

## Summary

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**Meeting dates:** April 9-10, 2015

**Agenda item:** Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances – Briefing

**Presenters:** Penny A. Becker, Ph.D., Acting Diversity Division Manager and  
Cynthia Wilkerson, Land Conservation and Restoration Section  
Manager, Diversity Division, Wildlife Program

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**Background summary:**

The department will brief the commission on the development of two Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAAs). The agreements with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) provide participating landowners with a permit containing assurances that if they engage in conservation actions included in the agreement, the landowner will not have additional restrictions placed on them and they will not be asked to implement additional conservation measures even if the species were to be federally listed in the future. The permit also covers CCAA participants for any incidental take of the listed species or its habitat on their land for the term of the agreement.

WDFW is working with partners to draft two separate CCAAs including one for fisher and one for greater sage-grouse. CCAAs are available to all non-federal landowners. The fisher CCAA is focused for private landowners, while the sage-grouse CCAA is for both state and private lands. The CCAAs must go through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, be completed and have participants enrolled in them before the final listing date for the species. As of now, the USFWS is planning to have final determinations for fisher in October 2015 and for sage-grouse in October 2016, though timing extensions are possible.

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**Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:**

N/A

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**Public involvement process used and what you learned:**

Both CCAAs are being developed with significant input from stakeholders and the USFWS. For fishers, large and small forest landowners have contributed to writing the agreement and the agreements are being discussed with multiple tribes. For sage-grouse, organized agricultural groups and the Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) are engaged in the process.

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**Action requested:**

N/A

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**Draft motion language:**

N/A

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**Justification for Commission action:**

N/A

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**Communications Plan:**

WDFW Website, News Releases, One-page flyers, Public Meetings, Newsletter articles- WA Cattlemen's, WDNR Small Forest Landowner, Presentations to interested parties/organizations

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