



# Department of Natural Resources Fact Sheet



## 2016-2017 BIENNIAL BUDGET FACT SHEET

### Aviation Services Rightsizing

\$2,200,000 FY16/\$350,000 FY17

[General Fund and Game and Fish Fund]

#### **It Is Needed Because**

The aviation section of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Enforcement provides efficiency and support for DNR programs as well as public safety missions statewide. The Aviation section provides support for goals outlined in the DNR Strategic Plan through:

- Wildlife survey and census;
- Wetlands and waters protection;
- Support to enforcement operations for tribal and local agencies;
- Search and rescue;
- Asset damage survey for natural disaster; and
- Safe and efficient transportation of staff in research projects (ie. Moose study crew).

Through this proposal, the DNR will be reducing the rotary aircraft fleet from three helicopters to two while increasing safety. The rotary aircraft being replaced are two Military Surplus OH58's from 1968 and 1972, and two non-flying helicopters that will be returned to the Department of Defense (DNR will not realize any income/value from the return). These helicopters are becoming expensive to maintain and parts are becoming scarce. In addition, this proposal will replace a 1985 fixed wing aircraft with high hours of use.

The Division of Enforcement operates the aircraft and charges operation costs (hourly rate) of the aircraft to other DNR customers. (Pilot salary and replacement cost of the aircraft is not charged). The DNR Enforcement Pilots are exceptionally well trained to perform specific duties required for these missions (wildlife identification) and are SAFETY DRIVEN rather than profit driven.

#### **Major Program Elements**

The proposal requests one-time funding of \$2,200,000 in FY16 for the purchase of one helicopter to replace

two aged military surplus helicopters, and \$350,000 in FY17 for the replacement of one fixed wing aircraft.

#### **Key Measures and Outcomes**

The proposal will provide for efficiency by "right-sizing" the DNR's aviation fleet and increase safety by operating modern aircraft. More specific outcomes include:

- Rotary aircraft fleet will be reduced from three to two;
- Safer and more fuel efficient aircraft;
- Maintain lower hourly rates to DNR customers;
- Ability to continue to provide operational efficiency and effectiveness for critical DNR Programs; and
- Better government for Minnesotans through cooperative program with Public safety to reduce total fleet required

#### **Fiscal Impacts**

Funding of this proposal comes from the General Fund and the Game & Fish Fund (GFF) and is based on historical usage.

\$2,200,000 in FY16 for rotary aircraft from funds

- \$880,000 (General Fund)
- \$1,320,000 (GFF)

\$350,000 in FY17 for fixed wing from funds:

- \$140,000 (General Fund)
- \$210,000 (GFF)

#### **For Further Information, Please Contact:**

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