

WDFW BUDGET AND POLICY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING SUMMARY

July 25, 2023

10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Natural Resource Building, Olympia, WA

ATTENDEES

BPAG Members

Alexei Calambokidis, Trout Unlimited
Bill Richardson, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Deborah Jensen, Washington Audubon
George Harris, NW Marine Trade Association
Jessica Helsley, Wild Salmon Center
Kathleen Callaghy, Defenders of Wildlife
Kerston Swartz, Woodland Park Zoo
Lance Winecka, Regional Fisheries Coalition
Mark Pidgeon, Hunters Heritage Council
Nora Nickum, Seattle Aquarium
Rachel Voss, First Hunt Foundation
Tom Davis, WA Forest Protection Association
Tom O'Keefe, American Whitewater

WDFW

Kelly Susewind
Nate Pamplin
Tom McBride
Morgan Stinson
Wendy Connally
Rob Geddis
Kristina Hill
Chalee Batungbacal

Public

Robinson Low, WA Conservation Action
Rein Attemann, WA Conservation Action
Don Gourlie, PSP

MEETING NOTES

Welcome, Introductions, and Agency Update with Director Susewind

Nate Pamplin welcomed the Budget and Policy Advisory Group (BPAG) members and other guests to the meeting.

WDFW Director, Kelly Susewind, provided agency updates that included the announcement of WDFW's new Region 1 Director, Mike Kuttel Jr., and the announcement of the [Director of Conservation recruitment](#) posted on July 18.

Kelly also provided WDFW Fish and Wildlife Commission updates.

- The Co-Manager Hatchery Policy is being reviewed and a decision to adopt will be made in early fall.
- The periodic status review for wolves is open for comment. WDFW's draft recommendation to the Commission is to downlist wolves to sensitive, with a final recommendation and potential decision by the Commission later this fall.
- WDFW is reviewing public comments for the Conservation Policy and is presenting a summary of comments to the Commission's Big Tent Committee in August.

Kelly shared gratitude for a successful legislative session. The Biodiversity Decision Package is a huge success for WDFW and our ability to conserve biodiversity in the state.

State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP)

WDFW SWAP Coordinator, Wendy Connally, presented on WDFW's goals for revising Washington's State Wildlife Action Plan. The revision is due October 2025 and will prioritize conservation actions for the Species of Greatest Conservation Need. WDFW is coordinating with western states to develop common descriptions of threats and recovery actions.

BPAG members encouraged WDFW to be more explicit regarding the 'actions' to conserve species and have the plan be more 'user friendly' on the website, where species information and actions can be readily updated.

Please contact Wendy Connally at wendy.connally@dfw.wa.gov for additional information regarding the WDFW State Wildlife Action Plan.

Strategic Plan Implementation

WDFW Lean Performance Manager, Rob Geddis, presented WDFW's Strategic Plan Dashboard. The dashboard is used internally to track plan measures and implementation progress. WDFW is in the process of building out milestones for the current fiscal year.

BPAG members expressed appreciation for the visibility of WDFW priorities and encouraged WDFW to post/create a similar dashboard on the public facing WDFW webpage.

Budget Overview

WDFW Chief Financial Officer, Morgan Stinson, briefed BPAG members and facilitated discussion on WDFW's budget request process, timeline, and the 2024 supplemental budget.

There was significant discussion on the draft proposal to acquire a boat ramp in Clallam County, the Olympic Peninsula salmon and steelhead request, a request for forest health, and requests associated with hatchery maintenance and fish marking.

The draft packages will be presented to the Fish and Wildlife Commission at their August 10-12 meeting.

Please contact Morgan Stinson at morgan.stinson@dfw.wa.gov for additional information regarding the WDFW supplemental budget.

Legislative Updates & Check-In

WDFW Legislative Director, Tom McBride, briefed BPAG members and facilitated discussion on WDFW 2024 legislative requests.

Ongoing Agency Policy Requests

- 1226- Requiring recreational licenses for eulachon, carp, and crawfish species
- 5306- Authority for chronic wasting disease, voluntary check stations on highways

Possible Agency Policy Requests

- Protecting the confidentiality of other states' fisheries information.
- Allow concurrent application for habitat recovery project (HRPP) permits and cultural resource reviews.

- Expand recreational land management authority to better utilize non-profits and volunteers.
- Increase state funding of deer and elk crop damage.

Please contact Tom McBride at tom.mcbride@dfw.wa.gov for additional information regarding WDFW legislative requests.

Closing

Nate ended the meeting expressed gratitude for their support and engagement.

The next BPAG meeting will be in the fall. Please email Kristina Hill at Kristina.Hill@dfw.wa.gov for assistance if travel support is needed.