

06-07

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 Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2006-2007. As you will see, the Department was involved in many projects during the year.

As you know, the legislature passed a bill which raised the prices of resident and non-resident hunting and fishing licenses. The bill also provided for the new Wildlife Heritage License which will increase the Division's ability to match available federal funds and provide opportunity for non-hunters and anglers to financially support the Department. Additionally, a mentor provision allowing hunting license buyers the option to hunt under the "supervision required" status in lieu of passing the hunter education course was also passed.

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, including 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 2006 down in the Delta was extremely successful in helping control the overpopulation of gators. In an effort to expand on that success, more days and a second location (Lake Eufaula) were added for the 2007 hunts. A total of 98 alligators were bagged in the 2007 hunts.

Education is a major function of the Department. Last year more than 41,197 persons successfully completed the Basic Boating Course; more than 275 women completed the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Program; the Community Fishing Program conducted 56 events with over 12,883 participants; and the Youth Dove Hunting Program included 29 sites across the state with approximately 1,424 participants with 21.6 percent being first time hunters. The number of schools participating in Alabama's National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) has increased to an all time high of 100. Additionally, teachers from 263 schools have been certified to teach the NASP curriculum.

Work continues on renovations at several of Alabama's state parks. Construction of the Gulf Resort State Park Pier has begun, new cottages opened at Joe Wheeler Resort State Park, and the Lake Guntersville Resort State Park Lodge renovation was completed. An official grand opening of the lodge is scheduled in early 2008. Additionally, renovations to the Lakepoint Resort State Park Lodge have begun.

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 style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

M. Barnett Lawley
Commissioner

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Department Overview

The Alabama 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, 35 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 receives 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 2007:

- February 10, 2007 at the Gordon Persons Building Auditorium in Montgomery
- March 10, 2007 at 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center in Spanish Fort
- May 19, 2007 at the Huntsville Museum of Art in Huntsville

CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2007

Members	Home Town	Term Expires
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, 2013
Wayne May	Eutaw	March 28, 2009
Raymond Jones, Jr.	Huntsville	May 9, 2013
Ross Self	Gulf Shores	March 28, 2009
Warren Strickland	Huntsville	May 20, 2011

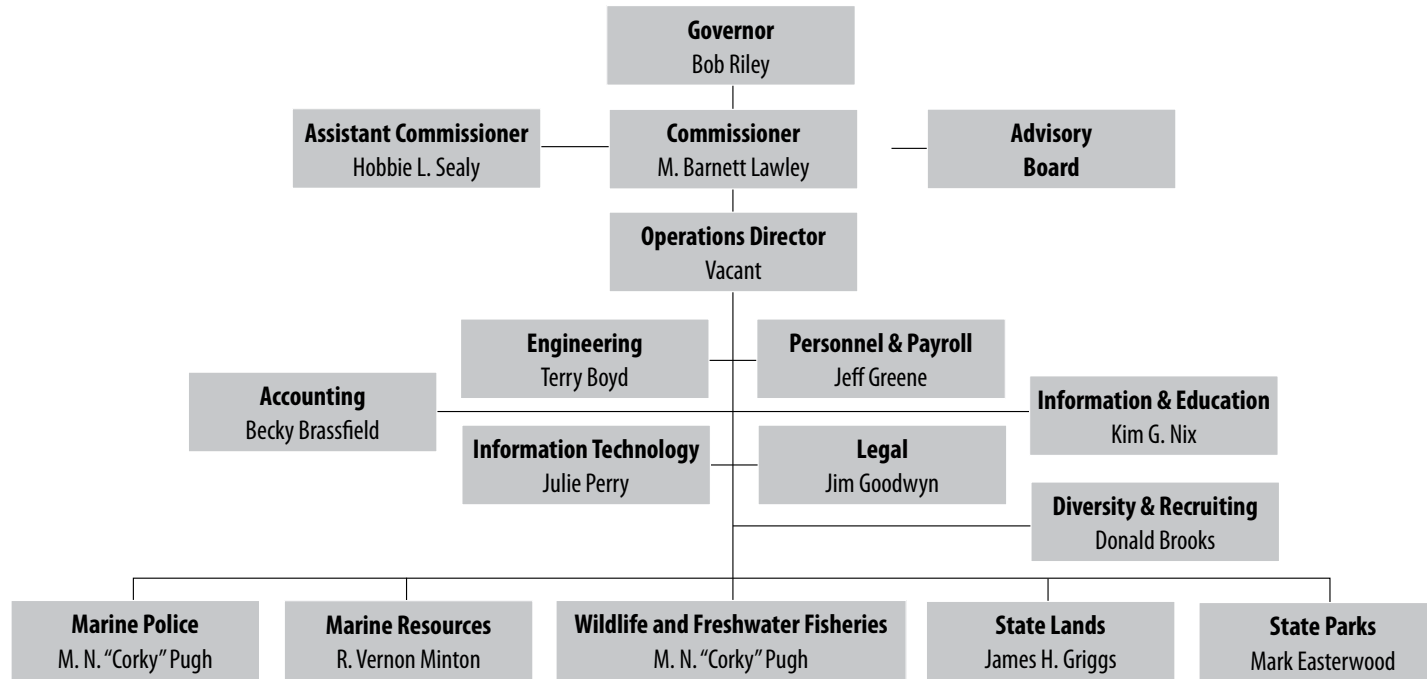
EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

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

EX-OFFICIO SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

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

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & NATURAL RESOURCES



2006-2007 BUDGETS AND EXPENDITURES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

Section	Budgeted Amounts	Actual Expenditures
Accounting	\$910,914	\$808,525
Auditing	\$276,408	\$260,676
Boat Registration	\$261,040	\$187,317
Commissioner's Office	\$1,300,121	\$995,812
Diversity	\$203,003	\$154,491
Engineering	\$1,899,366	\$1,496,031
Information & Education	\$1,279,671	\$1,142,599
Information Technology	\$1,500,628	\$1,344,863
Legal	\$955,758	\$774,335
License	\$342,590	\$269,475
Personnel & Payroll	\$821,872	\$570,148
Property Inventory	\$163,823	\$168,462
Totals	\$9,915,194	\$8,172,734

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. An Assistant Commissioner was appointed by the governor to the Department this year.

The Commissioner's administrative staff includes six 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, and Personnel and Payroll. 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 by 2003, \$107 million of which was compensatory damages (underpayment of royalties) and interest. During 2007, litigation against Exxon Mobil was apparently concluded with the decision of the Supreme Court of Alabama to uphold compensatory damage claims in the amount of \$51 million. Exxon had previously escrowed \$20 million in anticipation of the decision. The Supreme Court rejected all of the punitive damage claims. Interest on the unpaid amount of \$31 million dating back to totaled \$41 million for a total of \$72 million currently owed to the state. The state's attorneys will audit Exxon Mobil for the balance of unpaid royalties for years 2003 -2007.

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. Fifty-three percent of our 478 license agents are electronic and sell 76 percent of our licenses.

The Information Technology Section began work on a point-of-sale system for boat 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 State of Alabama.

The State Auditor's Office commended the Department in recognition of achieving a perfect property inventory audit for FY 2007.

FUTURE PLANS

- Although the automated hunting and license system is 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 timely valuable statistics for management, contact resources to find out what user needs or concerns are, and feedback on current and ongoing projects.
- It was anticipated that a point-of-sale system for boat registration for the Internet and probate offices would be piloted during FY 2007; however, it had to be pushed back to FY 2008. It is anticipated that several probate offices will be able to pilot the program some time during FY 2008.

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
& NATURAL RESOURCES**

**DCNR Total
ACTUAL
2006-2007**

**DCNR Total
BUDGETED
2007-2008**

**DCNR Total
REQUESTED
2008-2009**

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	1,182	1,460	1,475
UNENCUMBERED CASH BALANCE FORWARD	39,028,499	32,974,666	27,433,446
Total Federal Funding	30,723,025	55,938,977	49,860,446

Hunting Licenses	9,797,192	9,948,964	11,587,095
Fishing Licenses	7,094,518	7,204,423	8,390,655
Land Management Fees	6,422,277	7,000,000	7,000,000
User Fees	21,015,433	31,786,693	33,243,303
Boat Registration	5,070,699	5,611,085	7,496,319
Timber Sales	1,250,724	500,000	500,000
Fines	863,566	845,000	870,000
Trust Fund Interest	0	0	0
Other	872,655	410,658	547,150
Total Departmental Related Receipts	52,387,064	63,306,823	69,634,522

Cigarette Tax	3,411,069	3,500,000	3,500,000
Gasoline Tax, Would go to DOT if DCNR did not Receive	3,686,469	3,700,000	3,700,000
Use Tax Discount Cap, All but State Lands Required, State Lands Coastal Program discontinued if funding lost.	2,290,195	2,328,057	1,613,401
Sales Tax Discount Cap	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
General Fund	0	0	0
DCNR Transfers	50,000	50,000	50,000
Forever Wild Land	375,000	675,000	675,000
Total Other Receipts	14,812,733	15,253,057	14,538,401

Administrative Transfer	7,540,727	8,528,054	10,240,318
Actual All Receipts	105,463,546	143,026,911	144,273,687
BFY 2006-2007 Expenditures	111,523,382	148,568,131	160,060,935
Revenues verses Expenditures--Over(Under)	(6,059,833)	(5,541,220)	(15,787,248)

UNENCUMBERED CASH BALANCE	32,974,666	27,433,446	11,646,198
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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 and other training for the Department.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Statewide recruiting
- Natural Resources Law Enforcement training program for colleges (Internet Classes)
- Regional partnership with Federal agencies
- Adopt a school/community program for Elementary, Junior High and High School
- Statewide college internship program
- Welfare to Work partnership with Alabama Department of Human Resources
- Diversity and other training for managers and employees on a continuing basis
- Development of an affirmative employment plan

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue developing statewide and regional recruiting
- Enlarge 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.
- Develop a ten county college and high school job fair
- Continue the Natural Resources Law Enforcement Training program to include instructors from Alabama State University (ASU), Auburn Montgomery (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.

- 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; news releases distributed to media outlets; brochures for various Department programs; Web and special video productions; and a weekly outdoors column on the Department's Web site, outdooralabama.com.

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 801 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 service 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 11 authorized and filled positions during FY 2007: One Public Information Manager who served as section chief and magazine editor; one Public Information Manager who served as writer for a weekly online news column and magazine articles; one Public Information Specialist who served as a staff writer and media liaison; one Photographer II who served as staff photographer and

DIVERSITY AND RECRUITING

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

art director, one Artist-Illustrator II who served as graphic designer; one Conservation Education Specialist who coordinated workshops within assigned regions; one Audio-Visual Specialist III and one Audio-Visual Specialist II who served as videographers and video editors; two Administrative Support Assistant IIIs who provided clerical support for the section; and one Laborer who provided section support as needed.

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, and many other special projects. Photographic and audiovisual services were provided as needed. Eighty-three press releases were written in support of Department activities.

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

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue the popular *Outdoor Alabama* photo contest with winners published in the magazine. The winning artwork is displayed in different venues around the state.
- Continue working with State Parks to promote their Web site.
- Produce informational and instructional videos for the Department's Web site.

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

The staff of 11 includes an IT Manager, Programmer/Analysts, Systems Specialists and Technicians. During FY 2007, two contract positions were 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 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

- Continue to develop Web-based applications to provide better public access and reduce paper driven processes.
- Research possible uses of wireless technologies in the State Parks, Enforcement, and the district offices.
- Develop online Boat Registration Renewal system and an agent point-of-sale system.
- Provide technical support for implementation of property management system in Alabama State Parks.

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 Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' 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.

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue to provide payroll and personnel support services throughout the Department.

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 19 employees during FY 2006-2007: one Chief of Engineering Services, one Architect II, two Professional Land Surveyor IIIs, one Landscape Architect, one Design Technician Supervisor, one Graduate Engineer one Legal Research Assistant, one Clerk Stenographer III, one Conservation Construction Inspector I, three Land Survey Technicians, three Design Technicians, one Survey Assistant, and two retired state employees. The section's facilities are located in Montgomery and Oak Mountain State Park.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Engineering Section continued to provide on-site professional and technical support in the rebuilding of property and structures damaged or destroyed by storm activity in 2004 and 2005. Coordination with FEMA, local communities, and other federal, state and local agencies continues. The Engineering Section administered over \$30 million in contracts both initiated and coordinated in FY 2006-2007.

Engineering Section programs consist of providing the necessary professional expertise required to reach Department goals. These programs include capital and 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 file 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, 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 park trail maps and completed numerous banners, posters, retirement certificates and appreciation awards. The section continued communication between the Alabama Department of Transportation and Alabama 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 wildlife management areas, new state park brochure/map and other related data to digital form. The section continues to produce a digital archive of record plans and maps previously in paper format. This digital archival record includes files produced dating back to in the early 1800s, though Civilian Conservation Corps (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

Provided location maps; continued work on the Engineering Section's U.S. Geological Survey quad maps; continued to update the Engineering Section's digital filing system; provided assistance and support in the Parks renovation program; continued section's complete archival file scanning and production of digital format plan archives; and assisted in deed reviews and acreage estimation for the purchase of new lands and/or lease procurements.

Marine Police:

- Marshall County: Program development and planning performed for future proposed new District Office Building in Guntersville.

Marine Resources:

- Saltwater line project bid and awarded
- Claude Peteet Mariculture Center canal dock facility in planning stage
- Cotton Bayou parking lot repaving
- Mo's Landing in planning stage

State Lands:

- **Bullock County:** Completed construction documents, advertised for and accepted bid proposals, and completed construction of a new dormitory at the Wehle Nature Center. Performed plan development for new dormitory facilities. Completed construction of satellite toilet facility at the Wehle Nature Center.
- **Lillian Tract, Baldwin County:** Property Line Surveys, construction of fire lanes.
- **Minkin Fossil Tract Site, Walker County:** Property line surveys.
- **5 Rivers Delta Resource Center:** Coordinated construction of utilities, roads and buildings. Performed topographical surveys.
- **General:** Assisted in navigability research and provided plans for oil and gas lease tracts with acreage estimation. Administered construction of multi-purpose building at Weeks Bay. Continued to perform surveys of hurricane damage. In regard to wet debris removal, significant coordination of debris cleanup and emergency projects were required to be done at all coastal areas.

State Parks:

- **Cathedral Caverns:** Completed documents for construction of a new gift shop at the Cavern Entrance Building and Interpretive Sign at entrance; coordinated with park crew for future construction.
- **DeSoto Resort:** Campground design.
- **Chewacla:** Completed work on construction documents for new office, entrance, 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 Resort:** Began investigation into renovation work necessary at the lodge and hotel units. Administered work in continuing improvements, site work design stage; Continued design, construction and administration of large covered dock and transient docks. Campground planning performed.
- **Lakepoint Resort:** Continued administration of work with consultants for renovation of lodge, cabins, marina, and site improvements. Continued design, construction and administration of Transient Docks. Worked with consultant on campground renovation.
- **Meaheer:** Campground design.

- **Oak Mountain:** Continued administration of work with consultants preparing design documents for master plan and improvements. Administered construction phase of renovation to the Interpretive Center. Completed construction of new water lines, sewer lines and sewer system. Performed campground planning. Continued evaluation of erosion and sediment control at fishing lake.
- **Rickwood Caverns:** Performed Campground planning
- **Lake Guntersville Resort:** Continued to administer work with ongoing overall lodge and park improvements-construction phase. Continued design, construction and administration of transient docks project. Provided additional survey and topographic information for park improvement projects; performed property line surveys.
- **Roland Cooper:** Sewage outfall system in permit stage.
- **Wind Creek:** Campground planning and design performed.
- **Monte Sano:** Campground planning and design performed.
- **Gulf Resort:** Registration building renovation planning. Campground store renovation planning. Pier project was bid and awarded. Sand dune rehabilitation planning in conjunction with NOAA and FEMA. Continued to administer/work with consultants preparing design documents for park improvements. Continued to participate 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 park improvement projects; performed property line surveys. Completed phase one of campground landscape and reforestation. Continued to work with local authorities by design, consultation and coordination for trail improvements and links to city trails and park trail systems.
- **General:** Conducted research/plans for various other 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 Parks master planning program. Numerous projects completed under \$50,000 in upgrading and repairing facilities throughout the State Park System. This required intensive participation by the Chief of Engineering Services and other Engineering staff.

Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries:

- **Landowner Incentive:** Consulted on future stream bank restoration projects.
- **Freedom Hills Management Area:** Performed property line surveys.
- **State Lakes:** Completed construction of new concession building at Lee County Lake.
- **Swan Creek:** Continued post-construction administration at the new District One office building.
- **Hatcheries:** Completed over 10 projects under \$50,000 for facilities at the Marion State Fish Hatchery. Administered construction of a Mussel Rearing Facility at the Alabama Aquatic Biodiversity Center.
- **Fisheries:** Elk River Boat Ramp, Lauderdale County, performed topographic and property surveys; Shoal Creek Boat Ramp planning. Administered Mud Creek Docks, Flint Creek Docks, and Mt. Vernon Boat Ramp and Docks projects. Pelican Point, reconstructed boat ramp parking lot. AL 229 Boat Ramp Macon/Elmore County, performed topographic and property surveys.
- **Law Enforcement:** Provided digital files for hunter education and location maps; provided digital state WMA map for the Alabama Department of Transportation; performed property line surveys for numerous properties under the control of this division.
- **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.

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue to assist and coordinate ongoing storm-related repairs and reconstruction and continue coordination with FEMA and insurance settlements.
- Consult with State Parks for the identification, upgrading and construction of Accessible Destinations Initiative.
- Continue to surveying property lines for State Parks, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries and other critical locations involving the Department.
- 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 FY2007 are as follows:

Division	Number of Items	Value
Parks	3,643	\$14,251,702.87
Marine Resources	614	\$3,749,355.70
Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries	4,482	\$19,238,138.13
Administrative	529	\$1,691,167.16
Lands	511	\$2,354,228.22
Marine Police	1,132	\$6,040,718.49
TOTAL	10,911	\$47,325,310.57

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.

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 1639 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/public information 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 AMP 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 Resort 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 2006-2007, the Marine Police Division operated with 73 employees statewide. This included 59 uniformed officers, 8 clerical personnel, three marine mechanics, one painter, two laborers, and the Division Director.

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

For the fiscal year 2007, the Marine Police Division was authorized a budget of \$8,701,550. Total expenditures amounted to \$7,508,985. 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

- The Legislature passed Act No. 2007-420 (HB256), raising the fees charged for registration and the transfer of ownership on pleasure boats.
- Officer Mark Fuller, working in conjunction with the Benjamin Russell High School Media Class, produced a video, "Sink or Swim", aimed at underage drinking and boating. The students wrote, starred in, directed, produced and edited the video as part of a class project. It was shown at the NASBLA national convention and has generated many requests for copies from states across the nation. Additionally, it was distributed to every public high school driver's education class in Alabama.
- The Division had eight firearms instructors certified through the FBI Firearms Instructor Certification Course.
- All Marine Police Officers completed Incident Command System (ICS) training in levels 100, 200, 700, and 800. The majority of Marine Police supervisors also completed ICS training levels 300 and 400. The remaining supervisors will complete the final two levels during the 2nd quarter of 2008.
- Alabama Power Company contributed a \$25,000 grant to be used to promote public safety on the 12 Alabama Power Company impoundments.
- Two supervisory positions were filled during this year: District III Captain and District II Lieutenant.

- 7 new recruits were admitted to and passed Marine Police Recruit School Training.

ENFORCEMENT

In FY 2007, Marine Police officers were on patrol for 42,464 hours. There were 19,394 vessel contacts that resulted in 3,176 arrests and 6,031 written warnings. Drinking and operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs remained a problem on Alabama's waterways resulting in 65 arrests for boating under the influence of alcohol and 23 arrests for illegal possession of drugs. 95 arrests were made for illegal possession of alcohol and 157 citations were written for careless/reckless operation of a vessel or personal watercraft.

Marine Police officers performed 553 hours of search and rescue and assists to boaters. Marine Police officers were called upon by other law enforcement agencies for 551 hours of assistance with various duties. There were 58 marine events permitted by the Division, resulting in 293 hours of security patrol.

Marine Police officers remain 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 terrorist threat. Approximately 3,397 hours were expended on Homeland Security patrols

The Boat Theft Investigators opened and closed 91 cases of boat theft in 2007.

Officers investigated 113 boating accidents that resulted in 11 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) or the Dive Team. DRT, comprised of 21 officers from all areas of the state, 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, and works cases from body recovery to stolen weapon drops.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Education Section of the Alabama Marine Police Division continues in a joint cooperative venture with the Alabama

Department of Education Driver Education Section, with the implementation of the boating education taught in the driver education classes. Compliance continued to increase during the 2006-2007 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 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 Alabama Department of Public Safety. Because the state approved online boating course, www.boat-ed.com, which was implemented as another alternative for the vessel license requirement, received such a healthy response, the Division approved an additional on-line course, www.boaterexam.com. The new course provides an alternative to the existing course and is proving to be very popular, especially with younger boaters. Additional printed materials and videos were acquired for use in providing public education for the marine community.

Marine Police personnel taught a total of 70 boating courses during the year 2007. Officers conducted 468 public education programs and presentations with 65,884 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. Due to the success of last year's life jacket awareness safety program, T-shirts with a boating safety message were again 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 167; in addition, 292 newspaper articles and magazine articles were published statewide. A public service announcement aimed at boating safety over the Fourth of July weekend was distributed statewide and proved to be a popular PSA. It continued showing throughout the rest of the year and has been shown in the Georgia and Florida markets as well. Time expended on educational functions by the officers totaled 4,286 hours with 90,000 units of boating literature distributed to the public. Officers dedicated 502 hours to placing, replacing, and repairing 249 aids to navigation on Alabama's waterways.

MARINE POLICE

More than 41,197 persons successfully completed the Basic Boating Course taught by Marine Police officers in 2007.

2006-2007 BOAT REGISTRATION STATISTICS

Total Number of Boats

Registered	273,987
Ownership Transfers Processed	27,401

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

2006-2007 MARINE POLICE LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

- Routine Patrol42,464 hours
- Homeland Security Patrol.....3,397 hours
- Search and Rescue and Assists to Boaters... 553 hours
- Vessel Contacts 19,394
- Arrests..... 3,176
 - 65 for boating under the influence of alcohol
 - 95 for illegal possession of alcohol
 - 23 for illegal possession of drugs
- Written Warnings..... 6,031
- Boating Accidents113
- Fatalities 11
- New Boat Theft Cases91

Marine Police officers continue to work closely with ADEM in the implementation of the Marine Sewage Act of October 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 at marinas without a pump-out or waste disposal system (except in emergency situations). Although officers have found enforcement problems within the Act, 700 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 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 the State Lands' Coastal Section in the development and implementation of the Clean Marina Act.

BOAT REGISTRATION

The Boat Registration Unit is responsible for registration and records retention of approximately 400,000 boats. The total number of boats registered in FY 2007 was 273,987. In addition, 27,401 ownership transfers were processed. Great strides have been made by the Registration Unit and the IT Section in implementing an on-line renewal system. Because of the built-in safeguards, utilization of this on-line 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 on-line 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 due to resignations and retirements and upgrading outdated equipment. 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 \$1.6 million. With a turnover of nearly 18 percent of experienced personnel (by FY 08) and the additional responsibility of providing security and safety 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, outdated communication and enforcement equipment will need to be replaced. New technologies are in place through other law enforcement partners that will enable officers to work more efficiently and effectively. With ongoing enforcement of the Marine Sanitation Act, problems within the legislation continue, resulting in a need for an amendment of this Act in order to provide clear enforcement authority.

Legislation (Act 2006-398) was passed in 2006 pertaining to boat size and speed for Lake Martin, Lake R.L. Harris and Lake Weiss. However, enforcement of this Act has been delayed pending a ruling/decision of the court.

FUTURE PLANS

- Hire 10 officers and implement a new session of Marine Police Recruit School.
- Increase budget authority to reflect boat registration increase.
- Purchase four patrol boats to replace older model boats which will be placed in service elsewhere.
- Replace/update camera systems on patrol boats.
- Purchase hand-held PDA units in order to facilitate access to the Voyager system. This system enables officers to access boat registration records while on patrol.
- Host The National Association of State Boating Law Administration (NASBLA) Boating Accident Investigation Seminar in January 2008. This event will be at no cost to the Division and will be attended by participants from all of the southeastern states.
- Will send 12 candidates, at no cost, to Marine Patrol Officer Training at the U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Training Academy at Charleston, S.C.
- Reduce the number of boating accidents resulting in fatalities and injuries.
- Work with the Accounting and Information Technology Sections to update the antiquated boat registration system and implement/refine a new on-line renewal and registration system.
- Work toward amending the Marine Sanitation Act and inspect at least 50 percent of all vessels with a marine sanitation device.
- Introduce boat theft legislation and legislation to increase reportable property damage amounts on damage-only accidents to \$2,000.

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 60 employees of the Administrative, Enforcement, and Fisheries Sections during Fiscal Year 2007.

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

A total expenditure of \$9,503,969 was made from the approved budget of \$15,422,007. Revenue of \$9,654,258 was made up from federal aid (72 percent), license fees (21 percent), marine gas tax (six percent), and other sources (one percent). This plus a cash forward balance of \$529,691 provided funding of \$10,183,949 for the fiscal year.

The Administrative Section expended \$301,558 on salaries and benefits, \$589,758 on all other charges for an administrative expenses total of \$1,255,095. Other expenditures handled by this section included \$665,337, the total of administrative transfer payments to Montgomery. This represented a total of \$1,556,653.

Expenditures for the Enforcement Section totaled \$1,846,089 of which \$24,345 was reimbursable by a grant from the National Marine Fisheries Service and \$750,000 was reimbursable under a Joint Enforcement Agreement from NOAA/Office of Law Enforcement.

Fisheries Section expenditures were \$6,101,227, which consisted of funds from 26 federal aid programs and required state matching funds. Federal aid projects varied in state match requirements from zero to 25 percent. Included in these expenditures, in addition to the normal expenditure were shell planting activities, and boating access area up-keep, renovation, and construction. Fisheries section expenditures include \$3,213,839 of Emergency Disaster Recovery Program (EDRP) monies and \$788,585 of Oyster Ivan Recovery grant monies, and \$409,472 spent on development of artificial reefs.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

The lack of adequate quantities of high salinity, high quality water for rearing of marine fishes such as red snapper at the Claude Petete Mariculture Center (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. A contract has been awarded and preliminary construction began on November 28, 2007. It is estimated that it will take 15 months to complete.

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

Enforcement officers continued to improve and expand the Coastwatch Program, training citizens to recognize and report violations of saltwater fishing laws and regulations. Information from Coastwatch members has 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. To date, 203 citizens have been trained at 31 training sessions held in Mobile, Baldwin, and Jefferson counties. The response to the program continues to be very positive.

The U.S. Department of Commerce appropriations budget for the FY 2006 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 \$750,000 as part of the agreement. The money will be 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.

The 2007 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.

The success of the electronic trip ticket computer program continues to grow. Currently 29 Alabama seafood dealers are actively using this program. These dealers contribute up to 65% of yearly Alabama 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 2007, MRD staff participated in two 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 our children's art section. The events included the four-day Mobile Boat Show and the one-day Conservation Bird Festival at Fairhope.

The MRD hosted two fishing outreach days at CPMC in 2006. A total of 20 children and teachers from Baldwin county were given the opportunity to fish in one of CPMC's ponds stocked with red drum 12-16 inches in size. Nearly all of the participants caught fish, some for the first time in their lives. In addition to fishing, the children and teachers were given a tour of the hatchery operations at CPMC which included red snapper brood stock and juveniles, and the injection and algae rooms.

Four hundred and fifteen new concrete and steel pyramid reefs were deployed in a grid fashion offshore in Alabama's reef areas during FY 2007. This brings the total deployment of these specially fabricated modules to 866. 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.

FUTURE PLANS

- Work with the City of Gulf Shores to renovate the boat ramp at Boggy Point that will give fishermen access to Little Lagoon.

- The development of the inshore artificial reef system, particularly in Baldwin County, will continue as suitable reef material becomes available.
- Continue developing procedures to enhance the Joint Enforcement Agreement with NOAA, assure that such agreements are implemented in future years, and seek long term funding for agreements will continue.
- Continue developing and implementing a coastwide remote monitoring system and technology upgrades to enhance enforcement monitoring, deployment of enforcement manpower, and biological fishing effort research will continue.
- Continue implementing the extension the jurisdiction of District Courts to offenses committed offshore from Alabama in addition to those committed fully within Alabama's territorial sea will continue.

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 Service, and U.S. Customs agents and cooperate extensively with these agencies and other Federal agencies in the coordination of joint enforcement operations, investigative and fisheries enforcement expertise, training, public safety, and other natural resource issues.

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.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Enforcement officers conducted 18,379.5 hours of boat and shore patrol, 13,540 boat checks, 1,598 seafood shop inspections, 23,019 recreational fisherman checks, and issued 1,599 citations and warnings for illegal activities. Thirty-two percent of the citations and warnings (512) were for violations of recreational fishing laws and regulations. The 469 violations of commercial fishing laws and regulations comprised twenty-nine percent of the citations and warnings issued. Officers also issued citations and warnings for 354

**2006-2007
MARINE RESOURCES
LAW ENFORCEMENT
STATISTICS**

Routine Boat and Shore Patrol	18,379.5 Hours
Boat Checks	13,540
Seafood Shop Inspections	1,598
Recreational Fisherman Checks.....	23,019
Citations and Warnings	1,599 Total
<i>Recreational Fishing Laws</i>	
<i>Commercial Fishing Laws</i>	
<i>Boater Safety Laws.....</i>	
<i>Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.....</i>	
<i>Other State and Federal Laws.....</i>	
Administrative Duties, Court Attendance, Training and Equipment Maintenance.....	12,880 Hours
National Marine Fisheries Services Interjurisdictional Fisheries Enforcement Program.....	4,441.5 Hours

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.

violations of boating safety laws and regulations, 71 wildlife and freshwater fisheries, and 193 citations for other state and federal laws and regulations. A total of 12,880 hours was spent on administrative duties, court attendance, training, and equipment maintenance. Officers worked 4,441.5 hours with the National Marine Fisheries Services interjurisdictional fisheries enforcement program.

Enforcement officers continued to improve and expand the Coastwatch Program, training citizens to recognize and report violations of saltwater fishing laws and regulations. Information from Coastwatch members has 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. To date, 203 citizens have been trained at 31 training sessions held in Mobile, Baldwin, and Jefferson counties. The response to the program continues to be very positive.

The U.S. Department of Commerce appropriations budget for the 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 \$750,000 as part of the agreement. The money will be 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.

Officers attended training courses on boat handling, criminal investigation, self-defense, supervision, and other state and federal agency law enforcement programs.

Officers continued to enhance public outreach efforts to better communicate enforcement efforts to provide important information and to foster cooperative management initiatives.

FUTURE PLANS

- Continue to develop mechanisms to improve the Coastwatch program and 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 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 Gulfwide 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.
- Continue to develop and implement a coastwide remote monitoring system and technology upgrades to enhance enforcement monitoring, deployment of enforcement manpower, and biological fishing effort research.

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, 17 Biologist Aides I/II's, and two temporary laborers.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The eighth 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.

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 early 2008.

Four hundred and fifteen new concrete and steel pyramid reefs were deployed in a grid fashion offshore in Alabama's reef areas during FY 2007. This brings the total deployment of these specially fabricated modules to 866. 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.

The effort to create new inshore fishery habitat in south Baldwin County has continued. Demolition of the Gulf State Park lodge and hotel facilities provided 10,482 tons of clean concrete rubble which completed the Bayou St. John Reef in Orange Beach. Demolition of the Fowl River bridge provided enough concrete rubble to complete approximately 85 percent of the Ross Point reef in Perdido Bay. Demolition of the Fish River bridge provided enough reef materials to complete approximately 70 percent of the Ono Island reef. Approximately 1650 tons of concrete rubble was placed on the Upper Wreck Reef in Mobile Bay.

During the year 1,040 fisheries assessment samples were taken. This data is utilized to afford managers the opportunity to review the populations of lower trophic level species to detect any changes before they reach the recreational and commercial important species. A total of 93 habitat assessments were performed, and 4,181 fishermen were interviewed during creel surveys.

The success of the electronic trip ticket computer program continues to grow. Currently 29 Alabama seafood dealers are actively using this program. These dealers contribute up to 65 percent of yearly Alabama 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, MRD processed and submitted trip ticket data from 31,825 commercial trips reporting over 32.7 million pounds of seafood worth over \$48 million.

During 2007, MRD staff participated in two 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 our children's art section. The events included the four day Mobile Boat Show and the one day Conservation Bird Festival at Fairhope.

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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: 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.

MARINE RESOURCES

Four hundred and fifteen new concrete and steel pyramid reefs were deployed in a grid fashion offshore in Alabama's reef areas during FY 2007. This brings the total deployment of these specially fabricated modules to 866.

**MARINE RESOURCES
FISHERIES**

The eighth 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.

Fisheries Assessment and Monitoring Program (FAMP): 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 2007, 205 trawls, 54 seines and 62 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. One hundred eighty-two nets set were conducted, collecting 5,794 finfish representing 6 freshwater and 46 saltwater species. An assessment of the spotted seatrout stocks was submitted to the director and is currently under external review.

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 fisheries-dependent data on commercial shrimp, oyster, crab and finfish landings. Additionally, information on processed seafood such as crab meat and mullet is compiled. Biological information was collected on striped mullet, flounder, 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 fishery-independent data base on recreationally and commercially important marine and estuarine fishery stocks. This project provides funds to assist in management of the Alabama shrimp fishery and evaluate spawning success and juvenile survival for important recreational and commercial species. In 2007, 18 offshore 40-foot trawl samples and nine nearshore ichthyoplankton samples were collected. Quarterly sampling using a 16-foot trawl in state waters resulted in 75 trawls, 12 seines and 15 beam plankton trawls samples collected.

Inshore Roving Creel Survey: The survey uses non-uniform probability roving creel sampling based on aerial overflight counts to sample the marine recreational fishery in coastal Alabama. Goals of the survey include characterization of Alabama's coastal recreational boat fishers and their catch. Biological information from fishermen's catch are helpful for determining health of fish 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 effort information on a trip level for shore, charter and private boat anglers throughout the United States. Data generated from the survey is used by fisheries managers throughout its scope of coverage. MRD has a subcontract to conduct the portion of MRFSS which collects data from anglers after they have completed their fishing trips and interviews charter boat captains for effort. Division personnel completed 2,200 fishermen interviews for FY 2006.

Otolith Sampling Program: Funding for this project is provided through a subgrant from the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission. MRD continued collection of otoliths (ear stones) from red snapper, greater amberjack, king mackerel, and southern and gulf flounder caught by commercial and recreational fishermen. This year the list of species of interest was expanded by 12 to include some inshore (i.e. spotted seatrout, sheepshead, striped mullet, red drum) as well as more offshore species (i.e. gray triggerfish, tilefish, red grouper). Otoliths are used to age fish, important information used to determine the health of fish stocks. A total of 2,045 otoliths were collected in fiscal year 2007.

Commercial Trip Ticket Program: Funding for this program is provided through the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC). This program is part of a Gulfwide effort to generate more specific information for each commercial fishery by collecting landings and effort data from each fishing 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, verified 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 29,996.66 cubic yards of oyster cultch in the summer and fall of 2007. A total of 10,000 yards was planted

in a shallow area outside the mouth of Heron Bay Heron bay. A total of 19,966.66 cubic yards of cultch was planted along the western edge of Cedar Point reef.

Emergency Storm Recovery Funding: Late in the fiscal year, MRD worked with legislators, the Commissioner of Conservation, and neighboring state agencies to secure roughly \$29 million in NOAA fishery recovery funds. The monies are to be used to clean up and restore oyster and shrimp grounds affected by recent hurricanes, and to monitor the recovery of associated fisheries over the next five years. A total of 7,500 cubic yards of cultch was acquired by the division for local oystermen to plant over 1,735 acres in Heron Bay. Oyster dredgers were contracted to remove rocks from Buoy Reef. They removed 848 cubic yards of rock in May and June 2007.

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

FUTURE PLANS

- Collection of 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 will continue.
- 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 (DI) 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 Section will produce larvae of commercially and recreationally important species for use in experiments by the DI Sealab.

- Cooperative projects will continue to be initiated with Auburn University, the (DI) Sealab, 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.
- Continue 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 to collect Alabama commercial seafood landings data via Alabama's Trip Ticket Program and commercial biological fishery dependent data.
- Continue the of cooperative offshore reef creation effort with the Red Snapper World Championship organization.
- The Section will work with the city of Gulf Shores to provide boating access to Little Lagoon by renovating the Mo's Landing boat ramp.

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 Alabama Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation 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 Alabama 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. In addition to these administrative services, the SLD also manages many of the Forever Wild tracts, as well as complimentary tracts purchased by the SLD.

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 opened 5 Rivers, Alabama's Delta Resource Center, in April 2007. Located in Spanish Fort, this new conservation center serves as a gateway to outdoor recreation, conservation education, and land stewardship in the Mobile-Tensaw River Delta. The SLD also 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. The SLD also operates the Weeks Bay Reserve, a research facility geared to protect public estuaries. This function complements the Division's responsibilities for managing submerged lands.

The SLD implements the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) for the State of Alabama. The CIAP is a federally funded program managed by the U.S. Minerals Management Service (MMS) designed to mitigate impacts from Outer Continental Shelf activities. Specifically, the SLD prepares Draft and Final CIAP Plans including projects selected by the State of Alabama, and the two coastal counties, Baldwin and Mobile.

The SLD coordinates 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. Specific accomplishments by each section for this past year follow.

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.
- Administered the Forever Wild Land Trust and State Lands Division acquisition programs and facilitated the purchase of

STATE LANDS DIVISION

Sources of Receipts	Total Income
Commercial Leases	\$122,543
Oil and Gas Leases (Royalties)	\$246,267,105
8(g) Payments (Federal offshore shares)	\$13,510,125
Timber Sales	\$2,515,847
Coal Leases	\$916,145
Coal Gas	\$667,286
Misc., Easements, Fees and Permits	\$12,147,176
TOTAL	\$276,146,227

Distribution of State Lands Division Receipts

Alabama Trust Fund	\$255,121,811
Alabama Department of Education	\$28,651
School Trust Lands	\$9,267,709
Auburn University	\$3,596
Alabama Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation	\$4,279,362

Department of Conservation

State Lands Division	\$6,911,263
State Parks Division	\$11,312
Marine Resources Divisions	\$1,007

Other State Agencies

Alabama Forestry Commission	\$12,367
Alabama Department of Transportation	\$240,512
Alabama Historical Commission	\$256,494
Forever Wild	\$12,143

TOTAL	\$276,146,227
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- the following three tracts of land, totaling 20,692 acres:
- Perdido River Longleaf Hills Tracts (Baldwin County) 9,304 acres.
 - Grand Bay Savanna – Giddens Tract Addition (Mobile County) 1,642 acres.
 - Coosa WMA – Cahaba and Columbiana Tracts (Coosa County) 9,746 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 floating platforms were reserved 98 nights during this reporting fiscal year (over a 100 percent increase from the previous reporting FY).
 - Began implementation of a newly authorized Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP).
 - Prepared a Draft CIAP Plan for FY 2007 and FY 2008
 - Managed the CIAP public participation process as dictated by program guidelines.
 - Developed State of Alabama CIAP projects in cooperation with other ADCNR divisions.
 - Coordinated with the Minerals Management Service and 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.

- Held the 4th Annual Alabama Outdoor Heritage Day at the Wehle Land Conservation Center in Midway, Alabama.
- Held the 2nd Annual Plant Festival at the Wehle Land Conservation Center in Midway, Alabama.
- Began constructing a dorm facility at the Wehle Land Conservation Center in Midway, Alabama.
- Provided 37 public education and/or recreation programs at the Wehle Nature Center and the Wehle Land Conservation Center in Midway, Alabama.
- Assisted with several educational programs at the Minkin Fossil Site.
- Hosted the 4th 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.
- Field staff continued routine land management activities including boundary marking, timber cruising, prescribed burning, invasive plant eradication and law enforcement.

5 RIVERS DELTA RESOURCE CENTER

- Executed a lease agreement with Fairhope Boat Company to open "Five Rivers Outfitters" at Bartram landing - offering canoe and kayak sales, rentals, lessons, and guided tours.
- Opened Blakeley Hall Conference Center- This flexible meeting space is designed to serve needs ranging from K-12 education programs to professional workshops, or even a small reception. Apalachee Exhibit Hall featured exhibits on the Delta's rich natural history as well as:
 - Judging of the Outdoor Alabama Art Show, sponsored by Bay Rivers Art Guild;
 - The watercolors of Carlos Alpha "Shiney" Moon
 - Birding Photography by Terry Hartley.
- Delta Hall, a premier reception facility and meeting space, was rented for over 40 receptions and numerous daytime meetings in the first six months of operation.

**STATE LANDS DIVISION
NATIONAL HERITAGE
SECTION**

Personnel have begun work on a \$100,000 State Wildlife Grant Project to restore longleaf pine habitat on Forever Wild tracts. This work includes tract assessment, gopher tortoise translocation, exotic species control, nest and roost augmentation, and other restorative actions.

- Opened Cypress Gift Shop - featuring an assortment of unique, outdoor-inspired gifts; all purchases support conservation.
- Debuted Tensaw Theater, a 90-seat, high definition, surround sound projection theater used as a “virtual-tour” space to provide guests a quick journey into Alabama’s largest wetland system.
- Installed a turtle exclusion fence to protect the endangered Alabama Red Bellied turtle, which nests on the grounds at 5 Rivers.

**NATURAL HERITAGE SECTION
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- The Natural Heritage Section (NHS) Database is now maintained as a sequel server database. Work continues to improve data entry and reception and to increase accessibility by more users. The database is currently composed of approximately 380,000 records.
- Staff biologists continued collecting detailed GPS/GIS data of the Forever Wild tracts to aid with the management and research of these tracts. Management actions included prescribed burns, sensitive species re-introduction, and hydrological restoration.
- Staff biologists participated in 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 have begun work on a \$100,000 State Wildlife Grant Project to restore longleaf pine habitat on Forever Wild tracts. This work includes tract assessment, gopher tortoise translocation, exotic species control, nest and roost augmentation, and other restorative actions.
- Personnel continue to coordinate a cooperative project 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.
- Personnel continued work in support of the state’s Coastal Impact and Assistance Program.
- Staff continued the process of reviewing new Forever Wild land nominations for biological diversity, ascertaining the availability of all nominated tracts, and providing this information for Forever Wild board meetings.

- Staff 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.
- Staff continued active partnerships with federal agencies including conducting Breeding Bird Survey routes.
- NHS staff continued biodiversity survey work on Forever Wild tracts.

**COASTAL SECTION
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Coastal Resource Improvement Grants:

- Small Town Design Initiative in the Stockton Community - The Baldwin County Commission collaborated with the Auburn University Center for Architecture and Urban Studies to develop a community plan for Stockton.
- City of Gulf Shores Zoning Ordinance - The City of Gulf Shores was awarded funds to update zoning ordinances and incorporate coastal zone management practices.
- City of Foley Public Access & Design - Coastal staff met with the City of Foley and a Citizen Advisory Committee to begin planning improved public access opportunities and recreational facilities at Graham Bayou Park while accommodating sensitive ecosystems in the area.
- Town of Dauphin Island Strategic Plan - The town contracted with the consulting firm 5 E’s to undertake a comprehensive strategic planning process with the community that would provide a blueprint for a sustainable future.
- SLD Coastal Section Special Projects funding.
 - The City of Foley, Riviera Utilities, and Wolf Bay Water Watch, along with the US Geological Survey completed installation of the real time surface water quality data station on Wolf Creek.
 - A Masters student from Auburn University completed a 10-week project to provide the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve with landscape plans to contribute to a comprehensive master plan for future development of the facility.
 - Dauphin Island (DI) Sea Lab purchased five picnic benches made of recycled milk jugs to place on the boardwalk and pavilion area at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab Estuarium.

Coastal Area Research Projects:

- Dauphin Island Sea Lab —
 - Avian Survey of Colonial Nesting Bird Sites.
 - Trophic Dynamics of a Created Salt Marsh, Phase II.
 - Real-time Mapping of Harmful Algal Blooms.
- University of Alabama —
 - South Baldwin County Groundwater Study, Phase II.
 - Assessment of Historical Salinity Variation in Chochohatta and Mobile Bays, Phase I.
 - 306A Construction Projects.
- Steele Creek, Satsuma — Constructed picnic areas and a boardwalk.
- 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center — Constructed a power boat dock and canoe and kayak landing.
- Dauphin Island Park & Beach Board — Constructed a boardwalk at the main beach and the Audubon Sanctuary.
- May Day Park Improvements, City of Daphne — Installed underground power and a restroom facility.

WEEKS BAY NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE

- The 20-year long range plan was completed, submitted, printed, and distributed.
- Construction on two new buildings at the Fish River Marina site was started. The buildings will be used for educational and community functions when completed.
- The NOAA 312 Evaluation process was successfully completed.
- An AmeriCorp group worked and stayed for a month in the summer.
- Twenty-five thousand visitors from all over the nation and world visited the Interpretive Center.
- The 13th Annual Native Plant sale was held at the Safe Harbor site.
- Over 200 young fishermen participated in the Kid's Fishing Day.
- Staff participated in the 2006 Birdfest.
- An arboretum of native trees was initiated at the Safe Harbor location, a cooperative effort of the Reserve and the Weeks Bay Volunteers.
- Held educational workshops for 294 coastal resource managers on wetland regulation and compliance issues for land use professionals; wetland functional assessment methods,

managing erodible soils and storm water; GIS tools for watershed management; statistical tools for resource manager and researchers; terrestrial and wetland invasive plants; economic benefits of conservation planning and no adverse impact floodplain management tools.

- Hosted community education programs on rain gardens and volunteer water quality monitoring.
- Reviewed ADEM permit applications.
- Continued implementation of the Baker Branch subwatershed restoration project.
- Coordinated with visiting researchers on various projects at the Reserve.
- Initiated collection of phytoplankton data from various sites within the Reserve in cooperation with the ADPHA laboratory in Mobile, Alabama.
- Monitored several harmful algal blooms and fish kills; cooperated with researchers from the Dauphin Island Sea Lab to collect extensive data on these blooms in effort to understand cause and effect.
- Continued the System-Wide Monitoring Project to collect weather and water quality data at the Reserve.
- Restored salt marshes with 15 Spanish Fort High School students at Little Lagoon in Gulf Shores and at Weeks Bay Reserve Property.
- Restored beaches with over 100 students from Daphne and Foley High Schools at Alabama Point and Gulf State Park Pavilion.
- Provided hands-on activities for approximately 2,799 K-12 students and 350 adult chaperones throughout the 2006-2007 school year.
- Promoted the Grasses in Classes program through numerous outreach activities to support conservation education.
- Provided interpretive tours and community outreach activities for over 15 civic group activities.
- Carried out numerous land stewardship activities including prescribed burns, removal of exotic species, floral and faunal surveys.

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 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 \$34,094,816 in receipts and 15,503 payment vouchers; and disbursed approximately 28,438 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 Resort, Oak Mountain, DeSoto Resort, and Lake Guntersville Resort 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, assisted in upgrading trails statewide and trail planning at Lake Lurleen, Lake Guntersville Resort and Oak Mountain State Parks.

Natural Resources staff produced articles for publication in magazine and periodical format, helped plan, organize and participate in the Southeastern State Park Directors Conference hosted by the State Parks Division, attended the 2007 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

further implemented an earlier planned project to reestablish 128 acres of longleaf pine and the future enhancement of a pitcher plant/longleaf pine community at Gulf Resort State Park.

Personnel expanded an introductory course in basic fire management in the spring for parks field personnel. Further planning towards establishing classes through the Wildland Fire Academy sponsored by the City of Pelham were finalized as were plans to establish prescribed burn areas in four other state parks plus the implementation of a master wildland urban interface burn plan at Oak Mountain State Park. Section personnel also coordinated and conducted a variety of research programs pertaining to whitetailed deer overpopulations at Oak Mountain, and Lake Guntersville Resort, and assisted in conducting three deer population reduction public hunts at Oak Mountain State Park. Personnel also aided in the live trapping of giant Canada geese at Joe Wheeler Resort and Lake Guntersville Resort State Parks.

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 Resort State Park and further construction of firebreaks within the Park. Section staff also worked at securing other Federal funds for a number of habitat enhancement projects on the coast.

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 Resort State Parks, both to be constructed within the next 12 months.

Staff coordinated scientific collection permit requests for various park locations; 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 landscape/ecosystem management program designed to improve park recreational potential, forest health and wildlife habitat. In the past fiscal year, fuel reduction/wildlife habitat enhancement prescribe burns were completed in five state parks and totaled 149 acres. In addition, timber stand improvement/wildlife habitat enhancement thinning

STATE PARKS

NATURAL RESOURCES SECTIONS

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.

**STATE PARKS
NATURAL RESOURCES
SECTIONS**

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

and salvage operations were conducted in two parks that totaled 140 acres. Tree planting initiatives on approximately 61 acres were also accomplished.

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 Resort; redesign Oak Mountain's nature center (in progress) 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 Resort 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 of 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 logs many hours in the field inspecting facilities and equipment, investigating complaints and providing guidance to field personnel.

The vacant Operations and Maintenance Assistant Supervisor position was filled in September of 2007, bringing the section to 80 percent of authorized strength for the first time since 2001. Several sections within the division, including the Operations and Maintenance Section, are utilizing part-time retired state employees to offset personnel shortages. The retired workers bring a wealth of experience and dedication but are only part-time and of a temporary nature.

Section personnel reviewed, approved and forwarded to the personnel section more than 650 hourly employee personnel action forms. Six merit system positions were filled after interview and recommendation from the Operations and Maintenance Section.

Law enforcement training was conducted and coordinated by the operations staff for 41 state officers.

The division contracted with Auburn University's Hospitality and Tourism Research Unit to provide hospitality training for all State Parks employees. The training was accomplished in the field by bringing in area parks employees to a single location for intensive hands on training.

The division also contracted with Auburn University's Hospitality and Tourism Research Unit to perform a Guest Satisfaction Survey study. The study will collect input from parks visitors and will be ongoing for a calendar year. The research unit is also updating the State Parks Operations Manual. The manual has not been updated since 1986 and is extremely outdated.

More than 1,000 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 State Parks Division at Board of Adjustment hearings and testified concerning these claims before the board.

Section staff managed a division-wide personal property inventory, in cooperation with the departmental Property Inventory Section, of 5,332 inventory items valued at \$14,331,389.00. Section staff provides daily management of the personal property inventory system and process all additions and deletions to the system.

Section staff manages the property insurance program for the Division and processed seven claims during the year. Continual review of insurance coverage is ongoing by the staff to insure that adequate coverage is maintained on 831 state parks structures.

A formal State Parks inspection program was initiated during this year. The program provides inspection checklists, inspections schedules, responsibilities for inspections and record keeping guidelines. This program will ensure all levels of management are looking at the important elements of our mission and will provide continuity between the various levels of supervision.

A staff housing policy, that incorporates several separate memorandums and oral guidance, was established and formalized during the year. The policy outlines responsibilities, maintenance, inspection, rental rates, and record keeping. The policy also incorporates a rental agreement form to be signed by both parties. This policy will provide definitive guidance for all parties involved in staff housing management.

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 of skills than is available at the park level. The Operations and Maintenance staff is involved in pre-construction meetings with architects planning renovation projects.

The State Parks Operations and Maintenance Section Staff and Construction Crew worked on or completed the following projects in 2007:

- **Blue Springs State Park:**
 - Hauled fill and filled in park Olympic size swimming pool.
- **Cathedral Caverns State Park:**
 - Installed walkway lights at cave entrance.
 - Constructed a 100-foot long rock retaining wall.

- Constructed a safety barrier, consisting of five stone columns with 6-inch treated post between.

- **Cheaha Resort State Park:**
 - Hauled water from Heflin, Alabama to park, beginning in July, to alleviate a water shortage caused by the ongoing drought.
- **Chewacla State Park:**
 - Renovated the bathhouse by installing bubble board on all walls and showers, installing partition doors, and painting the interior and exterior.
- **DeSoto Resort State Park:**
 - Graded and ditched CCC road behind cabins.
- **Floral State Park:**
 - Constructed three new campground sites and installed utilities.
 - Renovated all existing campground sites, including new 8x8 inch timbers and 50 Amp service.
- **Frank Jackson State Park:**
 - Constructed five new campground sites and installed utilities.
- **Gulf Resort State Park:**
 - Replaced campground activities building that was completely destroyed by Hurricane Ivan and added a 16x16-foot kitchen.
 - Renovated 11 bathhouses in the campground, installed heat/air systems, retiled, installed all new fixtures and counter, painted interior.
 - Installed prefabricated comfort station in picnic area.
 - Connected utilities, poured new concrete foundation and sidewalks.
 - Replaced two 8x50-foot piers on Little Lake that were damaged by Hurricane Ivan.
- **Lake Guntersville Resort State Park:**
 - Replaced main feeder electrical line to bathhouse in campground.
 - Installed florescent fixtures in Marine Police portion of building. Repaired exterior flood light and parking lot lights at beach pavilion.
 - Repaired flooring in Assistant Superintendent's staff house.
 - Graded and ditched roadways in Town Creek campground.

- Repaired fishing pier at Town Creek fishing center.
- Rewired two campground bathhouses.
- Replaced 20-foot beam and v-joint ceiling in chalets 407 and 409.
- Repaired porches on chalets by installing flashing, metal roof and gutters.
- Minor renovation of the golf pro-shop included replacing rotten sections around front windows, reinstalling windows, painting, minor electrical work, removing back double doors, installing wood shingle siding, and replacing missing siding around building.

■ **Lake Lurleen State Park:**

- Replaced kitchen floor and portion of interior and exterior walls at manager's staff house.
- Replaced electrical wiring and boxes in campground.

■ **Lakepoint Resort State Park:**

- Replaced beams and siding on campground pavilion.
- Replaced flooring in kitchen, dining and living rooms of staff house.
- Replaced fascia boards, step treads and handrails on cabins five, six, eleven and thirteen.
- Replaced decking and roofing on three golf course buildings.
- Installed new 650-foot power line from electrical source to panel for sewage lagoon pumps.
- Installed water and electrical lines to new transient docks at marina.

■ **Meaher State Park:**

- Rewired all campground sites that were damaged by Hurricane Ivan.

■ **Oak Mountain State Park:**

- Replaced wiring that supplies power to lift station.

■ **Paul M. Grist State Park**

- Replaced electrical pedestals on five campground sites.

■ **Joe Wheeler Resort State Park:**

- Repaired roof of beach pavilion and replaced ceiling.
- Completed renovation of cabin 23.

■ **Wind Creek State Park:**

- Began construction of cabin five by completing foundation, framing, utilities, and cabinetry. It is approximately 75 percent completed.
- Repaired floors in Superintendent's staff house by installing new exterior door and a sliding glass door.
- Began construction of cabins six and seven by digging and pouring footings.

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, camp-ground directories, and newspaper articles; cooperation and coordination with the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel, chambers of commerce, convention and visitors bureaus, tourist association 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* along with ads in the *Birmingham Barons Program* and listings in the *Mile Marker Magazine*. Ads are alternated between the nations' largest two campground directory guides. Last year the ad was placed in *Trailer Life Directory*; next year it will return to *Woodall Camping*. 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. Promotions continues to reach over 27,000 subscribers of these magazines plus another 10,000 who purchase them at newsstands. Promotions has also co-opted with Mountain Lakes Region with a golf ad in the *North Alabama Golf Guide*. Also advertised with the parks were two car shows held this year at Wind Creek and Lakepoint on the cable television show Big Boys Toys and a three-month ad campaign with a Huntsville television station. The commercial specifically promoted Cathedral Caverns State Park and featured Alabama First Lady Patsy Riley.

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 introduced two years ago, was just reprinted for the fourth time. The fourth printing was updated to provide accurate information regarding all 22 state parks. A new color brochure for Gulf Resort State Park is ready for printing.

The Volunteer In Parks (VIP) program continues to provide much-needed help throughout the year at a number of parks. Three positions are vital for the 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 once again participated in the Alabama National Fair held in Montgomery each October. Over 1500, people registered for gift cards given away by Alabama State Parks. Promotions also participated in the 2007 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 and were also exposed to Alabama's southern hospitality. The Fall Camping and RV Show in Atlanta as well as the Quality Deer Management Show in Chattanooga, Tennessee were also events Promotions participated in.

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

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special Events at Alabama 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 park to individuals that otherwise might not visit. The Promotions Section could plan and conduct all type events, but, limited personnel severely hinders the ability to do so. Last year, a very successful car show was held at Wind Creek State Park. A show was held in June of this year. The first car show at Lakepoint Resort was held in August.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

There are numerous ways to promote the Alabama 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, new and unique ways to introduce our parks to individuals who may not ordinarily visit them can be produced. Some state law restrictions make it difficult to have special events in Alabama State Parks. Relaxing some of these restrictions, will enable us to plan, finance and conduct special events more frequently. Lack of sufficient advertising funds limits the ability to produce and distribute effective advertising.

FUTURE PLANS

- To cut back on most printed ads in magazines and focus what advertising revenue we have on television and radio.
- A continued effort will be directed toward revision of each resort state park brochure with Joe Wheeler, Cheaha, and DeSoto Resort State Parks brochures complete. Rickwood Caverns and Cathedral Caverns brochures were updated last year. Lakepoint Resort brochures will be updated as renovations approach completion. Lake Guntersville Resort brochures will be updated early next year. Wind Creek will receive a color brochure during the coming year along with Buck's Pocket and Frank Jackson. A new Gulf Resort State Park brochure is near completion.
- Participation at the Snowbird Extravaganza consumer show again in January of 2008.
- Produce a state parks calendar as our promotional item to use at the show.
- Participate in the Alabama National Fair in Montgomery and the fall camping show in Atlanta. We would also like to have a booth at the Alabama Municipalities Conference this coming year.
- Hold another car show at Wind Creek and hopefully have an additional show at Cheaha Resort State Park.

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT PROJECTS

A joint effort including the Alabama Department of Transportation, The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs will hopefully bring the construction of attractions and destinations for the physically challenged in Alabama State Parks beginning in 2008. This effort began last year after soliciting input from several individuals within organizations who specialize on these type facilities.

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 Resort State Park Lodge and Lake Guntersville Resort 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 Management Analysis Section to assure accurate accounting data. The office works closely with Operations and Maintenance Section on various projects, insurance claims and inventory data. Records of purchases, as well as payment of those purchases and are maintained accuracy of the requisitions and payment vouchers from the State Parks is assured.

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 FY 2007 include routine purchases, emergency purchases and annual agreements. Most purchases were of a routine nature to continue operations. Some purchases included: boat motors, pontoon boats, furnishings, cash registers, building materials, satellite TV equipment, uniforms and a wide variety of commodities and services. In

FY07, bidding for lawn services to include Lake Guntersville Resort State Park and Gulf Resort State Park was expanded. Many restaurant and hotel items were bid for the re-opening of Lake Guntersville Lodge. Advertising, cable TV and internet are now required to be on purchase orders, which added to the workload. Coordination of new building/improvement contracts and assisting with web-site design and maintenance were added responsibilities in fiscal year 2007.

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 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 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division (WFF), 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 legislature passed a bill which raised the prices of resident and non-resident hunting and fishing licenses. The bill also provided for the new Wildlife Heritage License, which will increase the Division's ability to match available federal funds and provide opportunity for non-hunters and anglers to financially support the Division. In addition, a mentor provision allowing hunting license buyers the option to hunt under the "supervision required" status in lieu of successfully completing the hunter education course was passed.

The Youth Dove Hunting program had 29 sites across the state with approximately 1,424 participants, 21.6 percent of which were first-time hunters. The Community Fishing Program conducted 56 events with over 12,883 participants.

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 IIs, one Accounting Technician I, one ASA III, and three ASA IIs.

WILDLIFE DIVERSITY

State Wildlife Grants and the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) 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 FY 2007 was \$943,908. 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 implementation of the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. Federal funding to the Landowner Incentive Program in FY 2007 was \$1,029,510. These funds are used for fish and wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration on private lands in the Paint Rock, Coosa, Cahaba and Choctawhatchee river basins and in association with the longleaf pine ecosystem. These programs are administered by two Biologists in the Administrative Section who work closely with Wildlife Section and Fisheries Section staff. Both programs interact with and engage a broad range of partners, including federal and state agencies, universities, non-government organizations, and private land owners.

ENFORCEMENT

The Law Enforcement Section of the Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries assists in the 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 IIs, 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

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES FOR WILDLIFE AND FRESHWATER FISHERIES DIVISION

Section Name	Budgeted Amount*	Expenditures
Administrative	\$ 850,070	\$ 824,814
Enforcement	\$12,376,850	\$11,597,625
Fisheries	\$ 6,937,829	\$ 6,650,174
Wildlife	\$ 9,614,237	\$8,950,180
Wildlife Diversity	\$ 1,222,817	\$ 952,022
Transferred to Department Administrative Transfer	\$ 2,544,638	\$ 2,301,738
Total	\$33,546,441	\$31,276,553

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

2006-2007 WILDLIFE AND FRESHWATER FISHERIES LAW ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

Arrests	9,206
Warnings	846

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 twelve 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 Alabama Peace Officers Standard and Training Commission (APOST) certified. These officers are employed on a part-time basis and are used in problem areas of the state or where vacancies exist. The Law Enforcement Section is authorized 131 uniformed field officers. Eighteen of these positions are sergeants who are field supervisors. Due to retirements and resignations, the Section currently has 114 field officers on staff with one lieutenant, one area sergeant and 16 officer positions vacant.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- Officer Grady Myers of Autauga County received the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Officer of the Year Award for Alabama.
- Officer Jonathan Stone of Winston County was selected as The National Wild Turkey Federation's Officer of the Year for Alabama.
- Officer Joe Carroll of Henry County was selected as the Shikar Safari International's Wildlife Officer of the Year Award for Alabama.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ARRESTS AND WARNINGS:

- Officers made 9,206 arrests and issued 846 warnings during FY 2007, 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.
- Reconfigured arrest/bonding paperwork to simplify the process and allow easier data collection/recall.
- Restructured the game breeder licensing and permitting process.

TRAINING OF OFFICERS AND SUPERVISORS:

- Participated in table top exercise simulating major foot-and-mouth disease outbreak with the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries.
- Increased firearms training from two sessions a year to three.
- Refresher training in Pressure Point Control Techniques (PPCT) and Strategy Self Defense Grappling Techniques (SSGT) self defense tactics.
- In-service training in fish and wildlife law enforcement tactics.
- FEMA IS100 and IS700 training (all officers). FEMA G300 & G400 (district supervisors).
- Supervisors received training in Pandemic Influenza Response Planning Conference.
- Officers provided transportation security for vaccines during Pandemic training exercise with Alabama Department of Public Health and FEMA.
- Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center (ACJIC)/ National Criminal Information Computer (NCIC) operating system upgrade training for Police Communication staff.
- Supervisors completed FEMA Incident Control System (ICS) 300/400 Training Courses.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASES:

- Twenty-four new patrol vehicles to replace unreliable law enforcement patrol vehicles.
- New vehicles were equipped with new narrow band capable VHF radios mandated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).
- Two 19-foot fiberglass center console boats and trailers.
- Five VHF radio repeaters.
- Twelve Beretta PX4 Storm 40 caliber pistols.

RECRUITMENT:

- Seven new recruits were hired as Conservation Enforcement Officers. They are assigned to the following counties: Blount, Coosa, Macon, Mobile, Monroe, Shelby and Russell.
- Two officers transferred to Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries from other Divisions and are assigned to Conecuh and Jefferson counties.

FISHERIES SECTION

The "Take a Kid Fishing" license plate became available to the public in 2006 when presales of more than 250 license plates were achieved. In the first full year, 438 plates were sold. The \$18,063 proceeds from the plates help support the Fisheries Section's water resource education activities, enhancement of fish habitat, and restoration of Alabama's aquatic threatened and endangered species.

FUTURE PLANS:

- Complete work on a comprehensive arrest database that can be utilized by all Divisions of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.
- Seek funding to replace 15 VHF repeaters and approximately 75 VHF vehicle radios with narrow band capable equipment as required by the FCC mandate.
- Seek funding to upgrade communications dispatch call logging system (Computer Aided Dispatch system).
- Re-examine public needs/demands for officer assistance in each county/district to better utilize limited budget resources (through SMART planning).
- Utilize Virtual Alabama technology to aid in enforcement of game and fish laws.
- Examine E-Ticket technology for enforcement applications.

FISHERIES

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

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

There are 75 staff members in the Section including fisheries biologists, fisheries biologist aides, malacologists, a clerk stenographer, 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.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Technical Assistance: District fisheries biologists conducted 818 biological checks of private ponds. Individuals requesting assistance were given appropriate solutions in writing to address problems. The Fisheries Section reviewed, investigated and commented on 42 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 11 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 145,110 anglers harvested 237,786 fish weighing 174,113 pounds from all 23 State Public Fishing Lakes. Each angler averaged 1.2 pounds of fish per angler trip. These figures represent an increase of 30 percent and 14 percent respectively, from the number and weight of fish harvested in FY 2006. The number of anglers fishing on Alabama's State Lakes increased approximately five percent from FY 2006. Fisheries biologists and support personnel made 690 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 Hatcheries stocked a total of 632,384 fish into Alabama's State Lakes. Species stocked include: bluegill sunfish, channel catfish, largemouth bass, redear sunfish, and white amur. Additionally, rainbow trout were stocked into Madison County Lake for a winter fishery. New lake managers were hired at Barbour, Bibb, Chambers, Coffee, DeKalb, and Pike County Lakes. Lake manager contracts were renewed at Escambia and Monroe County Lakes. Coffee County Lake was reopened to fishing. Marginal treatments were conducted at Bibb, Dale, Escambia, Fayette, Lower Geneva, Madison, Lee, and Pike County Lakes. A sectional treatment was conducted at Bibb County Lake.

Access Areas: During the year, 289 routine inspections of 120 Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries access areas were made by Fisheries Section personnel. In excess of \$750,213 of Fisheries Section funds were obligated to develop and maintain boating access areas in FY 2007. Major accomplishments include the following: Waterloo in Lauderdale County – two new floating docks, Minky Creek in Marshall County – new wooden dock, Selma City Landing in Dallas County – new floating dock, Easter Ferry in Limestone County – erosion control, Lee-Hi in Limestone County – erosion control, Leesburg in Cherokee County – parking repair, Gordon in Houston County – parking repair, Mud Creek in Jackson County – erosion control, South Sauty in Jackson County – erosion control, Parker's Bridge in Escambia County – repaved

**TABLE 1.
FISH STOCKED DURING FY 2007 IN PUBLIC
WATERS THROUGH THE FISHERIES SECTION'S
PROGRAMS**

Species	Inch Group	Number
Largemouth Bass - Florida	1-9	391,423
Largemouth Bass - Northern	1-4	18,589
Smallmouth Bass	1-2	18,500
Striped Bass - Gulf Race	1-2	506,949
Hybrid Striped Bass	1-2	349,792
Channel Catfish	3-24	125,449
Bluegill	1-8	1,094,087
Redear	1	60,000
Black Crappie	2-7	100,850
White Amur (Grass Carp)	10-19	1,045
Rainbow Trout	8-12	24,499
TOTAL		2,691,183

parking, Waterloo in Lauderdale County – repaved parking, Mt. Vernon in Mobile County – new floating dock, Elk River North in Lauderdale County – ramp extension, Flint Creek in Morgan County – new floating dock, Thomas Mill Creek in Henry County – new floating dock, Flint Creek 67 in Morgan County – erosion control, Maple's Bridge in Limestone County – erosion control, Boligee Access in Greene County – erosion control, Cordova in Walker County – new boat ramp, Mud Creek in Jackson County – new floating dock, Riverview Access in Tuscaloosa County – restripe parking lot, Town Creek in Marshall County – restripe parking lot, Steele Creek in Mobile County – restripe parking lot, Stevenson in Jackson County – restripe parking lot, Road End in Randolph County – repair boat ramp, Moundville in Tuscaloosa County – repaired boat ramp, Gordon in Houston County – repaired boat ramp, and Beeswax in Shelby County – repaired boat ramp. 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. Descriptions of each WFF boat ramp were added to the www.OutdoorAlabama.com Web site.

Aquatic Plant Management: Aquatic plant communities were monitored in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) to determine their impact on small boat navigation and fish populations in Alabama's public waters. Limited work was accomplished, however; during FY 2007 the COE experienced funding difficulties and a decision was made to dissolve the partnership. Due to a lack of funding the Fisheries Section of the Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries will not continue to employ an aquatic plant biologist. Technical assistance concerning public water vegetation problems will be accomplished by district biologists.

Fish Hatcheries: The Carbon Hill, Eastaboga and Marion State Fish Hatcheries distributed 115,050 largemouth bass and 929,750 bream to 86 new private ponds (415.75 acres), 160 renovated old ponds (617.25 acres) and 5 ponds (125.75 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 2,691,233. This information is provided in Table 1 on Page 41.

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 309 presentations on various fisheries topics.

Publications: One technical paper was published in a scientific or technical journal by a Fisheries Section biologist during FY 2007 (see Aquatic Resources Activities).

Research: Through the Investigation and Management Techniques for Public Waters Project, there were four contractual studies ongoing during the year. These studies involved research on the population characteristics of largemouth bass in the Mobile Delta; an evaluation of the recreational catfish fishery in Wilson Reservoir; interactions between stocked channel catfish and other sport fish in public fishing lakes; and a study of the interrelationships of striped bass, largemouth bass and spotted bass in Lewis Smith Lake. Two projects funded through Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program (WCRP) grants were continued during FY 2007. 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 Upper Bear, Holt, Smith, Warrior, Logan Martin, Neely Henry, Eufaula, Bartlett's Ferry, Gantt, Point A, Coffeeville, Miller's Ferry, West Point, Demopolis, Cedar Creek, and Weiss Reservoirs in addition to the upper and lower Mobile Delta. 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 Miller's Ferry, West Point, Point A, Gantt, Demopolis, Harris, and Cedar Creek, and are recorded in the reservoir reports.

General Survey: General fish sampling and surveys were conducted on Holt, Warrior, and Lake Tuskegee. Fisheries survey work was also performed on Mulberry Fork River, Coosa River, Tallapoosa River, Hatchet Creek, Alabama River, Tombigbee River, and Choctawhatchee River. Samples of largemouth bass were collected from Wheeler, Smith, Guntersville, Logan Martin, Lay, Tuscaloosa, and Demopolis Lakes for a genetics study.

Endangered Species (Section-6) Studies: The staff malacologist conducted three endangered species surveys (i.e., Tennessee River mussel and snail recovery, spotted rocksnail survey, and Chipola River headwater mussel survey). The Aquatic Resources Coordinator conducted a survey for the saltmarsh topminnow and administered the following Section 6 contractual studies in FY 2007: eastern hellbender survey; Chattahoochee River mussel survey; Alabama River mussel survey; slackwater darter survey; watercress darter genetics and distribution; bluenose shiner survey, tulatoma snail survey; rusty gravedigger crayfish survey; and Uphapee Creek crystal darter 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 56 community fishing events reaching over 12,883 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 80 sessions that reached 1,781 participants. Seventy casting classes were taught for 2,948 participants. Rods and reels were loaned to physical education instructors who allowed students additional casting practice. Talks about how aquatic resources function were presented to 52 groups with a total audience of 1,405. Information was presented to the public through displays using 61 man-days at events such as boat shows, fairs and Earth Day celebrations. An additional 17 man-days were devoted to displays where potential anglers could enjoy the Sportfishing Simulator. Eight presentations were made to 92 potential instructors about casting, fishing and/or aquatic education.

Twelve fisheries articles were distributed through media outlets, mailing lists and our Web site. One article was published in the *Alabama Forestry Association* magazine, and one was published in *Outdoor Alabama* magazine.

Fishing License Plates: During the first full year of "Take a Kid Fishing" license plate sales, 438 plates were sold. The \$18,063 proceeds from the plates will help support the Fisheries Section's water resource education activities, enhancement of fish habitat, and restoration of Alabama's aquatic threatened and endangered species.

Freshwater Mussel Management and Research: A total of 51 biological field trips were made during this FY 2007 for general and specialized surveys of mussel and snail populations, releases of relocated or cultured animals, brood stock collection and rescue of animals during a reservoir drawdown. Worksites included locations on the Elk River, Tennessee River, Pickwick, Martin, Wilson, Wheeler, Terrapin Creek, Gantt, Coosa River, Buttahatchee River, Paint Rock River, Alabama River, Locust Fork River, Chipola River, Big Creek, Cowarts Creek, Chewacla Creek, Piney Creek, Round Island Creek and Cheaha Creek. 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); Alabama Fisheries Association Annual Meeting; Annual Gulf Sturgeon Workshop; Mid-South Aquatic Society Annual Meeting; Paddlefish Symposium; and Reservoir Symposium. Aquatic Resources staff planned and coordinated the Status of Shoal Bass Meeting held in Auburn. A paper written by Aquatic Resources staff and titled "Conservation and Collection Efforts for the Endangered Alabama Sturgeon" was published in the *Journal of Applied Ichthyology* (JAI). A draft of the State of Alabama ANS management plan was completed and distributed to task force members for review. Sixty state-protected species and four public-water stocking permits were issued in FY 2007. Conservation efforts for the southern walleye continued, with two specimens being collected for broodstock. Shoal bass fingerlings were obtained from Georgia for restoration efforts and stocked in hatchery ponds at Marion for grow-out. Paddlefish data continues to be analyzed for development of a management plan. On April 3, 2007, an endangered Alabama sturgeon was collected below Claiborne Lock and Dam. This is the first specimen collected in nearly eight years as part of an Alabama sturgeon collection and propagation project. The fish was determined to be a mature, reproductively-inactive male and was the second largest ever recorded. The fish was implanted with a 48-month sonic tag and returned to the site of capture on April 17, 2007.

Alabama Aquatic Biodiversity Center: Activities at the Alabama Aquatic Biodiversity Center (AABC) focused primarily on facility re-fit and new construction in 2007. Due to the extensive

**TABLE 2.
FRESHWATER SNAILS STOCKED DURING FY 2007
IN PUBLIC WATERS THROUGH THE FISHERIES SECTION'S
AABC EFFORTS**

Species	Location	Number
Plicate Rockshere (<i>Leptoxis plicata</i>)	Locust Fork	31,500
Total		31,500

**TABLE 3.
FISH STOCKED BY NON-GOVERNMENT PERMIT HOLDERS
IN ALABAMA PUBLIC WATERS DURING FY 2007**

Species	Location	Number
Largemouth Bass	Lay Lake	35,000
Channel Catfish	Guntersville Lake	2,000
Channel Catfish	Neely Henry Lake	1,000
Channel Catfish	Logan Martin Lake	3,000
Total		41,000

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

nature of refit activities, it is anticipated the AABC will not become operational until spring or early summer of 2008. A new culture area (65' x 85') was constructed primarily for snail production but this area may also be used to support fish and mussel culture as well. Major water supply lines were rerouted and new drain boxes installed. The aeration tower was refit and repositioned above ground. Most importantly a new sump, lift station, 60 µm drum filter, and gravel bed filter was installed to filter all effluent coming from the facility. Since the AABC is within one mile of the Cahaba River, an extensive effluent capture system was installed to prevent the possible accidental release of non-native species into the basin. An exterior drainage system was installed around the Wet Lab to channel storm and groundwater away from the lab. Substantial completion of refit activities inside the Wet Lab interior was also achieved in 2007. Additional construction was planned and contracts issued which included replacement of metal on the wet lab, improvement of pond water supply and control valves and installation of mussel culture facilities. These improvements will be completed during the first quarter of 2008. However, some culture activities were undertaken during 2007. Due to the extensive refit work, the AABC was without a water supply from February to May, missing the prime culture season. Some small activities with snails and mussels were carried out in temporary set-ups at the Marion Fish Hatchery. Thirteen different species of mussels were successfully transformed and cultured in temporary facilities. This included four federally endangered species. Host fish determinations were carried out for four species of mussels, two of which had never been successfully transformed previously (Coosa Mocassinshell and Southern Kidneyshell). Additionally, the pond culture of the Coosa Creekshell's (*Villosa umbrans*) transformed in May 2006 continues to be very successful. At 14 months the animals are nearly fully grown and some females appear to have been fertilized. Additionally, four species of snails were cultured during 2007, and two of these are federal candidates as endangered. In October 2006 a release of 31,500 federally endangered Plicate Rocksnails (*Leptoxis plicata*) were introduced into a new site in the Locust Fork of the Black Warrior River in Blount County (Table 2). Subsequent monitoring in August 2007

confirmed reproduction in the introduced population. Finally, mussel monitoring activities were completed in two rivers (Coosa and Elk) to evaluate the effects of flow restoration on mussel communities.

PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS

Public Fishing Lakes: Permit fees appear to be significantly less than fees being charged elsewhere in the Southeast. That makes it more difficult to attract and retain qualified lake managers.

Riverine Habitat: The loss of riverine habitat in Alabama has resulted in the decline or loss of obligate riverine fishes. 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. Our authority is limited to the control of existing vegetation problems and responding to reports of new introductions. The aquatic plant program has been terminated due to funding problems.

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 Kowaliga, Pace's Point, Road End, Lay Lake, and Lion's Park boat ramps.
- Acquire new boat ramp facilities where needed.
- Construct courtesy docks at North Sauty Creek, Minky Creek, Flint Creek, and Mud Creek boat ramps.
- Monitor reservoir fish populations and riverine habitat.
- Expand riverine fish population sampling.
- The first phase of construction for the AABC will be completed in FY 2008 and the staff's attention will turn to production activities.

- The publication of the book *Freshwater Mussels of Alabama and the Mobile Basin in Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee* will be completed in FY 2008.
- Expand efforts to introduce children to fishing and in raising awareness of aquatic resources.
- Investigate Permit Fees for other public fishing lakes and lake access in the Southeast.

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 WFF Director recommendations on hunting season lengths, dates, bag limits and restrictions; 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 to 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 35 WMAs, two wildlife refuges and two sanctuaries (approximately 814,000 acres); administering public hunts on approximately 807,000 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 each 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 four WFF 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.

Wildlife Section facilities include a central office in Montgomery, six district offices, 35 wildlife management areas, two wildlife refuges and two wildlife sanctuaries.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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 counts were also conducted for bald eagles.

Approximately 185,900 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 2,607 miles of boundary lines, 8,907 acres of wildlife openings, and 1,988 miles of area roads were maintained.

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. The results were valuable in determining hunting season lengths and bag limits and evaluating the success of each hunting season.

WILDLIFE SECTION

It was a significant year for bald eagle restoration as the species was removed from any formal listing under the Endangered Species Act.

WILDLIFE SECTION
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.

An annual 28-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, 895 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. Approximately 2,600 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 WFF personnel to develop population indices.

A wild turkey production study was continued to 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 654 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 and continued throughout the waterfowl hunting season in order to meet established quotas.

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 pair of laughing gulls. Additionally, six routes of the Breeding Bird Survey were conducted as a contribution to the continent-wide monitoring of neotropical and other resident nesting species. Assistance was given to the National Audubon Society in their plover surveys in coastal Alabama which documented nests of snowy and Wilson's plovers.

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

Wildlife biologists participated in three National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts, coordinating and compiling one of the count circles.

The Division received \$354,182 of federal aid funds for projects on fish and wildlife species eligible for funding under Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act. Those funds were shared by the Wildlife and Fisheries Sections with approximately one-half the total allocated to projects administered by the Wildlife Section. Population and status surveys for the gray bat, cerulean warbler, and eastern indigo snake are examples of projects made possible by those funds. A Safe Harbor Plan for red-cockaded woodpeckers was implemented for the state of Alabama.

Surveys for the eastern indigo snake concluded with no evidence discovered of the threatened species occurring in the state. An educational brochure and companion poster were produced and printed for distribution to alert the public to the plight of the species and to generate credible sightings of the snake. Biologists attended a three-day meeting in Georgia concerning the conservation of the indigo snake throughout the Southeast.

It was a significant year for bald eagle restoration as the species was removed from any formal listing under the Endangered Species Act. Nongame personnel gave numerous newspaper and television interviews concerning this delisting to Alabama media outlets. Also, for the first time in many years, every known Alabama bald eagle nest was not monitored for productivity and survivorship. However, a selected subsample of approximately 20 nests statewide was monitored to detect any significant statewide problem with Alabama's eagles. Biologists also monitored the number of bald eagles overwintering in Alabama as part of the nationwide 2007 Mid-Winter Bald Eagle Survey. The number of bald eagles wintering in Alabama remains stable.

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 209 landowners and hunting clubs covering more than 483,000 acres.

Providing landowners and land managers technical assistance to help them implement strategies to improve wildlife habitat on their lands continued 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, four WFF Wildlife Biologists worked out of NRCS offices and worked with NRCS personnel to deliver the programs. This partnership will continue with NRCS in FY 2008.

A major longleaf pine restoration project began on the Barbour WMA. When completed, this multiyear project will have restored longleaf pine habitat on approximately 4,000 acres. The longleaf ecosystem is one of the most diverse and species-rich habitats. This project will benefit future generations for decades.

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 developed to meet their needs.

Nine shooting ranges on WMAs 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.

Construction of the Athens Community Archery Park began during the summer of 2007 and should be completed during the early part of FY 2008. This range will have eight youth targets ranging from 5-20 yards. The adult range will have eight targets that vary from 15-50 yards. An elevated platform, approximately 12 feet high, will be available for bowhunters to simulate hunting or shooting from a treestand. A simulated ground blind will also be available for bowhunters to practice shooting from a kneeling or seated position. This range is being constructed through a partnership with the City of Athens and the Archery Trade Association.

Construction of the Marengo County Public Shooting Range began during September, 2007. This facility will feature 25- and 100-yard ranges and an area to shoot shotguns at moving clay targets. The range is a cooperative effort between the WFF and the Marengo County Commission.

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 1,424 participants in the hunts scheduled in October 2006 and September 2007. The hunts were extremely popular, with 21.6 percent of the youth being first time hunters. In addition, youth hunt opportunities were offered on the WMAs for deer, turkey and waterfowl and statewide for deer and waterfowl.

Management and maintenance continued on the North Alabama Birding Trail which opened in September 2005. The trail has been very

successful, and has received better than expected levels of visitation. Visitor comments are almost all positive.

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 15th 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 800 certified instructors; most of them volunteers. The time and expertise contributed by volunteers is essential to the success of the Hunter Education Program.

The mandatory hunter education law was amended through the legislative process to allow persons born on or after August 1, 1977 to purchase a "supervision required" hunting license without successfully completing a hunter education course. This key legislative amendment allows people an opportunity to participate in hunting under the direct supervision of a properly licensed adult prior to completing a hunter education course. Having the opportunity to try hunting prior to having to complete the hunter education program could be important in the recruitment of new hunters.

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 100 schools participating. Teachers from 263 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 Fourth Annual NASP State Championship was held on April 26, 2007 and featured over 600 participants from 25 schools. Teachers, participants, spectators, and WFF employees stated the event was well organized and that they 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 2008 event has been scheduled for May 1 at the Birmingham Jefferson Convention Center. Approximately 900 students are expected to participate. This event will provide WFF with an opportunity to introduce participants to other outdoor life skills in addition to archery.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Loss of Leased Land: The continual loss of leased land and the threat of loss for WMAs is a significant problem. During the year significant losses occurred. The leases on West Jefferson WMA, Escambia Creek WMA and Autauga WMA were all canceled. In total more than 56,000 acres were lost to public hunting. Through purchase, approximately 4,540 acres were acquired in Lauderdale and James D. Martin-Skyline WMAs. 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 to purchase land for public hunting.

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 25-50 percent. Additional sources of revenue are required to meet this need.

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 Hunter Education CD ROM and Internet program developed in cooperation with seven

southeastern states has been readily accepted by instructors and students. These alternative delivery methods have 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.

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.
- 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 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.



**Alabama Department of
Conservation & Natural Resources**

64 North Union Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

1-800-262-3151

www.outdooralabama.com