

Natural Resources Commission Meeting



NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries
December 8, 2011

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- Updates
 - Fisheries & Wildlife Division Chief Updates
 - Preliminary Firearm Deer Season Results
 - Antler-point Restrictions Update
 - Law Enforcement Division Budget Update



NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

December 8, 2011

- NRC – For Information (Action in January)
 - Amendment to Falconry Regulations
- Director – For Information (Action in January)
 - Sturgeon Regulations Statewide (FO-240)
- Director's Action
 - 6 Fisheries Orders



Fisheries Division Update



Jim Dexter, Acting Chief
Fisheries Division
December 8, 2011



Thank You



www.michigan.gov/fishing

Wildlife Division Update



Russ Mason, Chief
Wildlife Division
December 8, 2011



Thank You



www.michigan.gov/hunting

Preliminary Firearm Deer Season Results



Brent Rudolph, Deer and Elk Program Leader
Wildlife Division
December 8, 2011



Preparation for 2011 Season

- UP & NLP: deer recovering from prior winter impacts, mild 2009-2010 & 2010-2011 winter
 - Upper Peninsula: conservative increase of 1,100 antlerless licenses across region
 - Northern Lower Peninsula: some private land antlerless license increases, but overall decrease of 3,800
- SLP: continued high deer populations
 - Southern Lower Peninsula deer populations appear to be stabilizing



Evaluation of 2011 Season

- Deer hunting & check station activity down on initial days, but more than the usual activity occurred later into the season
- Deer check station data (firearm only):
 - UP: +14.3%
 - NLP: +18.4%
 - SLP: -9.4%
 - Statewide: +6.2%



Evaluation of 2011 Season

- License sales through opening day showed 2.5% decline from 2010
 - More than 63,000 hunters purchased a license after opening day (more than usual)
- Deer license sales through 11/30/11:
 - Licensed hunters: 1% decline (685,888)
 - Kill tags sold: 1.5% decline (1,486,331)



Preliminary Firearm Season Estimates

- Upper Peninsula: unchanged to 10% increase
- Northern Lower Peninsula: slight to 10% increase
- Southern Lower Peninsula: 5–10% decrease
- Similar to slight increase overall



Final Firearm Season Estimates

- Mail survey with online reporting option will be conducted of sample of licensed hunters
- All licensed hunters may choose to complete an online survey
- Final harvest estimates will be available for development of 2012 regulations
- 2010 preliminary firearm harvest estimates projected 15% decrease to 10% increase by region; Mail survey results indicated 5.9% decrease



Thank You



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Surveys to Measure Support for Antler-point Restrictions



Brian Frawley
Research Biologist
December 8, 2011

Table 1. Proportion of landowners and deer hunters supporting antler-point restrictions, summarized by evaluation area.

Evaluation area	Support (%)			Outcome
	Landowners	Hunters	Difference	
Delta and Marquette	73%	68%	4%	Same
Dickinson, Menominee, & Iron	80%	71%	9%*	Same
Huron, Sanilac, & Tuscola	39%	36%	2%	Same
Leelanau	66%	63%	3%	Same
Chippewa & Mackinac	57%	53%	4%	Same
Iosco	81%	74%	8%*	Same
South Fox Island	100%	74%	26%*	Same
Iosco	59%	57%	2%	Same
Mason	47%	49%	-1%	Same
Montcalm	44%	40%	3%	Same
Drummond Island	77%	81%	-4%	Same
Clare	56%	57%	-1%	Same
Chippewa & Mackinac	59%	58%	1%	Same
Upper Peninsula	63%	61%	3%	Same
Dickinson, Iron, & Menominee	76%	74%	2%	Same
Alger, Delta, Dickinson, & Marquette	60%	52%	8%*	Same
Leelanau	72%	72%	0%	Same

*Non-overlapping 95% confidence intervals indicated estimates differed significantly between landowners and hunters (P<0.005).

APR Surveys:

Lessons learned from prior surveys

- 17 APR surveys have been completed
- Landowner and hunter opinions similar
- Survey outcome would have not changed if only one group had been surveyed
- Estimate from hunters represents more conservative opinion



APR Surveys:

Sources of survey sample for prior surveys

- Hunter sample obtained from DNR databases (i.e., responses to annual statewide deer harvest surveys and license sales database)
- Landowner sample obtained from county tax assessor offices



APR Surveys:

Obtaining landowner sample

- No known list of rural landowners owning 5 or more acres in any county
- County tax assessors maintain list of all landowners
 - Records organized by parcels, but not always cross-referenced correctly to landowners
 - Acreage is not used for tax assessment; thus, acreage usually not maintained as a separate field in database
 - Townships and counties use different software (inconsistent formatting and business rules)

APR Surveys:

Steps to create landowner list

- Extract acreage and parcel location information (township, range, section) from legal description
- Merge parcel information to landowner name and address (linked by parcel number)
- Remove parcels less than 5 acres (also delete public and commercial parcels)
- Create a new list organized by landowner (i.e., landowner listed once regardless of number of parcels owned)

APR Surveys:

Steps to create landowner list

- Reformat landowner addresses to consistent format
- Merge landowner information from each county
- Create final list organized by landowner from all county lists (i.e., landowner listed once regardless of number of parcels owned in each county)



Overview

- Landowner and hunters hold similar views
- Hunter sample obtained from DNR databases
- Landowner sample not readily available
 - Create landowner list from county tax assessors



Summary

- The DNR does not recommend continuing the landowner survey.
 - Results are redundant
 - Effort is substantial (average time spent is 1 week/county)
 - Substantially higher priorities for survey staff
 - Estimate from hunters represents more conservative opinion



Thank You



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Falconry Regulations



Karen Cleveland
All Bird Biologist
December 8, 2011

Background

- Falconry regulations are set on a three year cycle, beginning in 2009
- Survey sent to all Michigan falconers in 2010 to assess needed or desired changes
- Discussions with Michigan Hawking Club and Michigan Audubon Society



Recommendation



- Add rough-legged hawk to list of species that can be trapped for falconry
 - Take capped at 10 birds annually



- Add snowy owl to list of species that can be trapped for falconry
 - Take capped at 1 bird annually
 - Trapping limited to the Upper Peninsula
 - No nonresident take



Recommendation



- Allow take of eyas (chick) and passage (first year) raptors during all open seasons for take of wild raptors for falconry
- Extend spring season for take of raptors
 - Current: 12 May – 19 July
 - Recommended: 1 February – 19 July



Recommendation

- Allow take of birds for falconry with a damage and nuisance animal control permit
 - Tool to permit removal of hawks, falcons, and owls outside the regular take seasons when necessary to meet resource management goals



Thank You



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Law Enforcement Division Budget Review



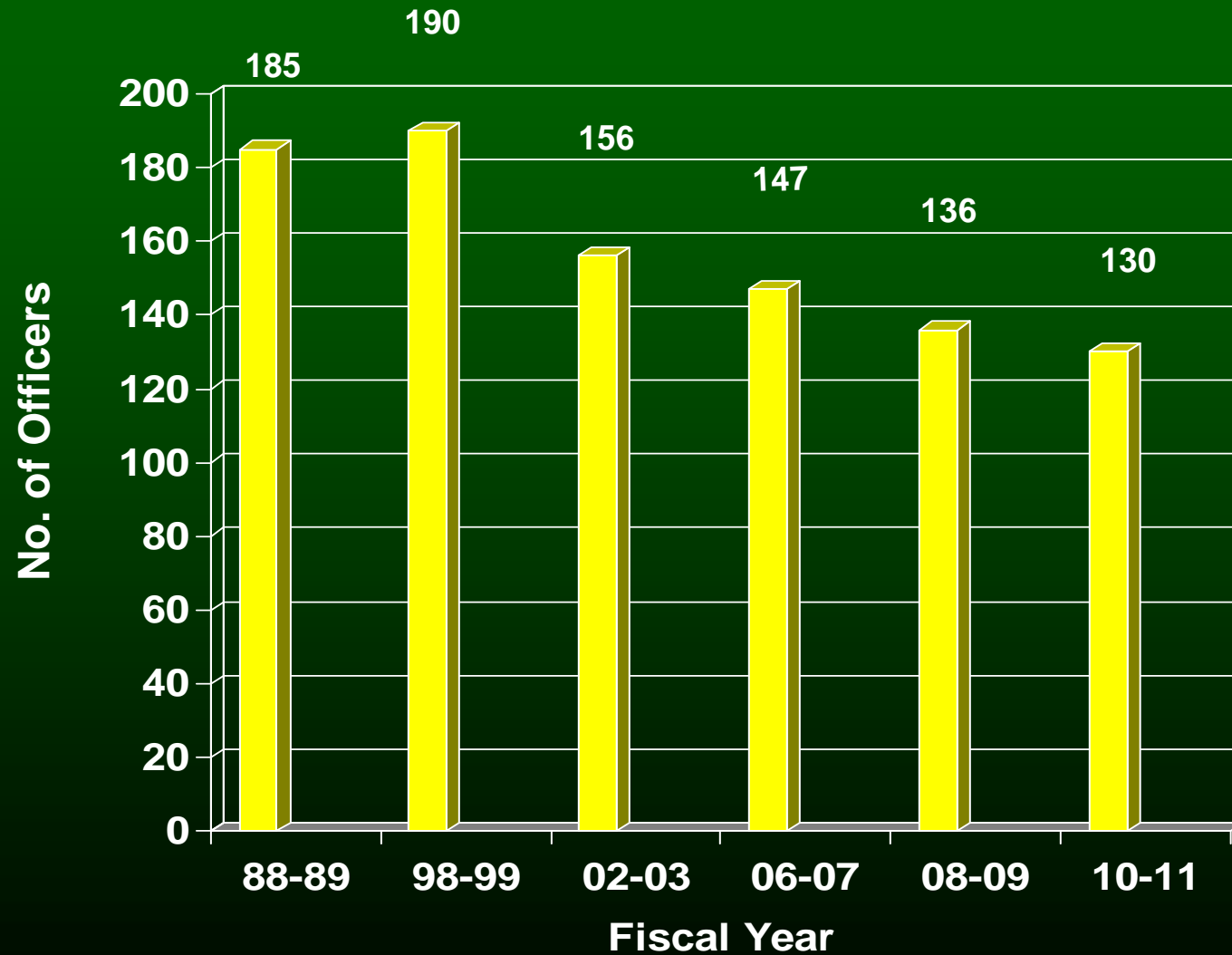
Gary Hagler, Chief
Law Enforcement Division
December 8, 2011

Agenda

- Field Conservation Officer history
- Current commissioned officers
- FY12 budget
- Equalized field officer activity breakdown
- 2010 Activity Summary
- Closing remarks



Field Conservation Officers



Current Commissioned Officers

To Date 11/1/11	Commissioned Field	Commissioned Division Office	Total
Conservation Officers	130		130
Conservation Officer Specialists	5		5
Detectives	1		1
Commercial Fish Specialists	5		5
Sergeants	22	3	25
Lieutenants	11	1	12
Chief/Asst. Chief/Captain	1	2	3
Total	175	6	181

*As of Nov. 1, 2011 Law Enforcement Division (LED) is comprised of 211 employees. There are 181 commissioned officers, 6 Env. CO, 1 PEAS coordinator, 1 Emg. Mgt and 22 support personnel

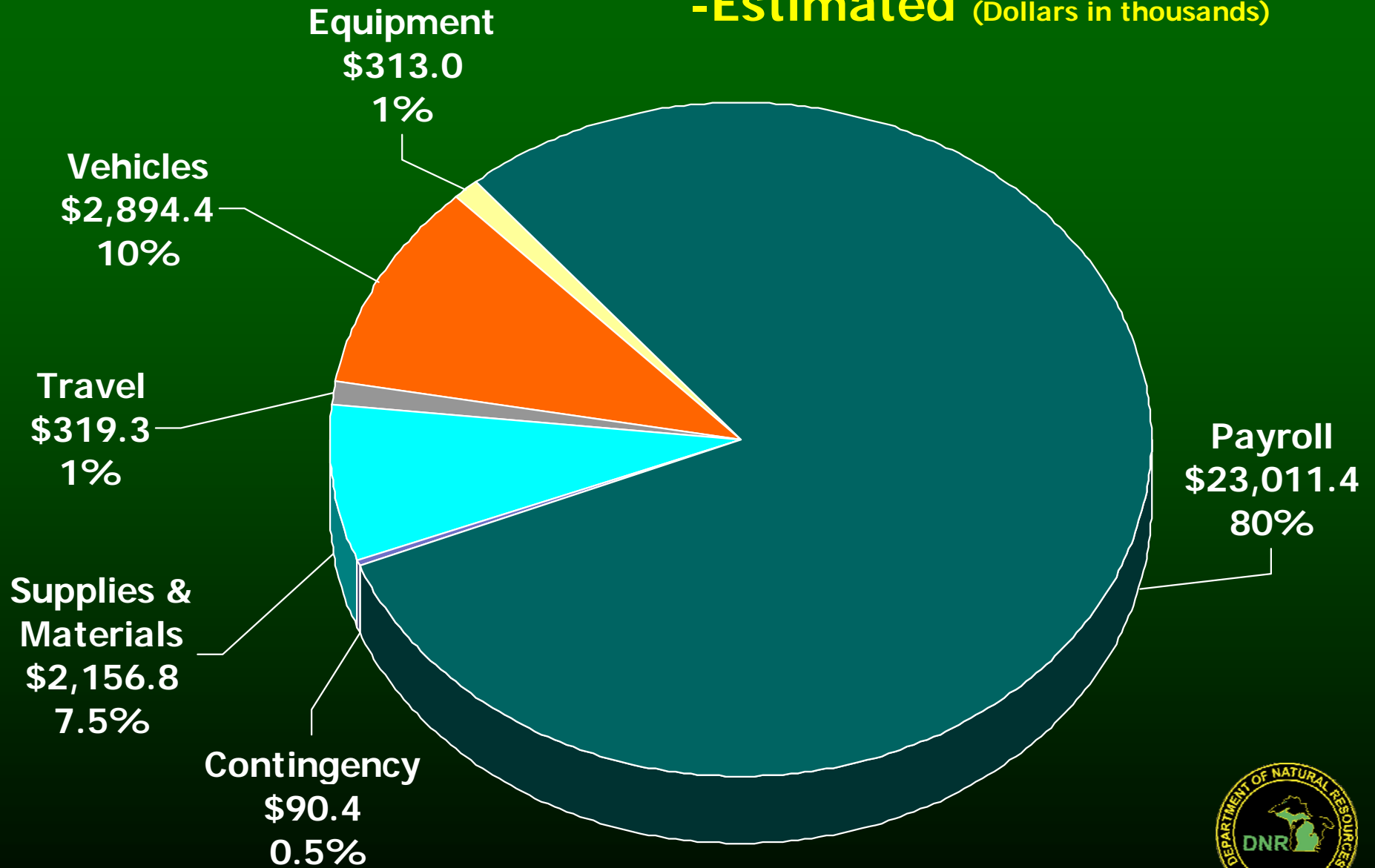


2012 Funds Available

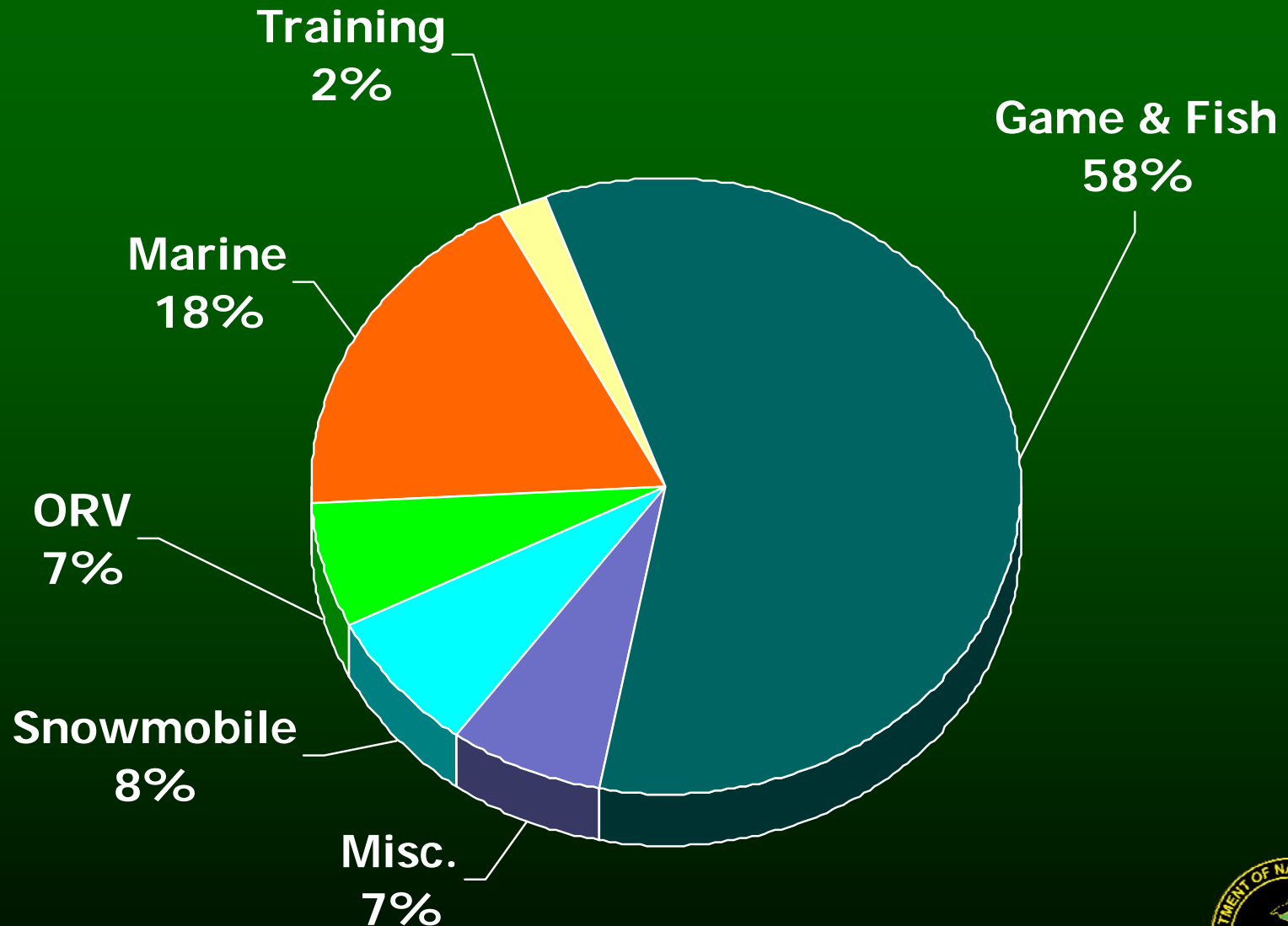
	Appropriation	Unfunded Appropriations*	Available
Federal	\$5,563,700	\$(806,100)	\$4,757,600
Cervidae Fees	\$50,100	\$(27,100)	\$23,000
Forest Recreation	\$67,900	\$(2,700)	\$65,200
Game & Fish	\$18,553,700		\$18,553,700
G&F Wildlife Res. Prot	\$1,094,400	\$(99,200)	\$995,200
Marine Safety	\$1,494,000	\$(210,400)	\$1,283,600
ORV Education	\$91,100		\$91,100
ORV Trail	\$1,109,900	\$(229,800)	\$880,100
Park Improvement	\$67,900	\$(2,700)	\$65,200
Snow Registration	\$947,000	\$(148,300)	\$798,700
General	\$1,271,900		\$1,271,900
Total	\$30,311,600	\$(1,526,300)	\$28,785,300

*Estimated

FY12 Planned Expenditures -Estimated (Dollars in thousands)



Equalized Field Officer Activities

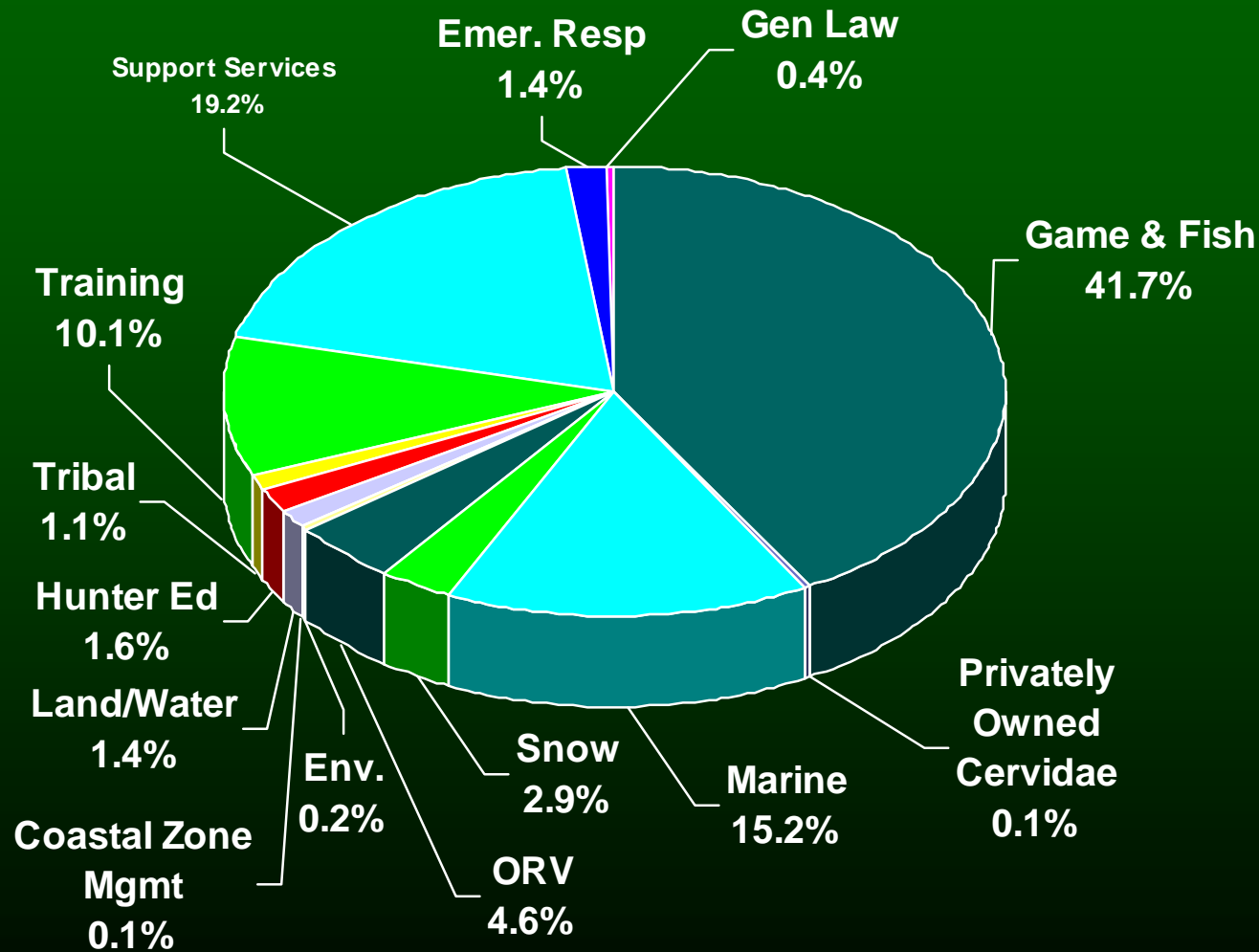


Misc. activities include RIF, Parks, Environmental, State Lands and General Criminal

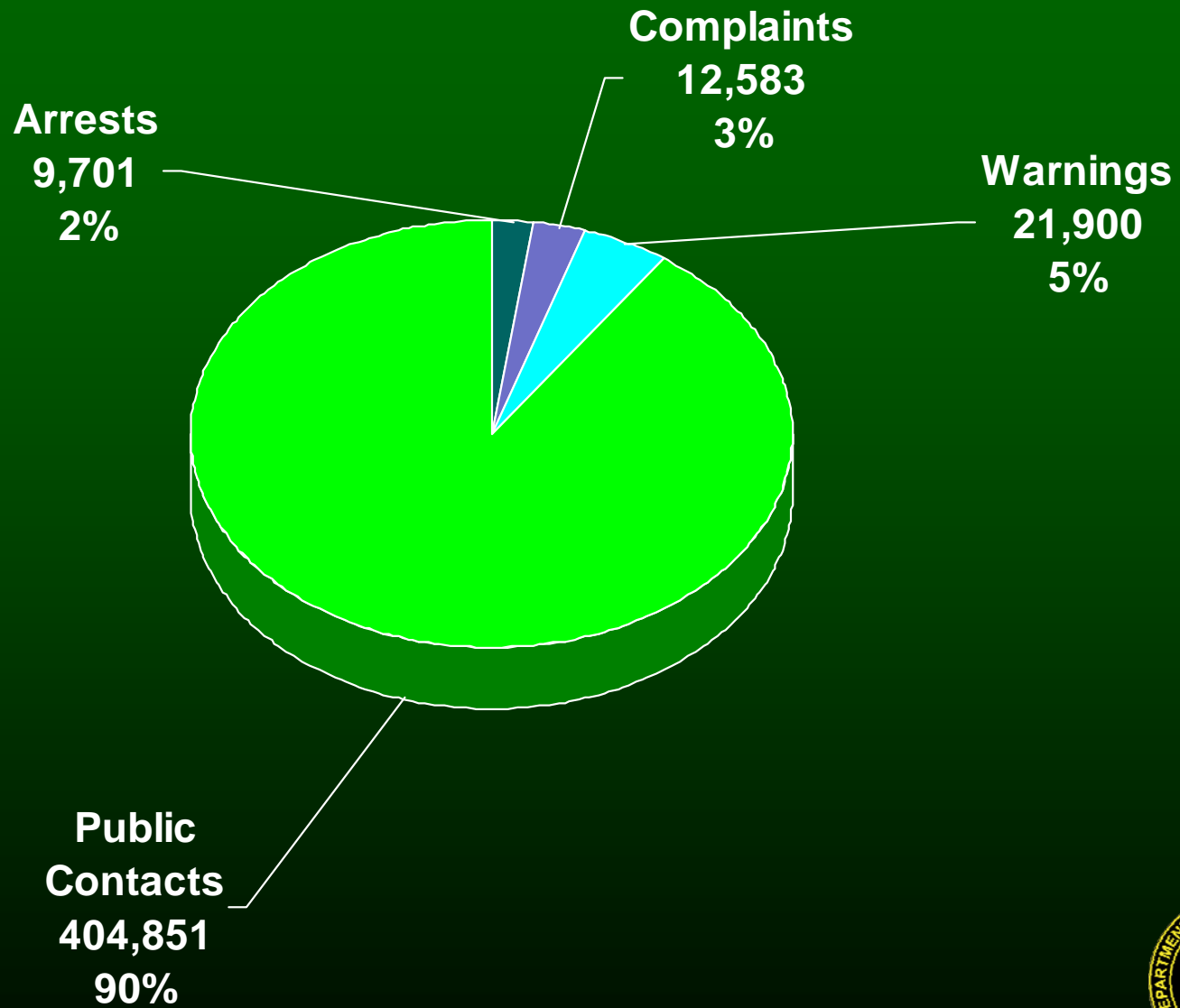


2010 Division* Hours Worked by Percent

* Includes civilian and commissioned staff



2010 Enforcement Activity



Closing Remarks

- Loss of enforcement flexibility
- Loss of funds = loss of Conservation Officers



Thank You



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