

## PHS List update process

The update to the PHS List required a great deal of input from experts and potential users of the list. Updating the PHS List began with an initial information gathering (scoping) phase. During this period, numerous agency staff were asked to provide input on changes and revisions that might be necessary to improve the PHS List. PHS user groups were also notified and asked to provide similar feedback (a notice was included in WDFW's newsletter, the *Fish and Wildlife Planner*). All feedback was reviewed and prioritized. Comments made independently by more than one individual were given higher priority. A technical advisory team formed to direct the update to the list reviewed all suggestions. This team also provided their own suggestions for needed updates to the PHS List. This team was comprised of species, habitat, and land use experts. A core group that oversees all PHS matters also provided additional feedback during this pre-update scoping phase. This scoping phase was used to determine what parts of the PHS List would require update and revisions.

After priorities were identified for this update cycle, the process of addressing each priority was carried out, often using teams of experts. Major priorities included additions, deletions, or modifications to the list of priority habitats and species as well as revisions to the language used to define specific priority habitats. The PHS List Technical Advisory Team provided much direction and guidance in addressing major changes to the PHS List. In some instances the team requested that subteams be formed to deal with matters requiring specialized assistance. Each subteam was comprised of experts who have knowledge about a particular habitat or species group. Subteams were formed to help write or revise definitions for nearshore, herbaceous bald, shrub-steppe, eastside steppe, westside prairie, and biodiversity areas and corridors priority habitats. A subteam was also formed to see which Species of Greatest Conservation Need should be added to the PHS List. Each subteam helped write and review proposed changes to the list. In addition to the use of the Technical Advisory Team and Subteams, communications with other experts was critical in making other important decisions (e.g., reviewing priority species distribution maps). Important communications with the Technical Advisory Team, subteams, and other experts were documented.

The peer-review was initiated as the final stage of the update. The review period lasted three weeks and many individuals with various backgrounds were given opportunity to comment. Each comment was considered and the final decision for how each comment was handled was documented.