

The DNR demonstrates operational excellence and continuous improvement in service to citizens.

The Challenge

DNR operations must adapt to an increasingly changing and diverse world. Rapid developments in technology, more complex conservation challenges, increasing pressures on state spending, and growing and diversifying public expectations accelerate the need for change in our organization and how we work with partners.

Why is this important?

Accomplishing our natural resource goals requires operational excellence. DNR business practices must continually become more efficient to make the best use of Minnesotans' dollars and minimize waste. We must build on recent accomplishments.

Continuously Improve Operations:

In the past two years, we completed continuous improvement projects in online permitting, records management, land acquisition, aquatic plant management, land surveys, financial management and purchasing.

Meeting New Demands:

We must be leaders in energy conservation and renewable energy practices. Today, the DNR is one of the top 10 renewable energy producers in Minnesota.

Increased efficiency alone can't address every challenge we face. Investing in facilities, equipment, and professional development for our employees is crucial if we are to support core operations, be nimble in the face of new challenges, and recruit and retain workers who reflect a full diversity of perspectives, skills and interests.



Process improvement events help DNR staff improve efficiency of business practices.

Four Key Trends next page

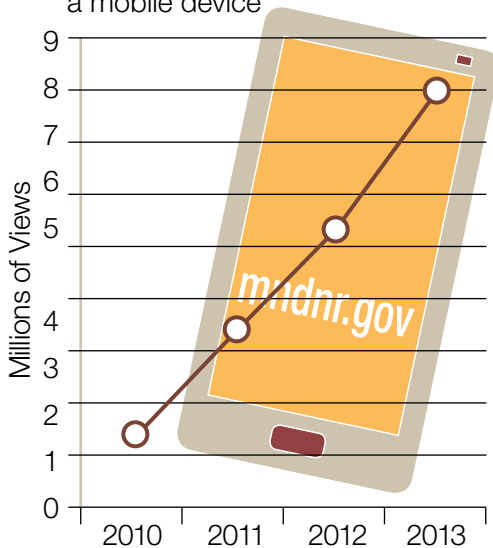
Trends

Four key trends illustrate this challenge:

● Citizen demand for information and service is growing

- Demand for easily accessible, accurate, and usable information is growing due to widespread use of the Internet, smartphones, mapping tools and other technology.
- Citizens today expect higher government transparency, more opportunities for engagement and greater accountability.

DNR website views from a mobile device

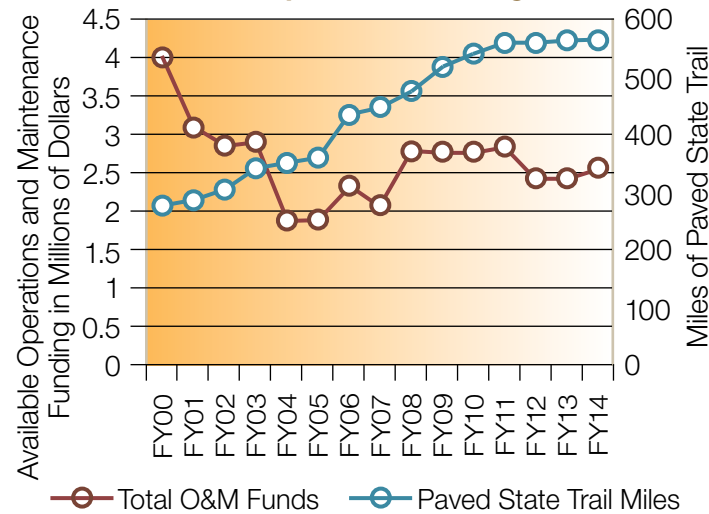


As of January 2014, 90 percent of American adults have a cell phone, 58 percent have a smartphone, and 42 percent own a tablet. Keeping pace with mobile technology demand is vital to providing high-quality customer service.

● Costs of doing business are increasing

- Energy, gasoline, and propane costs have all increased significantly since 2005. While prices have moderated recently, energy prices are volatile and difficult to predict.
- Minnesota’s Next Generation Energy Act of 2007 challenges the DNR to reduce our carbon footprint 30 percent by 2025.
- In 1998, a DNR review estimated it needed to spend 2.8 percent of the current replacement value of its properties each year to catch up with capital maintenance. In 2013, this is equivalent to \$13.7 million.

State trail operations funding

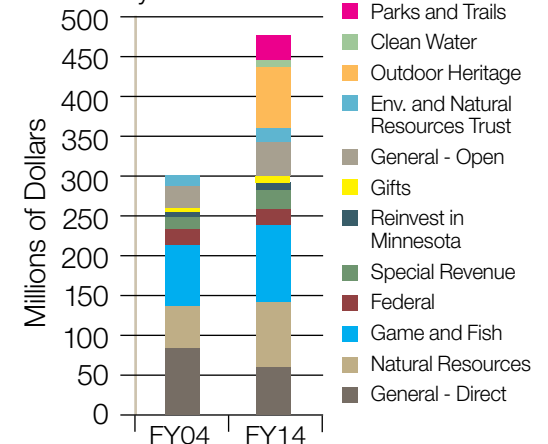


In recent years, the number of state trail miles has increased while the funds available to operate and maintain them have not kept pace. The result is a \$3.7 million funding gap in operation and maintenance, hampering our ability to maintain aging treadways, manage trail corridors and meet operations costs.

● Funding capacity and flexibility are decreasing

- The DNR’s funding has shifted in recent years to increased dependence on more stable but less flexible dedicated funding.
- DNR programs that depend highly on the state’s general fund, including parks, forestry and water management, struggle to keep up with demands.
- Since 2008, state parks have lost funding for 36,000 staff hours. Similarly, the Enforcement Division has lost 57,224 patrol hours due to 23 vacant field stations in 2014.

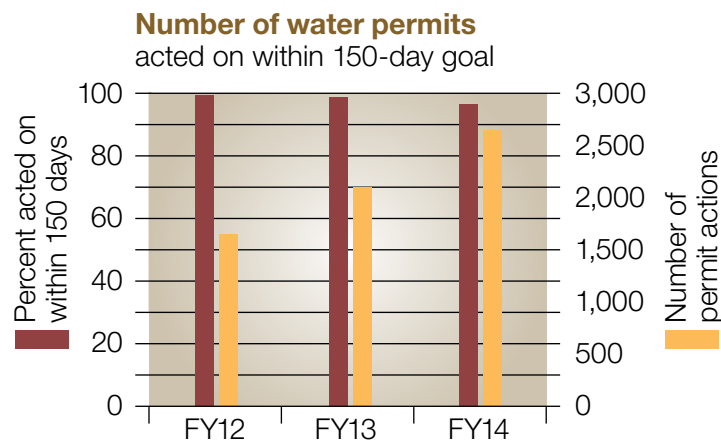
DNR history of expenditures by fund



Although the DNR’s overall budget has increased since fiscal year 2010, general fund (direct) expenditures dropped from approximately \$89 million in fiscal year 2004 to \$60 million in fiscal year 2014, limiting our ability to meet maintenance and basic operational needs.

Demands on staff time and resources are growing

- Longer fire seasons and greater intensity of wildfires increase the need for response. In the wake of severe drought the DNR spent more than \$30 million on emergency firefighting in 2013, the highest expenditure since 1977.
- Invasive species are outpacing our capacity to respond. As of 2014, the DNR had identified more than 130,000 infestations of terrestrial invasive plants on DNR lands, an increase of approximately 80,000 since 2009.
- Increasing frequency of floods require the DNR to respond by providing more hydrological information, clean-up support, and rescue assistance to local governments.
- The number of comments on environmental impact statements (EIS) and environmental assessment worksheets (EAW) are increasing exponentially. For example, the 2013 PolyMet Supplement Draft EIS generated approximately 58,000 comments.



The number and complexity of water permit applications increased 60 percent from 2011 to 2014, challenging our capacity to act on them in a timely manner.

Strategies

The following strategies define our identity as an excellent workplace and guide targeted management actions in response to changing trends.

Invest

Invest wisely to manage future operational costs.

- Invest in facilities, information technology and fleet to ensure safe and effective delivery of public services and efficient internal operations.
- Lead the way in energy conservation and renewable energy use to demonstrate wise use to citizens and other organizations.

Streamline

Streamline to deliver desired results more safely, efficiently and effectively.

Enhance

Enhance easy and transparent access to information so citizens can understand and participate in the DNR's work.

Develop

Develop the DNR's workforce by ensuring a safe, respectful and dynamic work environment that attracts and retains top talent from across the country.

Practice

Practice adaptive management to respond to rapid changes and an unpredictable environment.

Actions next page

Actions

The following actions are examples of how we will carry out these strategies:

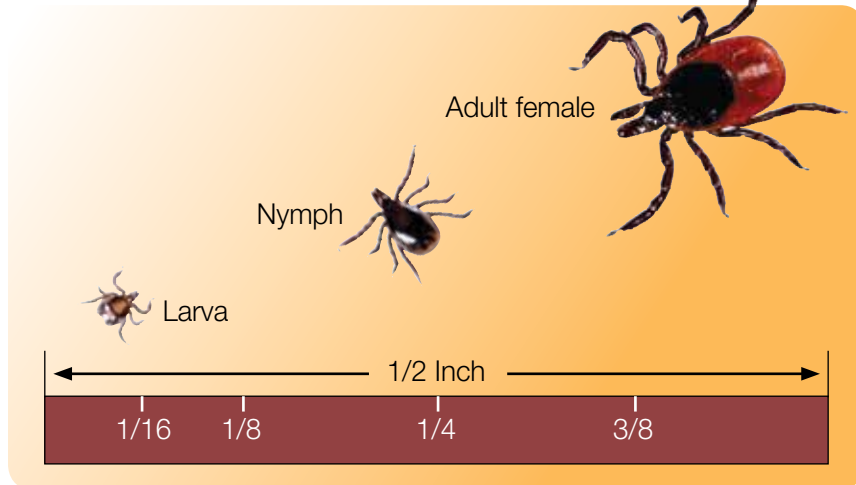
Put safety first

- Strive to reduce the number of work-related accidents to zero through practices such as hazard recognition, customized training, use of personal protective equipment and defensive driving.
- Provide emergency response to local governments when floods, wildfires and other natural disasters occur. Help local governments prevent, prepare for and reduce future damages from wildfires and floods.
- Improve safety and accessibility of DNR facilities by making all outdoor recreation facilities ADA accessible and consistent with modern design standards.

Example performance measure

Number of recordable work injuries per 100 employees

Blacklegged tick life stages



Tick-borne diseases are a major threat to field workers. The DNR mandates tick-borne illness training for all employees and provides insect repellent and protective clothing to field staff.

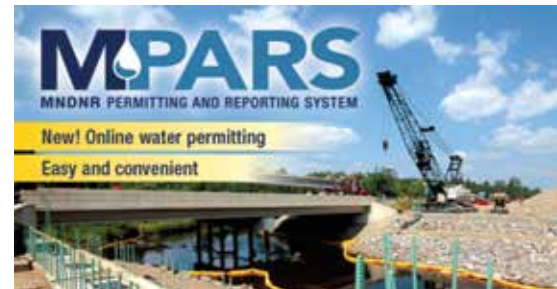
Provide better service

- Train, mentor and coach staff in continuous improvement and implement organizational improvements every year.
- Use plain language to improve customer service, reduce confusion and save time.
- Modernize our Web platform and digital content to provide easy, secure access to permits, licenses, parks reservations, mobile applications and other information.



Example performance measure

Percent of environmental permit decisions made within 150 days of receiving a complete application



The Minnesota Permitting And Reporting System simplifies water permitting for cities, farmers, businesses and landowners. The system increases the DNR's ability to track water use, identify permit violations and boost compliance.

Upgrade Minnesota's public land portfolio

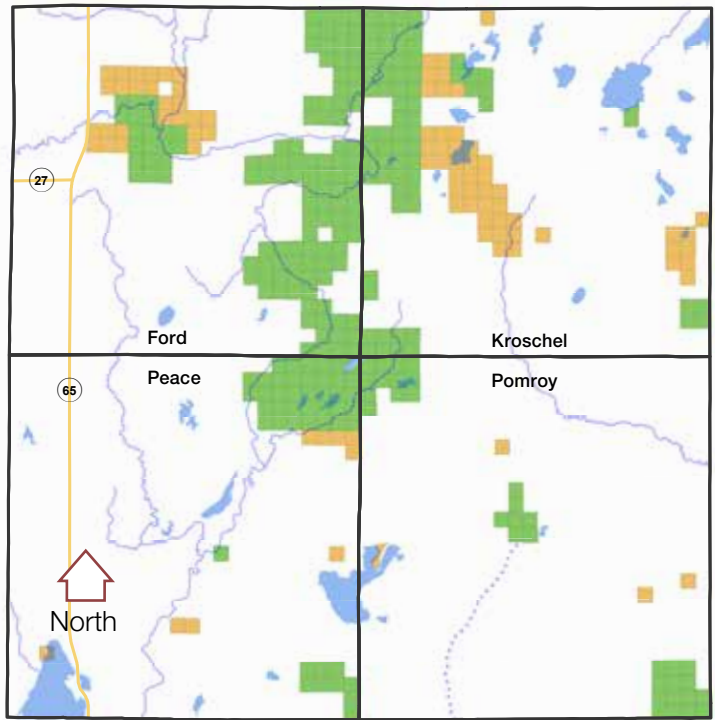
- Increase the conservation value of public lands through strategic land acquisitions, sales and exchanges. Fully integrate strategic land asset management into daily operations.
- Secure funding to enable sales and exchanges of low-priority scattered lands.

- Better coordinate public land asset management with nonprofit organizations, counties and other partners.

Example performance measures

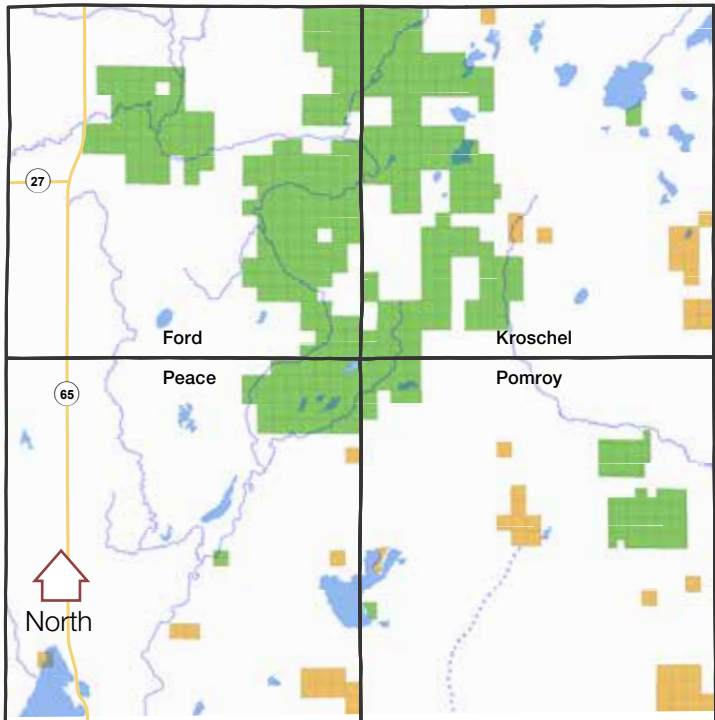
Acres made accessible through acquisition or exchange; miles of state boundary reduced by consolidating state lands

2010



State Land
County Land

2014



State Land
County Land

This Kanabec County land exchange consolidated land for the state and county, created connections between existing DNR management units, provided new access to timber, and improved overall protection, use and management of state land for current and future generations.

Actions continued next page

Actions continued

● **Grow a diverse, highly skilled and responsive workforce**

The DNR's culture of respect is a set of core values that support and promote accomplishment of the agency's mission.



- Conduct outreach and seek partnerships to foster a more diverse workforce. Explore promising opportunities including work with Wilderness Inquiry and the Conservation Corps.
- Accelerate incorporation of workforce diversity goals into all DNR programs.
- Invest in training and skills development to help staff adapt to changing constituencies and public expectations.

Example performance measure

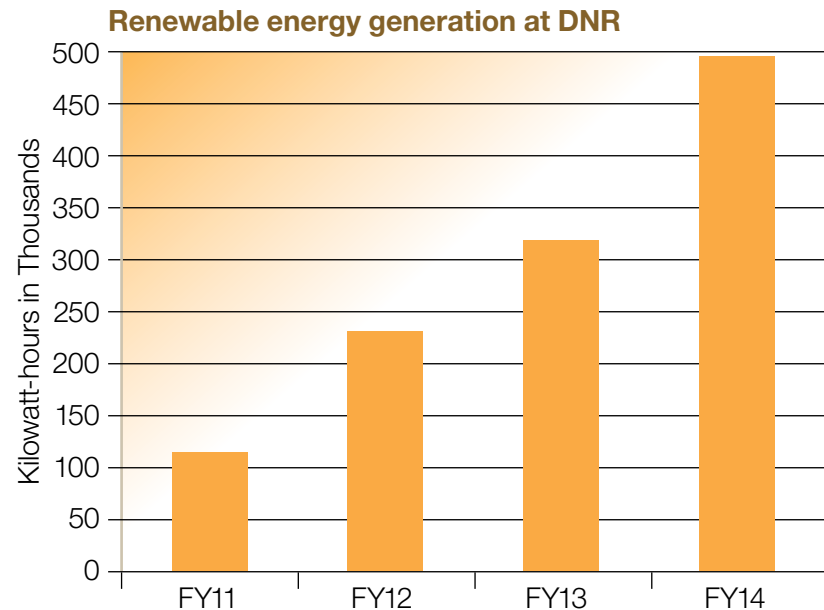
Percent of women, minorities and individuals with disabilities in the workforce

● **Increase energy efficiency and renewable energy use**

- Use more efficient vehicles and equipment to reduce fuel consumption.
- Reduce miles driven per employee by investing in teleconferencing and other technology.
- Improve energy efficiency of existing buildings and pursue net-zero energy consumption in new buildings.
- Install 125 kilowatts of renewable energy annually.

Example performance measure

Percent renewable energy used at DNR facilities



The DNR seeks to meet the state's 30 percent energy reduction goal by 2025 by increasing energy efficiency and reducing energy use.