



**Austin Booth**  
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## Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

February 28, 2022

Senator Jonathan Dismang, Co-Chair  
Representative Lane Jean, Co-Chair  
Joint Budget Committee  
Arkansas General Assembly  
State Capitol Building  
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Co-Chairs:

I respectfully request amendments to SB12, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission 2022-2023 Operating appropriation act. As the Commissioners and I chart a new strategic direction for the next biennium, these amendments are vital to ensure Arkansas Game and Fish Commission can compensate for challenges in inflation in calendar years 2021 and 2022, avoid further material delays in existing construction and renovation projects, and position the agency for the FY24 and FY25 biennium.

Please amend Section 1 to add the following positions for FY23:

| Item No.                | Class Code | Title                     | Annual Maximum No. of Employees | Maximum Salary Rate 2022- 2023 |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (9)                     | Q257U      | AGFC DIVISION CHIEF       | <del>9</del> 11                 | \$106,902                      |
| (29)                    | Q275U      | AGFC BIOLOGIST SUPERVISOR | <del>22</del> 23                | \$86,609                       |
| (38)                    | Q287U      | AGFC BIOLOGIST SPECIALIST | <del>53</del> 54                | \$80,624                       |
| Max Number of Employees |            |                           | <del>630</del> 634              |                                |

These additional positions are required in order to transition to a deeper, enduring, and strategic focus on recreational shooting and private land wildlife management. More specifically, these positions will lead the effort in FY23 to elevate the existing recreational shooting and private lands programs into standalone divisions in the next biennium.

Please amend Section 3. Appropriation - Operations to add the following appropriation:

|                              |                          |               |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| (06) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION |                          |               |
| (A) OPER. EXPENSE            | <del>34,471,984</del>    | 35,471,984    |
| (C) PROF. FEES               | <del>4,309,003</del>     | 5,309,003     |
| (D) CAP. OUTLAY              | <del>8,885,000</del>     | 12,885,000    |
| (08) CONSTRUCTION            | <del>13,000,000</del>    | 18,000,000    |
| TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED    | <del>\$124,222,887</del> | \$135,222,887 |

This request includes \$1,000,000 in Operating Expenses and \$1,000,000 in Professional Fees that would allow the commission to assess and replace aging technology infrastructure and systems. AGFC requests an additional \$4,000,000 in Capital Outlay to enable the Commission to continue the timely replacement of fleet and equipment. Supply chain issues have caused unprecedented delays in delivery. Vehicles, boats, and other equipment ordered in FY2022 will likely not be received until FY2023. Lastly, an additional \$5,000,000 in Construction appropriation. AGFC and the Arkansas Department of Transportation are working together to manage the Marine Fuel Tax Program. Under a current proposal, the Commission would directly procure and coordinate projects funded by Marine Fuel Tax.

Please Insert the following Section and renumber accordingly:

SECTION 9. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE NOT PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS A SPECIAL LOCAL AND TEMPORARY LAW. ENFORCEMENT SALARIES. In order to allow the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to seek and employ qualified law enforcement officers and maintain sustainable staffing levels, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission may exceed the maximum annual salary rate by no more than twenty percent (20%) for the following positions:

| <u>Class</u> | <u>Title</u>                           |
|--------------|--|
| <u>Q256U</u> | <u>AGFC COLONEL</u>                    |
| <u>Q261U</u> | <u>AGFC MAJOR</u>                      |
| <u>Q267U</u> | <u>AGFC CAPTAIN</u>                    |
| <u>Q276U</u> | <u>AGFC LIEUTENANT</u>                 |
| <u>Q284U</u> | <u>AGFC SERGEANT</u>                   |
| <u>Q288U</u> | <u>AGFC CORPORAL</u>                   |
| <u>Q299U</u> | <u>AGFC WILDLIFE OFFICER 1ST CLASS</u> |
| <u>Q309U</u> | <u>AGFC WILDLIFE OFFICER</u>           |

The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

This special language is necessary to allow the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to keep enforcement officers' compensation at a level to allow stable recruitment and to maximize mission accomplishment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Austin Booth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Austin Booth, Director  
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission