



New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

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Stephanie L. Simek, Ph.D.
Executive Director

2A
DEC 17 2025

October 31, 2025

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Pursuant to RSA 206:33-A, authorize the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department (NHFG) to accept a \$3,500 donation from the Granite State Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society to be utilized by the Wildlife Division for habitat improvement projects, effective upon Governor and Council approval through June 30, 2026.

Funds to be deposited into 020 07500 21130000 402768

FY 2026
\$3,500.00

EXPLANATION

The board of the Granite State Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society voted to donate funds to the NHFG Wildlife Habitat Program to support two habitat improvement projects: 1) A small grants program project that will have a focus on grouse and/or woodcock habitat; and 2) a road work project to facilitate upcoming forest management at the Forest Peters Wildlife Management Area in Northwood.

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Commission voted unanimously to accept this donation at their October 21, 2025 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie L. Simek, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Kathy Ann LaBonte
Chief, Business Division



A) Commissioner DeRosa moved to accept the donation of \$3,500 from the Granite State Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society, for deposit into the Small Gifts & Donations Account, to support two habitat projects and Commissioner Poole seconded:

- Small Grants Program project with a focus on grouse and/or woodcock habitat; and
- A road work project to facilitate upcoming forest management at the Forest Peters WMA in Northwood.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1.) Financial Statement – Kathy LaBonte, Chief, Business Division.

At this time, Commissioner McGonagle moved to formalize the Great Bay Stewards as a nonprofit entity to the NH Fish & Game Department and Commissioner DeRosa seconded.

2.) Cory Riley, Manager, Great Bay Discover Center, came before the Commission and provided an overview of the Great Bay Stewards and the potential benefits of formalizing them as a nonprofit entity to the NH Fish & Game Department. (see attached for full presentation)

Cory provided a comprehensive review of the historical relationship with the group. She reported that the group becoming a nonprofit partner to the agency could greatly enhance the department's capacity to fulfill its mission. She further explained that the Great Bay Stewards have been a dedicated organized group of volunteers committed to supporting the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve since 1989.

Commissioner Green stated that he would like the Commission to see more information, such as the Memorandum of Agreement with the Great Bay Stewards prior to next month.

Commissioner Stohl inquired if our funding from NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) had been reduced.

Commissioner DeRosa responded, "This is an attempt to mitigate that".

Cory responded that the funding had not been reduced as of yet, and that if it were to happen, staff would be having serious discussions with NOAA as an agency, as to how we could scale the programs way back.

Chairman Green reported that a motion was not necessary at this time, thus, Commissioner McGonagle withdrew his motion and Commissioner DeRosa withdrew his second to the motion.

The Commission thanked Cory for the presentation.

3.) John Magee, Program Supervisor, gave an overview of Inland Fisheries proposed rule changes. (See attached for full presentation)