

State Budget Committee

DNR Agency Hearing



Dan Bortner, DNR Director
December 16, 2024

DNR Director, Dan Bortner

DNR consists of three bureaus and multiple divisions within each bureau:

- Land Holding
- Regulatory
- Administrative
- Law Enforcement, Legal, Hearings/Natural Resources Commission, Natural Resources Foundation

Title 14 comprises the natural and cultural resources statutes of Indiana Code.

DNR Seven Pillars

- Customer Service
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Communication
- Inclusion and Succession Planning
- Personal Growth
- Flatten the Organization
- Enhance the DNR Brand

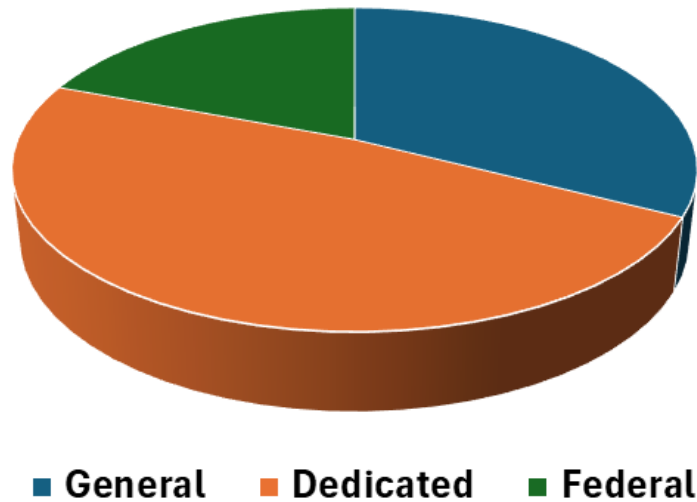
Seven pillars serve as foundation to the agency budget.

FY24-FY25 Budget

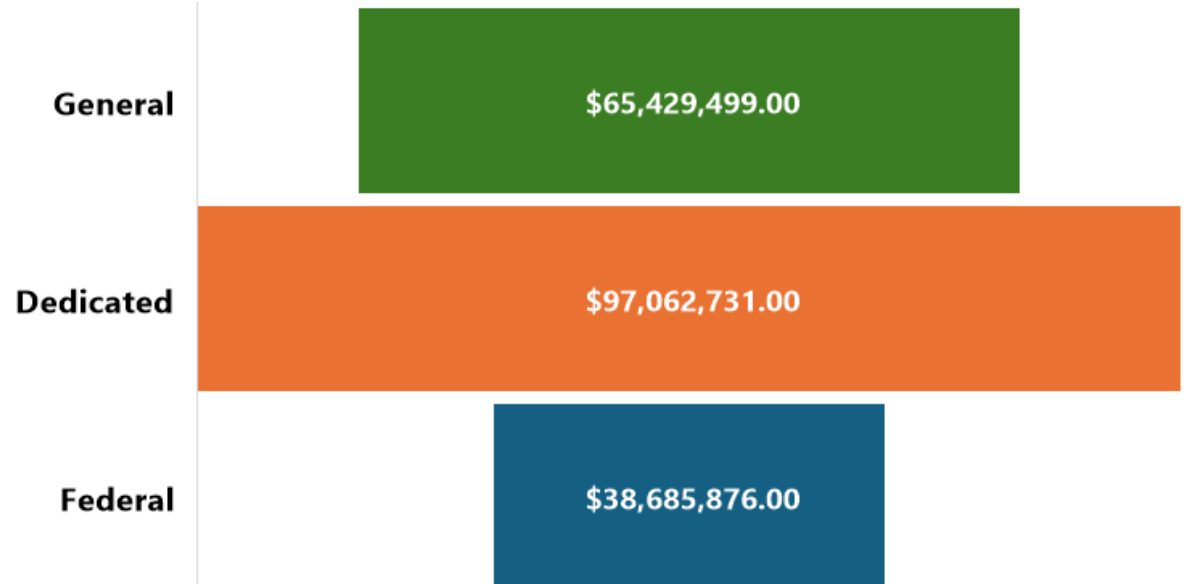


FY25 Appropriation

FY25 Appropriation by Funding Source



FY25 Appropriation



Biennium Accomplishments (FY24/FY25)

Deferred Maintenance

Continued positive partnership with IDOA:

- Of the \$100M awarded, roughly \$17M remains available (less than 18%)
- Funds are earmarked for projects, but not encumbered until released for bid.

Projects Recently Completed:

- Whitewater SP Nature Center building exterior
- Patoka Lake and Whitewater SP playgrounds installed
- McCormick's Creek SP and Turkey Run SP underground fuel tanks replaced and trail structures complete.
- Oubache SP office renovation design and construction documents complete

- **Spring Mill Inn – Stud Out Renovation**

- **Ribbon Cutting: November 20, 2024**

- Restoration of 71 guest rooms (room interiors, bathroom, HVAC, all furnishings)
- Renovation of upper and lower lobbies, service desk, gift shop, interior hallways, game room, improved accessibility throughout
- Restoration of kitchen, kitchen equipment, and Lakeview Banquet Facility
- Installation of whole-house generator
- New Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) HVAC System
- Second elevator and splash pad conversion coming in the spring of 2025

- **Spring Mill Inn - Two-Story Parking Deck Completion**

- **Projected Completion: November 20, 2024**

- Refurbish upper and lower decks - structural improvements and top coatings
- Lighting improvements, new staircases, and stone facia

One Million Trees

Annual Progress

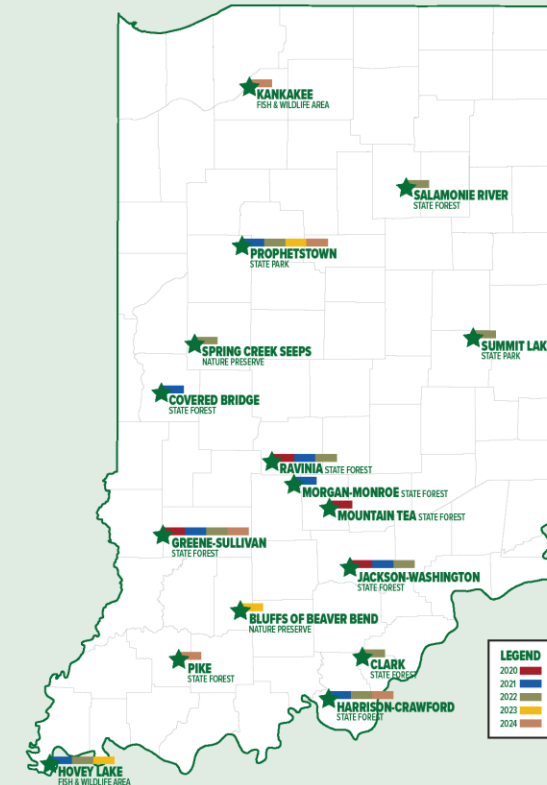
- 2020 – 213,500 trees planted
- 2021 – 208,100 trees planted
- 2022 – 257,500 trees planted
- 2023 – 253,400 trees planted
- 2024 – 195,000 trees planted

Partners

- Indiana Natural Resources Foundation
- Clif Bar Baking Company
- Duke Energy
- Hardwood Forestry Fund
- White Oak Initiative
- Huston Solar

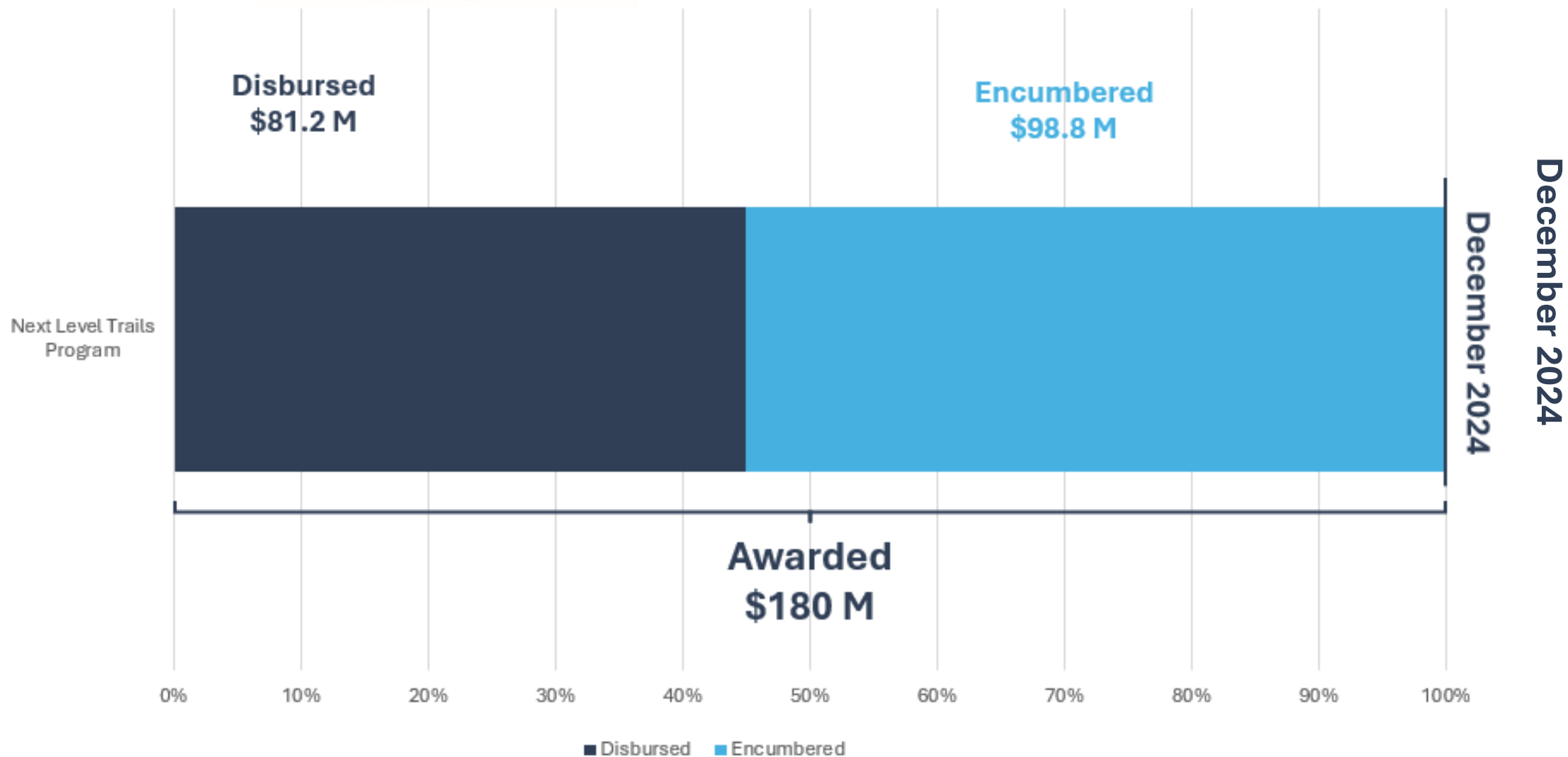
One Million Trees in Five Years

Continuing Indiana's Conservation Legacy



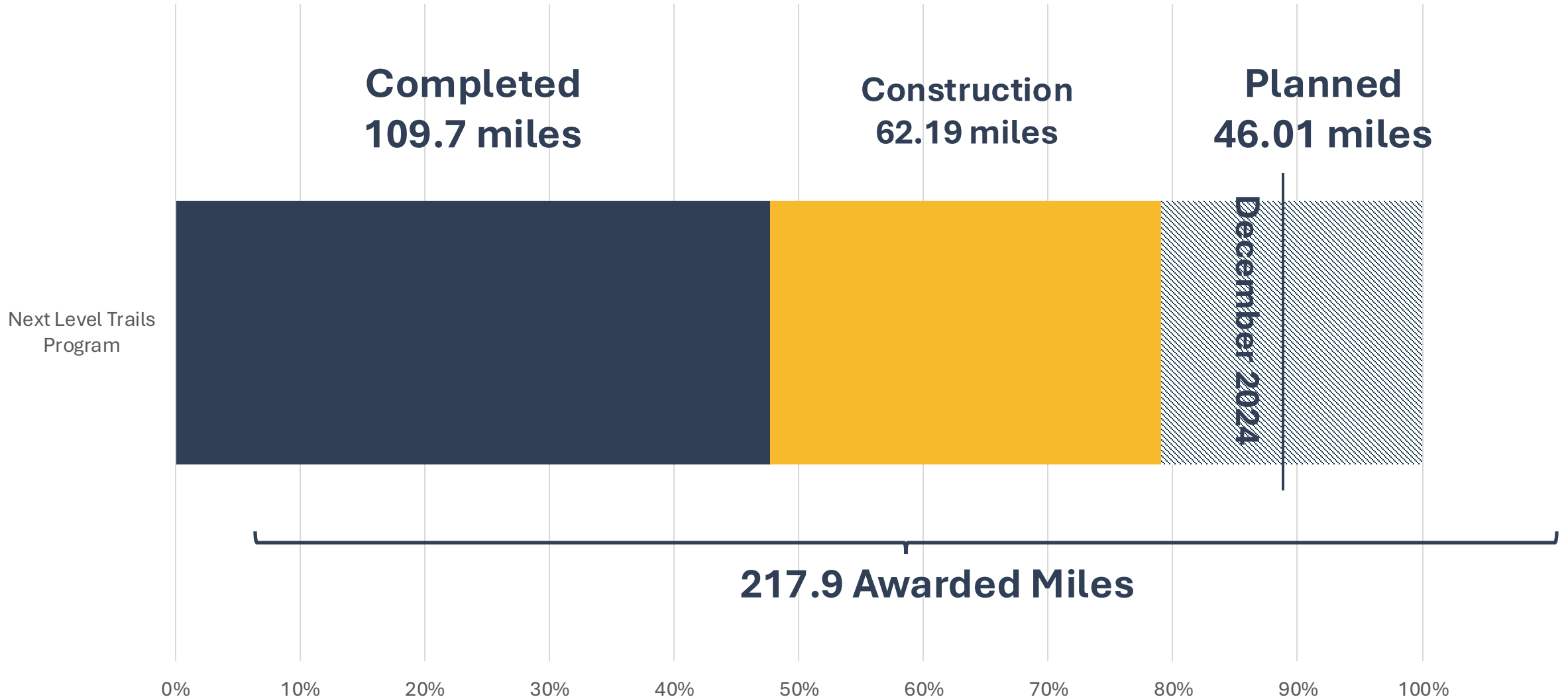


Budget Report





Mileage Report – Rounds 1, 2, 3, and 4





Monon South

DNR
Indiana Department
of Natural Resources

NextLevel
TRAILS



\$25M Next Level Conservation Trust

- 19 projects closed
 - \$12,804,727
 - 2,291 acres
- 5 projects in offer/signature process
 - \$6,651,500
 - 1,056 acres

Harrison Trust: \$10M Appropriation for FY 23/24

- 26 projects presented to the Project Committee since July 2023
 - 17 projects in process:
 - \$5,014,789 committed
 - 1,066 acres
 - 3 projects withdrawn
 - 2 projects closed for 62.37 acres
 - 4 projects in offer/state signature process for a combined 344 acres.

Lilly Endowment Grant



Historic Investment from Lilly Endowment

\$50M

Total given by the
Lilly Endowment

\$25M

Total going towards
Prophetstown State Park
projects

\$10M

Additional DNR match

Prophetstown State Park Investment

- **Campground development, \$15 million** – Addition of more than 120 new full-service campsites, doubling the size of the existing campground.
- **Prophetstown Heritage Area, \$8 million** - The area will feature facilities such as a visitor center, outdoor exhibits, and a recreated Native American village.
- **Trail development, \$1 million** - New trails will be developed to support greater accessibility for visitors.
- **Aquatic center restoration and enhancement, \$1 million** - Upgrades to the pool and other water features.

Investments Across Indiana State Parks

- **Campground improvements, \$10 million** - More campsites will be upgraded to be full-service, with electricity, water, and sewer connections.
- **Playground replacements, \$11 million** - Playgrounds across Indiana State Parks will be renovated and repaired.
- **Historic structure repairs, \$3 million** - Historic stone and log structures, retaining walls, and stone staircases that were built in the 1930s will receive masonry repairs and accessibility improvements.
- **Motorized wheelchairs, \$1 million** - Motorized wheelchairs will enable individuals to access trails that might otherwise be inaccessible.

Lodge at Potato Creek



The Lodge at Potato Creek



- Concrete footer pours progressing.
- Concrete curbing pours nearly complete, with paving to begin soon.
- Installed main sewer trunk.
- Initiated water line installation.
- Fiber optics installed and on site.
- Water tower nearly complete with water and sewer lines progressing from North Liberty to the park.
- Elevator towers are beginning to emerge late this year.

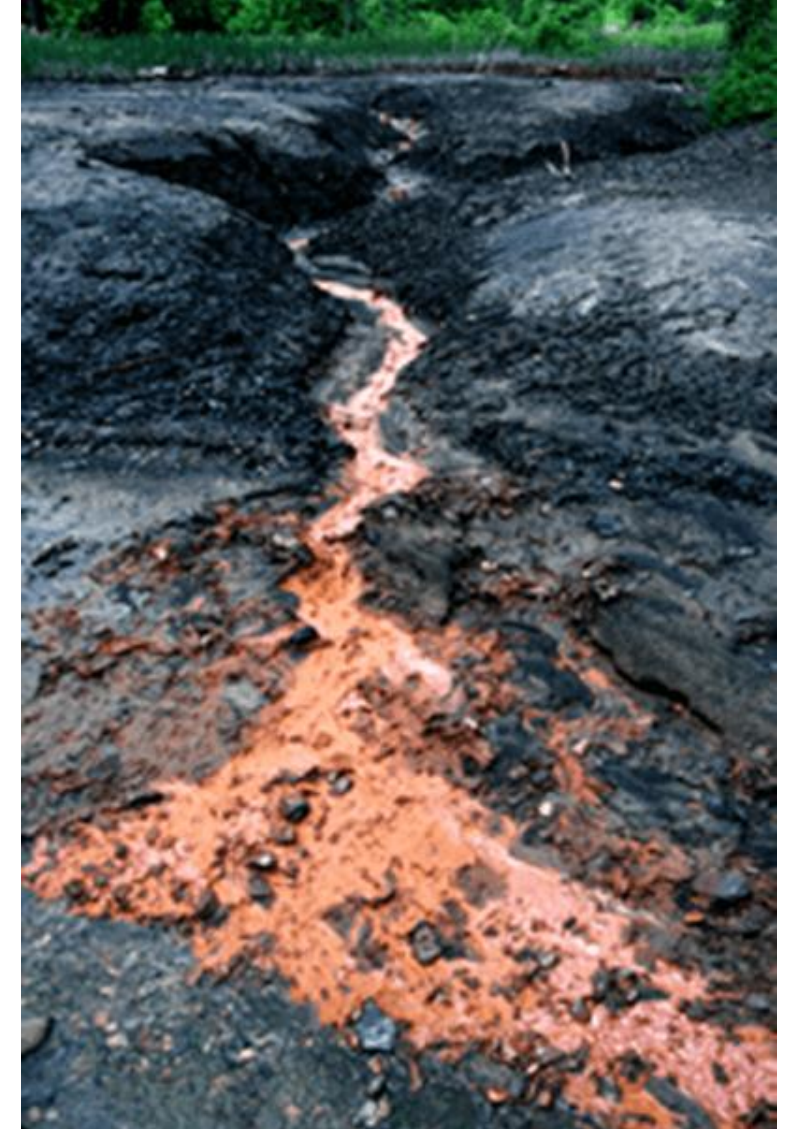
Abandoned Oil & Gas Well Plugging

- DNR received \$25 million in federal grant funding to initiate the well plugging effort
- Since January 2023, 359 wells have been plugged at a cost of \$21.6 million
- DNR has received an additional \$14 million through a second phase of federal grant funding to continue the effort
- DNR's Division of Reclamation has identified 1,264 leaking wells statewide



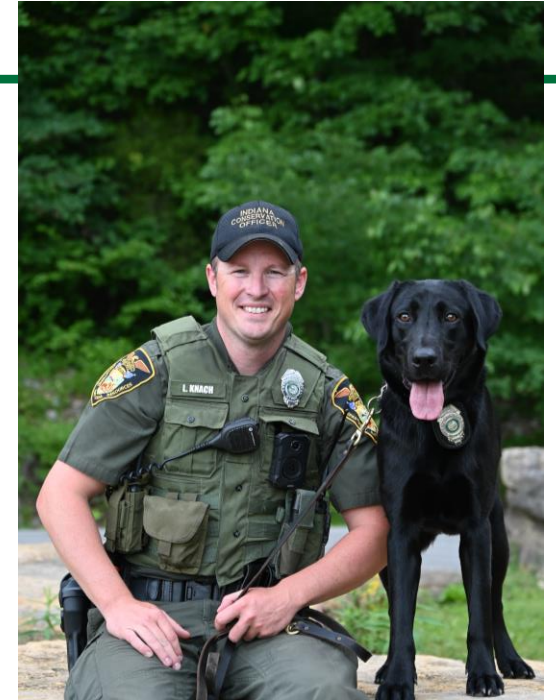
Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation

- Indiana will receive \$24.7 million per year for the next 15 years to remediate and reclaim abandoned coal mine lands through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
- DNR's Division of Reclamation Abandoned Mine Land (AML) staff currently have 9 projects in design with consulting firms and are working to finalize 6 more.
- DNR has identified nearly 80 sites to be addressed through this effort.
- The AML program was created with passage of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to address public safety and environmental concerns from mining activity prior to 1977.



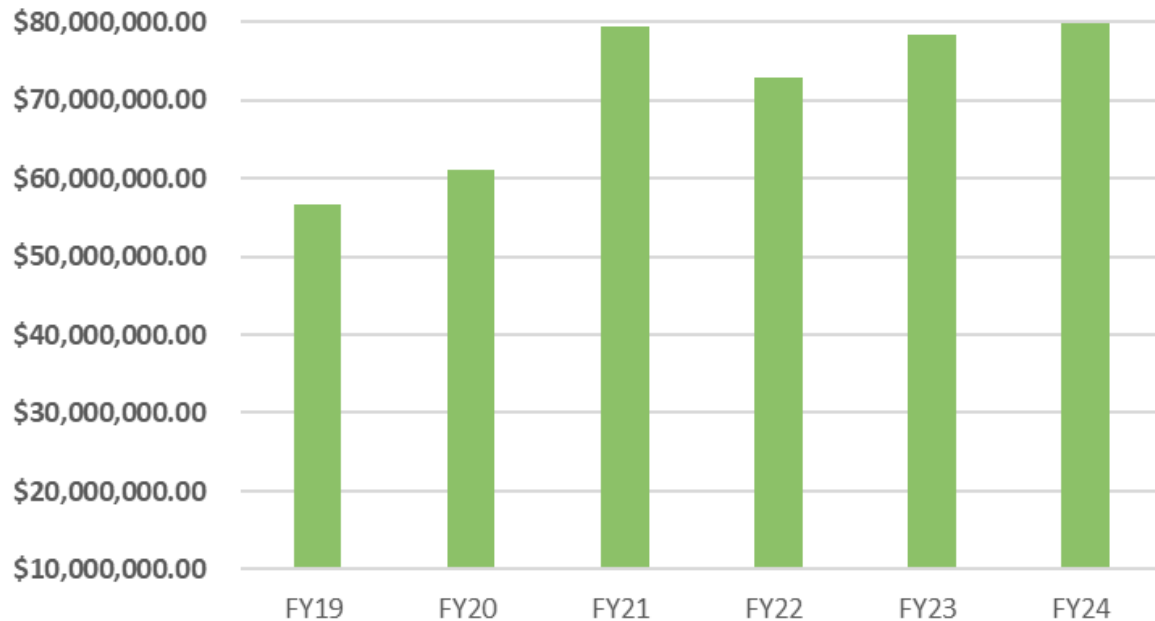
DNR Law Enforcement Updates

- Twenty-three new sworn officers joined the ranks of Indiana Conservation Officers after a successful 2024 recruit class.
- Three Indiana canines were trained in conduction with a canine from Arkansas during the winter of 2023 and early spring of 2024
- A future canine school will occur in 2025 to train five DNR canines. Three will be replacement dogs for tenured canine handlers and two for new handlers.

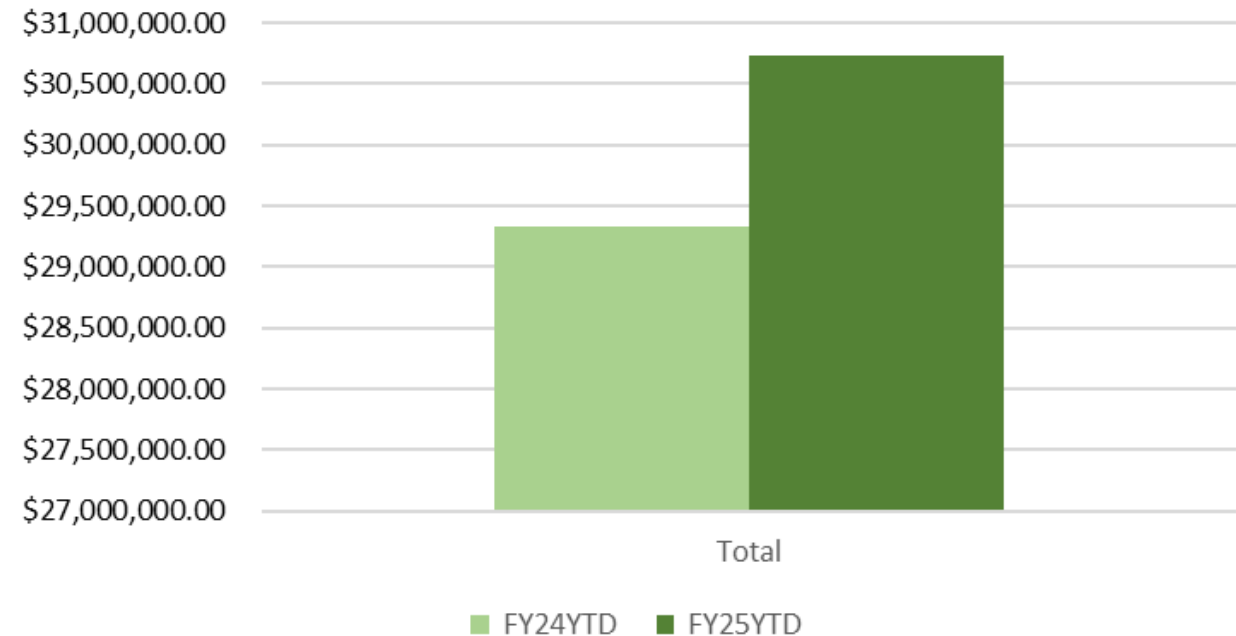


Recreational Revenue

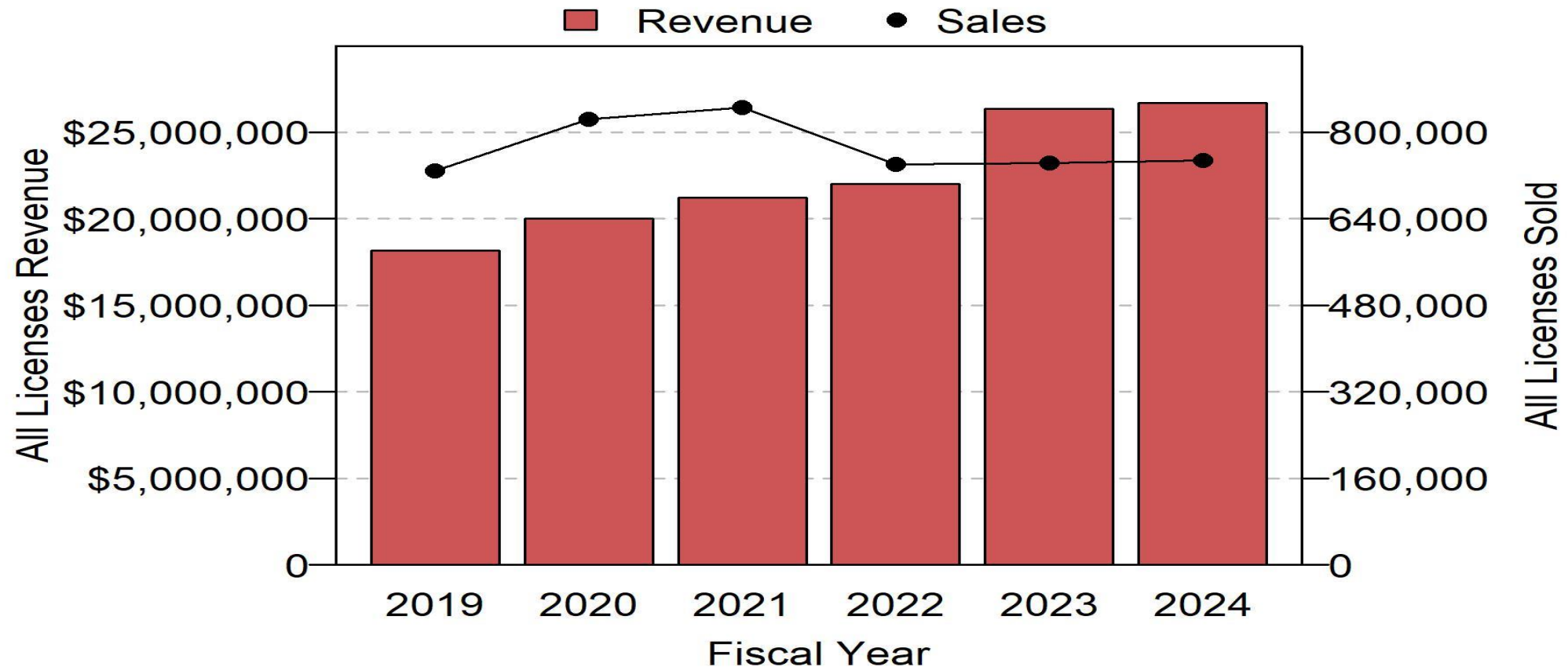
DNR Total Recreational Revenue FY19-FY24



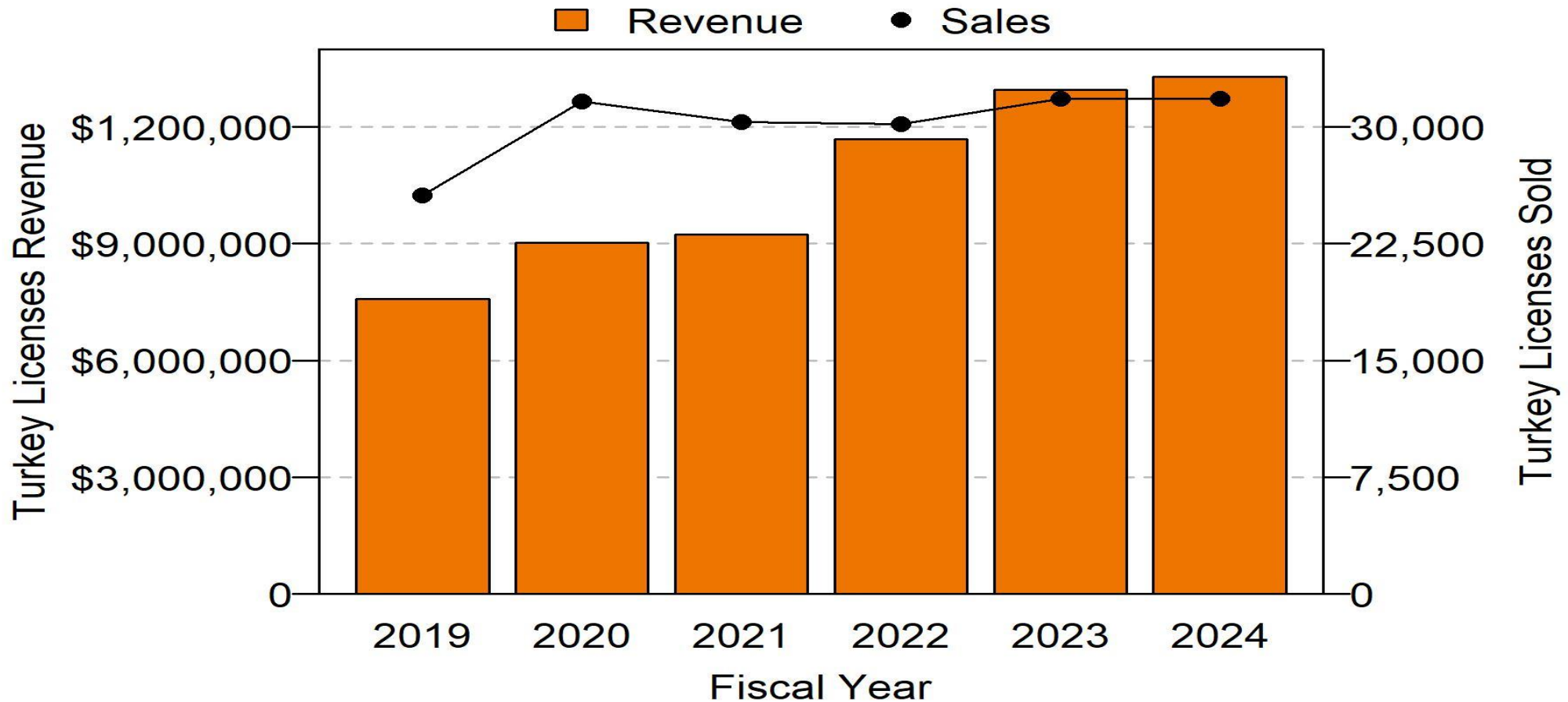
DNR Recreational Revenue FY24TD-FY25TD



Fish & Wildlife License Sales



Turkey License Sales



Agency Challenges

Agency Challenges

Carbon Program Launch

- Pursuant to HEA 1626 (2023), DNR is developing carbon industry-leading regulations supporting carbon sequestration projects in Indiana.

Reopening of the Campground at McCormick's Creek State Park

- Following the tornado that directly and seriously impacted McCormick's Creek State Park, much of the park has reopened for guests. However, the campground remains closed. A salvage harvest cleared the campground of remaining debris and planning is being finalized for the new campground design.

Opening of the Lodge at Potato Creek State Park

- Construction is well underway on the first Indiana State Park inn or lodge to be built since 1939. It is projected to open in 2027.

Agency Challenges

Modernization of State Fish Hatcheries

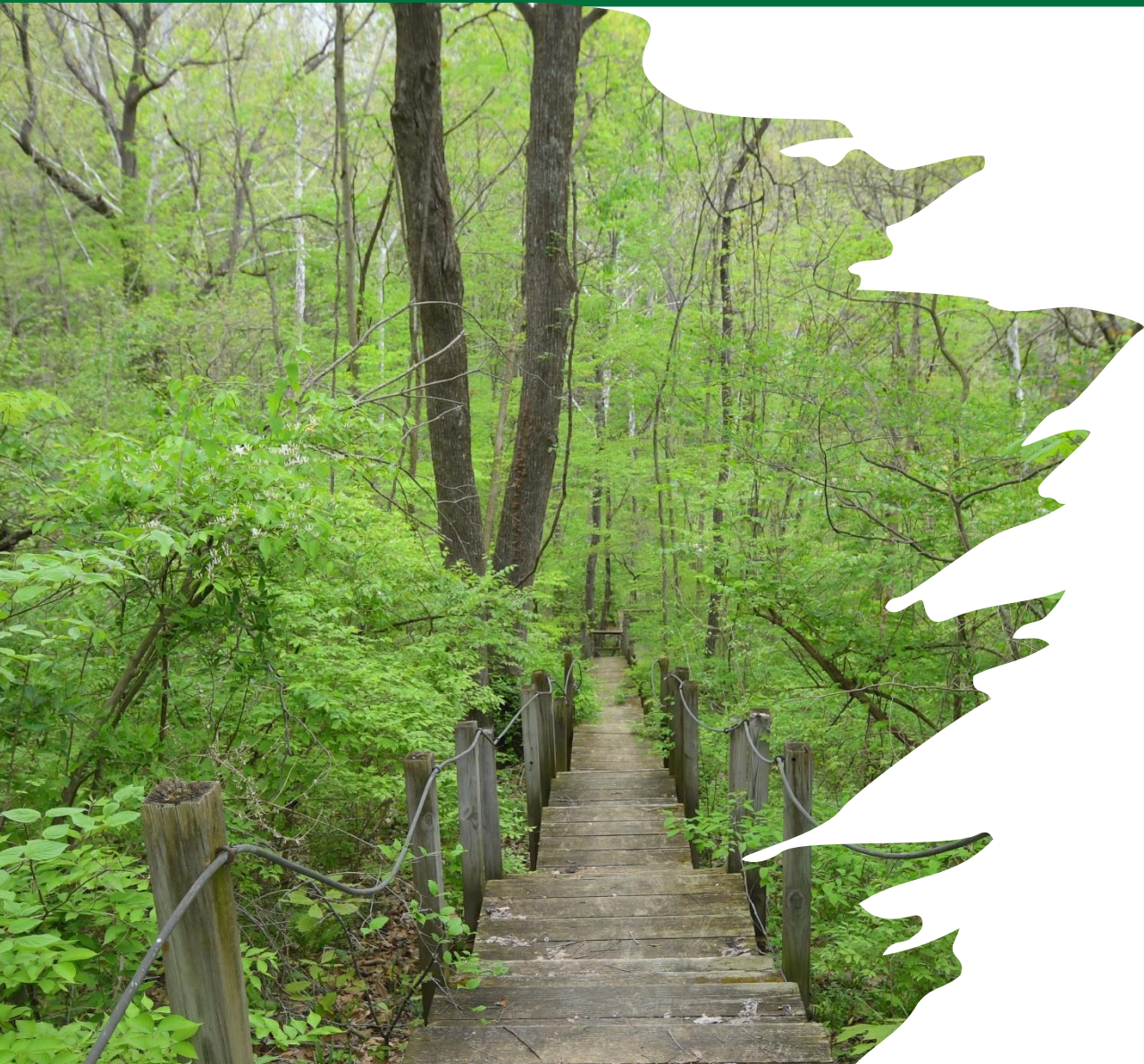
- DNR now has seven hatcheries that produce 27 million fish annually for the state's approximately 356,000 licensed anglers. The DNR needs modern fish hatchery systems to effectively provide appropriate fishing opportunities for demand, as the department continues to have significant loss in fish production due to outdated systems. These losses mean fewer fishing opportunities. Having fewer fishing opportunities means less spending by anglers, a decrease in related economic output, and a loss of jobs related to recreational fishing.

Expanding Customer Demographics

- While Indiana's demographics continue to become more diverse, the current user base for outdoor recreation must continue growing in line with those demographics. To continue to attract more Hoosiers to love and care for Indiana's natural resources, the department must work to expand its user base.

Addressing Infrastructure Needs

- Much of the infrastructure on Indiana's public lands is aging, including wastewater systems. DNR is working to either connect to local water utilities or invest in current systems to address this need.



Questions?