2026 Special Session I

Budget Bill - HB30 (Enrolled)

Department of Wildlife Resources

Item 370

	First Year - FY2027	Second Year - FY2028
Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Management (51100)	**$60,154,586**	**$59,740,934**
Wildlife Information and Education (51102)	$5,369,270	$5,369,270
Enforcement of Recreational Hunting and Fishing Laws and Regulations (51103)	$18,806,056	$18,392,404
Wildlife Management and Habitat Improvement (51106)	$35,979,260	$35,979,260
Fund Sources:		
General	$204,545	$204,545
Dedicated Special Revenue	$44,741,248	$44,327,596
Federal Trust	$15,208,793	$15,208,793

Authority: Title 29.1, Chapters 1 through 6, Code of Virginia.

A. Out of the amounts appropriated for this Item, $20,000 the first year and $20,000 the second year from nongeneral funds is provided for the Smith Mountain Lake Water Quality Monitoring Program.

B. Out of the amounts appropriated in this item, $10,000 the first year and $10,000 the second year from nongeneral funds is provided for the Back Bay Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Restoration Project.

C. Out of the amounts appropriated in this item, $204,545 in the first year and $204,545 in the second year from the general fund is provided to the department to support two staff biologists to develop and administer a statewide plan to protect and restore native freshwater mussel species. The department is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with qualified nonprofit and private entities to assist in mussel restoration planning and implementation.

D. Any unexpended general fund balances designated for payment to the Army Corps of Engineers for the seabird habitat project on the last day of each fiscal year shall be reappropriated for expenditure for the same purpose.

E.1. Subject to review and approval by the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, the Director of the Department of Wildlife Resources may issue to the Department of Transportation an interim permit to relocate the nest and eggs of any state listed threatened bird species from critical areas of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel Expansion Project's South Island associated with the ingress and egress to the island; the delivery, assembly, and immediate operations of the tunnel boring machine; or other project critical locations as mutually agreed to by the Commissioner of Highways and the Director, which, if not relocated, would effectively require all substantial construction activities to cease.

2. Prior to the issuance of an interim permit as described in section 1, (i) the Director must determine that the Department of Transportation and its design-build contractor have taken all reasonable steps to prevent birds from

nesting on the South Island, in accordance with the Colonial Nesting Bird Management Plan dated March 27, 2020, (ii) the Commissioner of Highways must determine that substantial construction activities will have to cease if the nest and eggs are not relocated, and (iii) the Director shall require as a condition of the interim permit that the nest and any eggs will be relocated under the supervision of the Department of Wildlife Resources to a location acceptable to the Director that is as close as possible to the original nesting location while allowing construction activities to continue.

3. Within 30 days of the adoption by the Board of Wildlife Resources of any regulation governing the take of migratory birds or threatened and endangered species, the Department of Transportation shall apply for a permit covering such take for the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel expansion project.