



**MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
FY2026/FY2027 BUDGET PRIORITIES
August 16, 2024**

Budget priorities are the highest-level objectives where the department will focus resources during FY26/27. These priorities will be used to drive 2025 Legislative session budget requests, allocation of 2025 budget starting points and all department work from FY2025 through FY2027. They overarch ongoing work that the department conducts on a routine basis as a part of core programs and services. These priorities can be accomplished through redirection of existing funds, a budget request to the legislature for new spending authority or funding or spending from existing funding in the next biennium. We expect to follow the priorities closely, barring emerging issues or rises such as pipeline spills, train derailments, disease outbreaks, weather events, or other unanticipated circumstances that could require the department to shift budget priorities during the biennium.

Customer Service Objective: Provide the public with the best possible experience.

Goals:

- Continue to improve our technical interface and programs for our internal and external customers.
- Expand FWP resources statewide to provide a better experience for visitors to state parks, fishing access sites, wildlife management areas and area offices.
- Remove red tape for Montana boaters.

Partnership Objective: Improve relationships with landowners, hunters, and other partners.

Goals:

- Invest in statewide resources for hunting access programs.
- Invest additional funding for partnerships to improve irrigation infrastructure to improve water use and fish habitat.

Stewardship Objective: Maintain and support cultural and historic resources, habitat and healthy and abundant fish and wildlife populations.

Goals:

- Expand fish and wildlife research resources statewide.
- Continue to work toward delisting of recovered grizzly bear populations in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem.
- Continue to address maintenance of department facilities and lands to include completion of backlog maintenance projects and expanded weed spraying.
- Expand wildlife survey and inventory efforts statewide.

Recreation Objective: Improve outdoor experiences for the public.

Goals:

- Improve FWP sites to provide a better experience for citizens visiting our state parks, fishing access sites and wildlife management areas.
- Increase public access to public and private lands.
- Expand funding for acquisitions, easements and leases of lands that will provide public access for hunting and angling.
- Continue to work towards access to our most used rivers and appropriate river recreation programs.

Workforce Objective: Value our workforce.

Goals:

- Ensure FWP office and administrative buildings provide a safe, healthy, and productive work environment for employees.
- Invest in resources to provide better training to all employees statewide.
- Continue to work towards an improved agency culture.

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