enforcement	\$11,462,372	\$10,470,091
Fisheries	\$ 6,763,810	\$ 5,636,117
Wildlife	\$ 8,533,083	\$ 7,135,456
Wildlife Diversity	\$ 1,164,183	\$ 748,648
Transferred to Department Administrative Transfer	\$ 2,611,770	\$ 2,611,660
Total	\$31,339,092	\$27,361,120

*Funding includes Federal Aid in Wildlife and SportFish Restoration monies apportioned to Alabama based on the state's geographical size and hunting and fishing license sales.

2005-2006 WILDLIFE AND FRESHWATER FISHERIES LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

Arrests	8,228
Warnings	1,134

time basis and are used in problem areas of the state or where vacancies exist. The Law Enforcement Section is authorized 130-uniformed field officers. Eighteen of these positions are sergeants who are field supervisors. Due to retirements and resignations, the Section currently has 116 field officers on staff with two area sergeants and 12 officer positions being vacant.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- Officer Dwight Thrasher of Greene County received the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Officer of the Year Award for Alabama.
- Officer Greg Elrod of Jackson County was selected as The National Wild Turkey Federation's Officer of the Year for Alabama.
- Officer Thad Holmes of Baldwin County was selected as the Shikar Safari International's Wildlife Officer of the Year Award for Alabama.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ARRESTS AND WARNINGS:

- Officers made 8,228 arrests and issued 1,134 warnings during the 2005-2006 fiscal year, the majority being for violations of Fish and Wildlife regulations with the remainder being for violations of Marine Police, Marine Resources, and other state laws.

TRAINING OF OFFICERS AND SUPERVISORS:

- Report Writing for Law Enforcement course.
- Semi annual firearms training.
- Refresher training in PPCT and SSGT self defense tactics.
- In-service training in fish and wildlife law enforcement tactics.
- FEMA IS100 and IS700 training.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASES:

- New vehicles were equipped with new narrow band capable VHF radios mandated by the FCC.
- Five 17 ft. Woolridge boats and trailers w/115 HP

four stroke mercury outboard motors to replace unreliable patrol boats.

- Replaced one VHF radio repeater and two antennas.
- Eleven 115 HP Mercury outboard motors to replace 18 year old units. Purchased through court ordered restitution in illegal mussel harvest case.
- Two 6 x 12 ft. cargo trailers and two 5000 watt generators for disaster response. Purchased through donations from the Safari Club International.

RECRUITMENT:

- Twelve recruits were hired as Conservation Enforcement Officers. They are assigned to the following counties: Cullman, Cherokee, Greene, Hale, Lee, Macon, Mobile, Jefferson, St. Clair, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, and Wilcox.

FUTURE PLANS:

- Seek funding to allow hiring new officers to fill critical vacancies.
- Complete work on a comprehensive arrest database that can be utilized by all Divisions of the DCNR.
- Sponsor an FBI Firearms Instructor course.
- Seek funding to replace 24 VHF repeaters and approximately 125 VHF vehicle radios with narrow band capable equipment as required by the Federal Communications Commission mandate.

FISHERIES

The Fisheries Section's mission is to protect, conserve and increase the freshwater aquatic resources of Alabama.

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

There are 74 staff members in the Section including fisheries biologists, fisheries biologist aides, a malacologist, clerk stenographers, account clerks, administrative support assistants, building maintenance supervisors, a carpenter, equipment operators, and

laborers. Fisheries Section facilities include six permanent district offices with laboratories. The Section has three sport fish hatcheries and one hatchery dedicated to producing mussels, snails and fish species of concern, with hatching and holding buildings, personnel residences and storage buildings. Twenty-three state owned public fishing lakes in 20 counties have a total surface area of 1,912 acres. Each of the 20 locations has a concession building, storage building, and in some cases, a residence.

WILDLIFE AND FRESHWATER FISHERIES FISHERIES SECTIONS

The "Take a Kid Fishing" license plate became available to the public in 2006 when presales of more than 250 license plates were achieved. This accomplishment was made possible through the hard efforts of many people including a significant donation from Bass Pro Shops.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The "Take a Kid Fishing" license plate became available to the public in 2006 when presales of more than 250 license plates were achieved. This accomplishment was made possible through the hard efforts of many people including a significant donation from Bass Pro Shops. Proceeds from the sale of fishing license plates will support the Fisheries Section's water resource education activities, enhancement of fish habitat and restoration of Alabama's aquatic threatened and endangered species.

Technical Assistance: District fisheries biologists conducted 974 biological checks of private ponds. Individuals requesting assistance were given appropriate solutions in writing to problems. The Fisheries Section reviewed, investigated and commented on 25 water-related permits and environmental impact statements. Written comments were provided to the appropriate agencies. Numerous staff members participated in meetings concerning the re-licensing of 10 Alabama Power Company hydroelectric projects. District biologists investigated 29 reported fish kills and cases of pollution. Formal reports prepared by the investigators were sent to the appropriate agencies.

Public Fishing Lakes: A total of 138,207 anglers harvested 182,537 fish weighing 153,023 pounds from all 23 state operated public fishing lakes. Each angler averaged 1.1 pounds of fish per trip. These figures represent a decrease of 25 percent and 23 percent respectively, from the number and weight of fish harvested in FY 2006 than in FY 2005. The number of anglers fishing on Alabama's State Lakes decreased approximately five percent from FY 2005. Fisheries biologists and support personnel made 715 visits to State Lakes to evaluate the condition of fish populations and to conduct various operational and maintenance activities. The Carbon

Hill, Eastaboga, and Marion fish hatcheries stocked a total of 1,452,847 fish into Alabama's State Lakes. Species stocked included bluegill, channel catfish, largemouth bass, redear sunfish, black crappie, hybrid striped bass, and white amur. Additionally, rainbow trout were stocked into Madison County Lake for a winter fishery.

New lake managers were hired at Barbour, Crenshaw, Dallas, Madison, and Walker County Lakes. Lake manager contracts were renewed at Dale and Washington County Lakes. Washington County Lake was reopened to fishing. Marginal treatments were conducted at Bibb, Clay, DeKalb, Lamar, and Lee County Lakes. Coee County Lake was renovated and restocked.

Access Areas: During the year, 400 routine inspections of 118 access areas were made by Fisheries Section personnel. In excess of \$689,960 of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries funds were obligated to develop and maintain boating access areas in FY 2006.

Major accomplishments include the following: Childersburg in Talladega County – new ramp and courtesy dock; Parker Bridge in Covington County – new boat ramp with parking; Waterloo in Lauderdale County – two new boating docks; Kowaliga in Elmore County – restripe parking lot; Beeswax in Shelby County – restripe parking lot; Childersburg and Glover's Ferry in Talladega County – restripe parking lots; Lay Dam in Chilton County – restripe parking lot; East Division in Cherokee County – erosion control; Second Creek in Lauderdale County – restripe parking lot; Flint Creek 67 in Morgan County – restripe parking lot; Valley City in Chambers County – boat ramp renovation; and Pride Landing in Colbert County – repair facility. Other work included installation of directional and logo signs, litter removal, erosion control with rip rap, repairing parking lots, repairing piers, and access area ground maintenance.

Aquatic Plant Management: Aquatic plant communities were monitored to determine their impact on small boat navigation and fish populations in Alabama's public waters in cooperation with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. During FY 2006, due to a lack of funding, no weeds were treated in the Mobile Delta. In Dannelly Reservoir, 20 acres of alligator weed were treated to provide angler access in the lower reservoir. Over 800 acres of submerged, emergent, and

**TABLE 1.
FISH STOCKED DURING FY 2006 IN PUBLIC
WATERS THROUGH THE FISHERIES SECTION'S
PROGRAMS**

Species	Inch Group	Number
Largemouth Bass - Florida	1-15	411,404
Largemouth Bass - Northern	1-23	54,846
Smallmouth Bass	1-2	7,610
Alabama Spotted Bass	2-3	3,000
Redeye Bass	1-2	15,500
Southern Walleye	1	6,508
Striped Bass - Gulf Race	1	428,023
Hybrid Striped Bass	1	373,920
Channel Catfish	3-18	253,171
Bluegill	1-8	3,039,636
Redear	2	10,000
Black Crappie	2-14	129,071
White Amur (Grass Carp)	16-22	80
Rainbow Trout	8-12	24,605
TOTAL		4,757,374

oating vegetation were treated on Coeville, Demopolis and Warrior Reservoirs of the Black-Warrior River System. A 70-acre infestation of hydrilla was successfully treated in Daubs Swamp in Demopolis with a SonarQ SonarAS application. However, a 30-acre experimental plot treated with a product from BASF Corporation failed to significantly reduce hydrilla.

Fish Hatcheries: The Carbon Hill, Eastaboga and Marion State Fish Hatcheries distributed 83,427 largemouth bass and 785,253 bream to 166 new ponds (562.41 acres), 66 renovated old ponds (293.25 acres) and one pond (6 acres) which needed corrective restocking of largemouth bass fingerlings. Fish were also stocked into public waters statewide through the Fisheries Section, including public fishing lakes that totaled 4,757,374. This information is provided in Table 1.

Presentations: Fisheries Section biologists attended public meetings, workshops and maintained educational displays at boat shows and fairs on fisheries resource topics around the state. They made 288 presentations on various fisheries topics.

Publications: One technical paper by a Fisheries Section biologist was published in a scientific or technical journal in FY 2006.

Research: Through the Investigation and Management Techniques for Public Waters Project, there were four contractual studies that were ongoing during the year. These studies involved research on the population characteristics of largemouth bass in the Mobile Delta; the effects of tournament fishing on the black bass population of Lake Martin; an evaluation of the recreational catfishery in Wilson Reservoir; and a study of the interrelationships of striped bass, largemouth bass and spotted bass in Lewis Smith Lake. Two projects funded through WCRP grants were continued during FY 2006. These projects were research and production work for the publication of a comprehensive book on Alabama's freshwater mussel species and a study of the community composition of fishes, mussels and snails associated with co-generation power plant sites in Alabama.

Reservoir Management: Black bass, hybrid and striped bass, sauger, shad, crappie, bluegill, and redear populations were sampled by electrofishing, trap netting, trawling and/or gillnetting in Wheeler, Upper Bear Creek, Logan Martin, Guntersville, Weiss, Harris, Aliceville, Gainesville, Demopolis, Jones Bluff, Yates, Mitchell, Miller's Ferry, Coeville, Eufaula, and Gantt Reservoirs in addition to the upper and lower Mobile Delta and the Coosa

River below Jordan Dam. All fish collected were measured and weighed. Thermal and oxygen profiles were collected from most of the previously mentioned reservoirs. Reservoir reconnaissance surveys were completed on all reservoirs where standardized sampling was performed. Results of the surveys are incorporated into reservoir reports. Relative values of angler harvest, effort, and pressure were collected by creel surveys on Wheeler, Upper Bear Creek, Harris, Aliceville, Coosa River, and Lower Mobile Delta and are recorded in the reservoir reports.

General Survey: General fish sampling and surveys were conducted on Inland Lake, Mitchell, Yates, Thurlow, Martin, and Jordan Reservoirs. Fisheries survey work was also performed on Town Creek, Short Creek, Talladega Creek, Weiss Bypass (Coosa River), Hurricane Creek, Lake Shelby, Fish River, and Lake Jackson. Samples of bass, catfish or representatives of other predator or omnivore groups were collected from several locations statewide for a cooperative contaminant study with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

Endangered Species (Section-6) Studies: The state malacologist conducted three endangered species (i.e., Tennessee River mussel and snail recovery, spotted rocksnail survey, and Chipola River headwater mussel survey) Section 6 studies in FY 2006. The Aquatic Resources Coordinator administered the following Section 6 contractual studies in FY 2006: paddlefish population survey; Elk River fish survey; coastal river's rare fish survey; eastern hellbender survey; Chattahoochee River mussel survey; and Alabama River mussel survey.

Aquatic Education (Community Fishing Program): The Fisheries Section, with assistance from other sections of the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division and volunteers, conducted 60 events reaching over 15,808 participants, plus their families and volunteers. The number of events and participants has remained relatively stable for the last several years.

Fishing classes were conducted for various audiences (mostly youth) during 90 sessions that reached 2,157 participants. Thirty-five casting classes were taught for 1,335 participants. Rods and reels were loaned to physical education instructors who allowed students to practice casting. Talks about how aquatic resources function were presented to 100 groups with a total audience of 4,884. Additional information was

presented to the public through displays for 49 days at events such as boat shows, fairs and Earth Day celebrations. Fourteen presentations were made to 179 instructors of various types about casting, fishing and/or aquatic education.

Six fisheries articles were distributed through media outlets, mailing lists and our web site. Five of these articles were published in the Department's *Outdoor Alabama* magazine. The Web site continued to grow, mostly with the addition of boating access information.

Freshwater Mussel Management and Research: A total of 52 biological field trips were made during this fiscal year for general and specialized surveys of mussel and snail populations and releases of relocated or cultured animals. Work sites included locations on the Weiss Bypass (Coosa River), Tennessee River, Pickwick Lake, Wilson, Terrapin Creek, Mitchell, Lay, Coosa River, Buttahatchee River, Chattahoochee River, Alabama River and Chipola River. Assistance and consultation regarding mollusk issues were provided to the Tennessee Valley Authority, Alabama Department of Environmental Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Aquatic Resources Activities: Aquatic Resources staff represented the Fisheries Section at the following meetings and workshops: Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS); Southeastern Aquatic Resource Partnership Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point Workshop; Alabama Fisheries Association Annual Meeting; Mobile Basin Coalition Meeting; National Fish Habitat Meeting; Watercress Darter Recovery Meeting; American Fisheries Southern Division Meeting; Asian Carp Workshop; and Gulf Sturgeon Workshop. Aquatic Resources staff planned and coordinated the Annual Alabama Crayfish and Mollusk Meeting held in Troy. A paper written by Aquatic Resources staff and titled "Conservation and Collection Efforts for the Endangered Alabama Sturgeon" was accepted for publication in the Journal of Applied Ichthyology's Scaphyrinchus conference issue. The Alabama Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force met three times in FY 2006; and a draft ANS plan is well underway, and will be completed in Fiscal Year 2007. Eleven state-protected species and four public-water stocking permits were issued in FY 2006. Conservation efforts for the southern walleye continued, with 15 specimens being collected for broodstock. Artificial spawning was successful

with 6,500 fingerlings stocked into Lake Mitchell. Nearly two hundred southern walleye fingerlings were retained at Marion Fish Hatchery, and will be used as part of the broodstock. Over 200 paddlefish were collected in the Alabama River for age, growth, and reproductive status determination. Sampling continued for Alabama sturgeon; however, none were collected in FY 2006. Shoal bass sampling continued in Chattahoochee River tributaries. Due to low number of shoal bass, this species was removed from the black bass creel limit. Sampling was conducted at five streams in close proximity to co-generation power plants to determine community fish and crayfish composition.

Alabama Aquatic Biodiversity Center: This was the second year of the State Wildlife Grant (T-2) that was established to fund the development and operation of the Alabama Aquatic Biodiversity Center (AABC). During FY 2006, the primary activities undertaken were to continue renovating and reactivating the buildings and facilities of the former Claude Harris National Aquaculture Research Center that is located adjacent to the Marion State Fish Hatchery in Perry County. Some of the accomplishments include: the installation of new metal roofs to three of the primary buildings; testing and retest of well #13; and interior renovations of main administrative office building. Planning for the lab water treatment system is near completion. The installation of this system will be necessary to prevent the escapement from the facility of animals not native to the Cahaba-Mobile drainage basin. Five new staff positions at the ABCC were filled in FY 2006: Biologist III (Program Supervisor); one Biologist Aide III; one Biologist Aide I/II; one Administrative Support Assistant II; and one additional permanent laborer. This brings the total number of staff positions up to seven. Fiscal Year 2006 culture and recovery activities included the translocation of approximately 15,500 freshwater snails of the genus *Elimia* and *Leptoxis* to reintroduction sites within the Cahaba River and Coosa River basins, and the culture of over 31,000 plicate rocksnails (*Leptoxis plicata*) for release into the Locust Fork of the Black Warrior River (Released 10/3/06). Preliminary culture trials were also undertaken for a number of other freshwater snail and mussel species. Redeye bass served as host for glochidia of the lined pocketbook mussel (*Hamiota altilis*), and bluegill sunfish were host to glochidia of the Coosa creekshell mussel (*Villosa umbrans*). The experience gained from these trials will

TABLE 2.
FRESHWATER MUSSELS STOCKED DURING FY 2006 IN PUBLIC WATERS THROUGH THE FISHERIES SECTION'S (AABC) EFFORTS

Species	Location	Number
Southern Toesplitter (<i>Lasmigona etowahensis</i>)	Terrapin Creek	5,000 (transformed glochidia)
Alabama Creekmussel (<i>Strophitus connasaugaensis</i>)	Terrapin Creek	3,300 (juveniles)
Coosa Creekshell (<i>Villosa umbrans</i>)	Cheaha Creek	187 (juveniles)
Total		8,487

TABLE 3.
FRESHWATER SNAILS TRANSLOCATED DURING FY 2006 IN PUBLIC WATERS THROUGH THE FISHERIES SECTION'S (AABC) EFFORTS

Species	Location	Number
Cahaba Elimia (<i>Elimia cahawbensis</i>)	Cahaba River Translocation	1,000
Sharp Crest Elimia (<i>Elimia carinifera</i>)	Cahaba River Translocation	3,000
Fluted Elimia (<i>Elimia cochliaris</i>)	Cahaba River Translocation	2,000
Painted Rocksnail (<i>Leptoxis taeniata</i>)	Coosa River Translocation	9,500
Total		15,500

TABLE 4.
FISH STOCKED BY NON-GOVERNMENT PERMIT HOLDERS IN ALABAMA PUBLIC WATERS DURING FY 2006

Species	Location	Number
Channel Catfish	Guntersville Lake	2,000
Largemouth Bass	Guntersville Lake	19
Spotted Bass	Guntersville Lake	12
Largemouth Bass	Lay Lake	35,000
Channel Catfish	Chambers County Lake	750
Channel Catfish	Payne Lake	1,392
Channel Catfish	Logan Martin Lake	3,000
Total		42,173

**WILDLIFE AND
FRESHWATER FISHERIES
FISHERIES SECTIONS**

Expand efforts to introduce children to fishing and in raising awareness of aquatic resources.

be applied to expanded full scale production for these and similar species in the future. A streamside inoculation of host shes with glochidia of the southern toesplitter (*Lasmigona etowahensis*) was completed on Terrapin Creek in Cherokee County. Detailed information on all snail and mussel translocations and releases is provided in Tables 2 and 3 on Page 43.

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

Public Fishing Lakes: Bass crowding continues to be a problem statewide. Removal of bass by the use of anglers and/or electro shing gear, along with judicious use of marginal treatments and slot limits, will be employed to manage overcrowded bass populations.

Recruitment of qualified lake managers at rural lakes continues to be a problem. This problem seems to be alleviated where suitable housing can be provided. A daily shing fee increase may be necessary to attract qualified managers in the future.

There is a need to advertise and market these recreational shing opportunities to the public.

Riverine Habitat: The loss of riverine habitat in Alabama has resulted in the decline or loss of obligate riverine shes. Efforts continue to document habitat loss and provide suitable riverine habitat where possible. There is a need to develop a comprehensive plan for the permitting, or managing of water withdrawals, water discharges and instream flow changes as it relates to the protection of aquatic habitat.

Aquatic Plants: The spread of established species of exotic aquatic vegetation and the loss of native aquatic plants remain an issue for Alabama waters. The threat of the introduction of other noxious plants to public waters is constantly present. Funding is inadequate, and our authority is limited for the control of existing vegetation problems and responding to reports of new introductions.

Fish Hatcheries: Many production ponds, including drain kettles, water supply lines, drainage lines and power supply to the ponds, are in need of renovation.

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue resurfacing parking lots at boating access areas statewide where needed.
- Renovate Mount Vernon Boat Ramp.
- Construct courtesy docks at Minky Creek, Flint Creek, and Mud Creek boat ramps.
- Monitor reservoir sh populations and riverine habitat.
- Expand riverine sh population sampling.
- Continue to search and collect Alabama sturgeon.
- Our goal is to expand the activities at the Alabama Aquatic Biodiversity Center in FY 2007 as soon as additional key facilities become operational and additional personnel are hired. It is anticipated that significant culture and propagation activities for freshwater mollusks will be initiated during FY 2007.
- We anticipate that the publication of the book *Freshwater Mussels of Alabama and the Mobile Basin in Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee* will be completed in FY 2007.
- Expand efforts to introduce children to shing and in raising awareness of aquatic resources.

WILDLIFE

The mission of the Wildlife Section is to manage and enhance the wildlife resources of Alabama and to provide for maximum public benefit. The section maintains Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) to provide public access for hunting and recreation; monitors wildlife populations to determine management needs; provides the Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Director recommendations on hunting season lengths, dates, bag limits and restrictions; and provides technical assistance to landowners, managers and hunting clubs on wildlife and habitat management and harvest strategies to improve wildlife resources, and on animal damage control to protect crops and property as much as practical without undue damage to wildlife resources. The section provides technical assistance to other government agencies to help structure activities to avoid undue damage to wildlife and enhance those resources where possible. The section also provides information to the public on the natural history, problems and management needs of Alabama wildlife.

The section provides a Hunter Education Program to train the public, especially beginning hunters, on safety, ethics and individual responsibilities of wildlife conservation. The section provides

opportunities to get youth and individuals with physical disabilities involved in hunting activities.

Wildlife Section operations involve ongoing projects such as developing and maintaining wildlife openings, roads, buildings and boundary lines on 34 WMAs, two wildlife refuges and two sanctuaries (approximately 803,400 acres); administering public hunts on approximately 796,400 acres of WMA land; stocking wild turkeys; participating on boards and committees to provide input into plans and decisions affecting wildlife; conducting wildlife research and surveys and publishing the results; cooperating with universities to conduct wildlife research of mutual interest; planning and coordinating environmental activities and review of impact statements; and administering the Alabama Cooperative Deer Management Assistance Program.

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

An administrative staff with offices in Montgomery coordinated and monitored operations within the Wildlife Section. The staff consisted of a Wildlife Chief, two Assistant Chiefs, one Forester, one Hunter Education Program Coordinator, one Nongame Wildlife Coordinator, one Wildlife Biologist, an accounting technician and three clerical personnel.

Six districts across the state are staffed by a supervising wildlife biologist and include a number of area wildlife biologists and managers, biologist aides, equipment operators, clerical personnel and laborers. One nongame wildlife biologist was headquartered at Florence primarily for north Alabama assignments and one at Spanish Fort for south Alabama. One Hunter Education Coordinator was assigned at Cullman to handle north Alabama activities, one in Montgomery for central Alabama and one at Andalusia for south Alabama activities. A Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Unit consisting of three Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division biologists worked out of Natural Resources Conservation Services offices in a partnership established to assist with cost share programs to enhance wildlife habitat on private lands throughout the state.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Wildlife Section personnel participated in meetings of the Mississippi Flyway Council, Alabama's primary means of input into waterfowl management decisions that affect this state. Fourteen states, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Canadian Wildlife Service, three Canadian Provinces and several private organizations participate each year. One assistant chief serves as the consultant to

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representing the southern region of the Mississippi Flyway Council.

Research and biological surveys were conducted to obtain information on wildlife and their habitats. Aerial waterfowl censuses and hunter bag checks were conducted in the Mobile Delta and on the Tennessee River during fall and winter. Aerial censuses were also conducted for bald eagles.

Information was collected on WMAs and other sites to determine deer hunter participation and success, the physical condition of deer and the current status of deer populations. Deer were collected at five sites to assess reproductive characteristics within those populations. A hunting activity survey was conducted and published. The results were valuable in determining hunting season lengths and bag limits and evaluating the success of each hunting season.

An annual 27-survey-route mourning dove study was conducted with information shared with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to form season and bag limit regulations. As part of a nationwide project, 972 mourning doves were trapped, banded and released. Data from reported band returns will be analyzed to provide parameters needed for dove population modeling such as band return rates and estimates for mortality and survival. Also, 2,336 mourning dove wings were collected to provide data on age structure within mourning dove populations as part of the nationwide project.

Furbearer populations were evaluated by means of a survey in which the number of road kills and sightings of live animals near roads were recorded by Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries personnel to develop population indices.

A wild turkey production study was continued in an effort to

THE WILDLIFE SECTION HAS THE FOLLOWING FACILITIES:

Montgomery	Central office and warehouse facilities
District I	District office (Tanner) and seven WMAs
District II	District office (Jacksonville), seven WMAs and two wildlife refuges
District III	District office (Northport), office (Demopolis), six WMAs
District IV	District office (Prattville) and four WMAs
District V	District office (Spanish Fort), office (Jackson), seven WMAs and two wildlife wildlife sanctuaries
District VI	District office (Enterprise), office (Andalusia) and three WMAs

**WILDLIFE AND
FRESHWATER FISHERIES
WILDLIFE SECTIONS**

Wildlife Section personnel participated in meetings of the Mississippi Flyway Council, Alabama's primary means of input into waterfowl management decisions that affect this state. Fourteen states, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Canadian Wildlife Service, three Canadian Provinces and several private organizations participate each year. One assistant chief serves as the consultant to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representing the southern region of the Mississippi Flyway Council.

develop methods of providing data needed to construct population models for wild turkeys in Alabama.

A chronic wasting disease surveillance program for deer was conducted in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries. Tissue samples from 779 deer were submitted to state diagnostic labs for testing. Chronic wasting disease was not detected in any of those samples.

Wildlife Section biologists received training in preparation for collection of samples from waterfowl and other birds to be tested for avian influenza. Funds for that program are being provided by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and it is being conducted in partnership with that agency's Wildlife Services personnel. Collection of samples began with the opening of the teal hunting season in September.

Wildlife biologists participated in annual surveys to monitor the status of breeding birds in Alabama. The surveys include colonial nesting shorebirds in coastal Alabama, most notably on Gaillard Island where between 4,000 and 5,000 pairs of pelicans nest annually along with 3,000 pairs of terns and 5,000 pairs of laughing gulls. Additionally, five routes of the Breeding Bird Survey were conducted as a contribution to the continent-wide monitoring of neotropical and other resident nesting species.

Twenty-three Alabama caves were surveyed and/or searched for threatened and endangered bat species. Biologists also continued the general survey of other bat species at selected sites.

Development of the Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas continued, and wildlife biologists contributed to that database. Wildlife biologists participated in two National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts, coordinating and compiling one of the count circles.

The Division received \$278,748 of federal aid funds for projects on wildlife species eligible for funding under Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act. Population and status surveys were conducted for the gray bat, alligator snapping turtle, cerulean warbler, vermilion darter, paddlefish and eastern indigo snake. Systematic surveys were conducted on the Upper Tombigbee River, Coosa River, Black Warrior River, Paint Rock River and Tennessee River primary tributaries to document the presence of listed and candidate species of fish, snails, mussels and crayfish. Also, a project for habitat improvement for red-cockaded woodpeckers on the Talladega National Forest was continued in cooperation with the U. S. Forest Service and Quail Unlimited. Structuring of a Safe Harbor Plan for red-cockaded woodpeckers is in the final stages for implementation.

Wildlife biologists continued to monitor bald eagle overwintering and nesting populations in Alabama. A total of 89 bald eagles – 63

adult and 26 immature – were recorded during the winter survey. Seventy-seven confirmed nesting attempts were reported in 2006. The number of confirmed nesting attempts increased by 16 compared to the previous year (61 nests), and by 24 since 2004 (53 nests). There have now been a total of 493 nesting attempts in the state since eagles resumed nesting in 1987. Each year the surveys continue to record an increase in the nesting bald eagle population within the state.

Over 1,400 man-days were devoted to providing technical assistance to private landowners, corporations, hunting clubs and government agencies. Biologists made on-site inspections, reviewed plans and provided recommendations for effective wildlife management. The Cooperative Deer Management Assistance Program included 311 landowners and hunting clubs covering more than 717,000 acres.

Providing landowners and land managers technical assistance to better help them implement strategies to improve wildlife habitat on their lands continues to grow in importance. An innovative partnership continued with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to help private landowners obtain better wildlife management advice and to better deliver farm bill programs to landowners. Under a cost share agreement, three WFF Wildlife Biologists worked out of NRCS offices and worked with NRCS personnel to deliver the programs. This program will continue and expand to four WFF Wildlife Biologists working with NRCS in FY 2007.

Approximately 183,300 man-days of hunting occurred on WMAs. Harvest figures reached expected levels. These areas also furnish trapping, fishing, hiking, picnicking, camping and nature study opportunities. A total of approximately 2,573 miles of boundary lines, 8,910 acres of wildlife openings, and 1,963 miles of area roads were maintained.

The Hunting Trail for People with Physical Disabilities continues to be well received. The season opened with 16 hunting sites on the trail. This innovative program provides opportunities for individuals with physical disabilities to participate in hunting in an environment that was developed to meet their needs.

Nine shooting ranges on Wildlife Management Areas and the Etowah Public Shooting Range continue to receive excellent public use. These ranges are open to the public on a daily basis during daylight hours. Maintenance is conducted throughout the year by staff members and volunteers. A new shooting range was developed on the Upper Delta WMA in Baldwin County. This was Alabama's first range to incorporate a tube design to control alignment of shots with the earthen berm to stop bullets. Construction was completed in September and the range was opened for public use.

Opportunities for youth participation in hunting are not as numerous as we would desire. The youth dove hunting program

continued on 29 sites across the state. This is a cooperative effort with private landowners and other sponsors. The goal is to provide youth the opportunity to experience hunting in a positive atmosphere. There were 1,427 participants for the hunts scheduled in October 2005 and September 2006. The hunts were extremely popular with 21.4 percent of the youth being first time hunters. In addition, youth hunt opportunities were offered on the wildlife management areas for deer, turkey and waterfowl and statewide for deer and waterfowl.

Articles written by section staff were distributed once a week to statewide media as "Wildlife and the Outdoors" columns. These popular features were published in many newspapers, magazines and newsletters throughout Alabama and other states, and were effective in disseminating public information and increasing citizen awareness of services available from the Wildlife Section. Other articles were written for publication in specific magazines.

Management and maintenance continued on the North Alabama Birding Trail which opened in September 2005. During its first year of operation the trail has been very successful, and has received better than expected visitation. Visitor comments are almost all positive.

Wildlife Section staff gave presentations to a variety of public groups on deer, turkey, eagles, shorebirds, backyard wildlife habitat management, and other wildlife species and topics. Those biologists also contributed significantly to the inaugural North Alabama Birding Festival as well as continued participation in the second annual Coastal Birdfest. Section personnel manned booths at functions such as state and county fairs, gun and boat shows, and forest festivals, making personal contacts and distributing educational material. Numerous presentations in a variety of forums were made to help the public better understand wildlife conservation issues.

The Wildlife Section staff is also charged with administering the permitting of falconry for the state. Three new falconers were tested and approved bringing the total number of permitted falconers in the state to 52.

This was the 14th year that completing the Alabama Hunter Education Program was mandatory for first time hunting license buyers born on or after August 1, 1977. Hunter education instructors taught approximately 400 classes totaling 4,800 hours of instruction. The courses were taught by 780 certified instructors (578 volunteers and 202 employees). Approximately 2,000 Alabamians participated in 60 youth shooting sports events that were conducted throughout the state to promote safe, responsible firearms handling and improve marksmanship skills. These one-day events are designed to introduce participants to muzzleloaders, shotguns, .22 rifles, and pellet guns.

Alabama's National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) continued to show growth and now has approximately 85 schools

participating. Teachers from 175 schools have been certified to conduct the two-week Olympic style archery curriculum. This program has the potential to introduce over 100,000 students to Olympic style archery each year. The third annual NASP state championship was held on April 18, 2006 and featured 575 participants from 21 schools. Teachers, participants, spectators, and WFF employees stated the event was very well organized and look forward to future events. Teachers and school administrators have made positive statements regarding this program and report that student behavior, attendance, and attitudes have improved since implementing the NASP. The 2007 event has been scheduled for April 26 in Jefferson County. Approximately 900 students are expected to participate in this event. This event will provide WFF with an opportunity to introduce participants to other outdoor life skills in addition to archery.

A new office building was constructed near Tanner, Alabama in partnership with the other sections within the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division for use by the District I staff.

The first ever alligator season was initiated in the state to deal with the ever growing alligator population in Mobile Delta. After obtaining approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the season was held in August. A total of 43 alligators were harvested with a 93 percent success rate.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Loss of Leased Land: The continual loss of leased land and the threat of loss for WMAs is a significant problem. Each year, small portions of WMAs are being withdrawn. Land lost is usually closed to the public and leased to a relatively small number of individuals. More leased land is likely to be lost in the future. The Wildlife Section will attempt to lease or purchase other lands and provide additional incentives to encourage landowners to include lands in the program. We will also continue to work with Forever Wild in an effort to purchase land for public hunting.

License Holder Database: One problem of the division shared by this section is the lack of an electronic database of license holders. Because this information is lacking, it is extremely difficult to understand our customers or to establish trend data of the hunters and anglers. The lack of a database also hampers survey work. To complete our annual hunter harvest survey we continue to have to manually search the licenses sold. It is a slow process that does not accommodate new surveys being implemented. Some improvements have been made but more are needed.

Nongame Funding: Funding for the Nongame Wildlife Program is not adequate. Revenue from the income tax check-off is minimal. Funds from Federal initiatives are becoming available but they require a state-matching share of 25 to 50 percent. Additional sources of revenue are required to meet this need.

Wildlife Diseases: Wildlife diseases are not new but one in particular continues to demand attention. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), once thought to be a problem in only the western part of the country, has been found in other areas. Its spread is linked mostly to the transportation of deer and elk. Due to the severe impact CWD can have on a deer population, we have taken several steps. We continued the random surveillance program. All deer tested were negative. We also continue participation with other agencies in a CWD Working Group. That work will continue into the next year. Avian influenza is another disease involving wildlife that is of particular interest. A surveillance program was initiated to provide samples from waterfowl and other birds for testing to detect avian influenza should it occur in Alabama. We also maintain a close relationship with the Southeast Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study, recognized for expertise in dealing with wildlife disease issues.

Diversity in the Workforce: We have not been as successful as we had hoped in creating diversity in the section's workforce. We have participated in the SEAFWA diversity committee and have communicated our needs to university wildlife departments. This problem is not unique to Alabama and is one we will continue to work to improve.

Hunter Education: The mandatory hunter education program brought Alabama in line with the majority of states. The program is beneficial in providing information to the state's hunters. We continue to explore better delivery mechanisms to minimize scheduling conflicts. A home study option has been developed for hardship cases. A Hunter Education CD ROM program, developed in cooperation with seven other Southeastern states, has been readily accepted by instructors and students. A Hunter Education Internet course was brought online in the spring of 2003. This course along with the CD ROM has greatly improved access to the mandatory hunter education program. Volunteers continue to be an integral part of the program by teaching classes and delivering the information to students. We hope to create a

mentoring program for license aged hunters who have not yet completed the hunter education program. Legislation for this effort is required.

Public attitudes toward management of deer in Alabama have shifted from management for higher numbers of deer to management for improved quality within deer populations. Changes in seasons and bag limits have been made in order to help alleviate problems such as overpopulation, unbalanced sex ratios, and the percent of bucks and does in the harvest. Wildlife biologists continue to work with hunters to help them better understand harvest strategies and to help them develop a program to meet their goals.

Hunter Participation: Hunter participation continues to remain approximately the same over the past few years. However, over the long term, statistical numbers reveal a decrease in comparison to the percentage of the population. There are many contributing factors to this, and it is not a problem unique to Alabama. Convenient locations to hunt and shoot are part of the problem and steps to correct those problems have been mentioned. It is thought that low participation is greatest in the younger age groups. An emphasis on youth programs will continue. A computer based license distribution system would assist in obtaining and analyzing demographic information.

FUTURE PLANS

- The Wildlife Section will continue operating WMAs for outdoor recreation. Every effort will be made to add acreage to WMAs, including contacts with corporate and private landowners and working with the Forever Wild program to identify appropriate tracts of land to purchase.
- We will continue to improve our relationship with the non-hunting public. Legislation in the U.S. Congress has provided limited funding for nongame wildlife work. It appears it will be some time before the comprehensive program most states prefer is passed. Any federal money that becomes available will require a state match.
- Sport shooting is closely related to hunting activities, and it is important for the public to have safe areas to participate in that sport. We will continue our efforts to increase developed shooting range sites. We are anxious to form more partnerships similar to the one in Etowah County.

- We plan to continue the youth dove hunting program by offering youth dove hunting sites across the state next year. This program has not only been popular with young hunters, it has opened many new areas for public hunting and has helped to create new partnerships. It has also brought national attention to our program. We will also maintain and continue to add sites to the hunting trail for people with physical disabilities.
- The alligator season that began in the Mobile Delta will continue and alligator populations in other areas of the state will be evaluated to determine if hunting seasons are needed and feasible.



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