

WDFW's \$26 million need for sustainable, adequate funding



Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

IN A STATE VALUED
FOR ITS QUALITY OF
OUTDOORS LIFESTYLE,

LESS THAN 1% OF THE
GENERAL FUND

GOES TO SUPPORT ALL
NATURAL RESOURCE
AGENCIES COMBINED
– THAT'S DNR, STATE
PARKS, RCO, THE
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION, DEPT. OF
ECOLOGY, THE PUGET
SOUND PARTNERSHIP,
AND WDFW.

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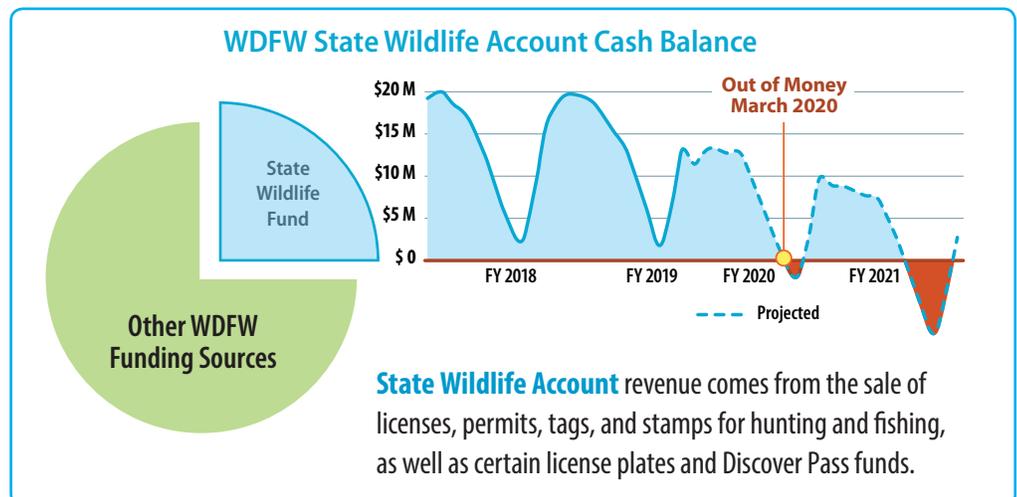
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WDFW's budget struggle in a changing environment

The balance of the State Wildlife Account that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) depends on has shrunk steadily over the last three years. Revenue has remained flat while basic costs continue to rise. Unless the Legislature intervenes to avoid an impending financial crisis, the Department will need to make drastic reductions in 2020. These cuts would lead to less conserved habitat, decreased science-based decision making, and fewer fishing and hunting opportunities.

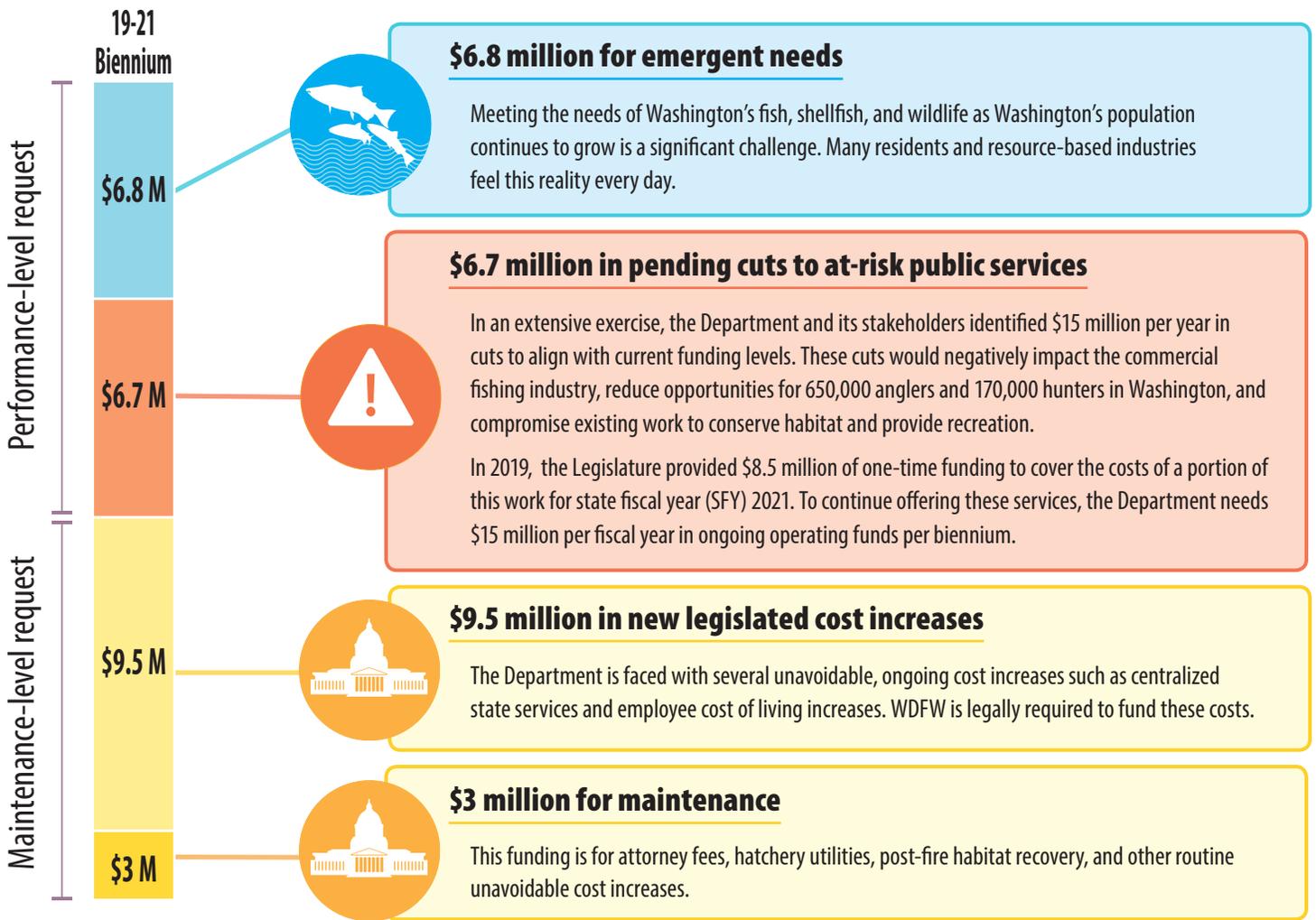
To avoid the loss of these services and recreational and commercial opportunities, the Department is requesting that the 2020 Washington State Legislature fully fund the Department in 2020 on an ongoing basis.



Since the Department's crisis emerged in 2017, WDFW has undergone a third-party financial review and cut \$2 million in ongoing expenses. Yet, these facts remain:

- WDFW continues to suffer from state general fund reductions enacted in 2009 due to a national economic downturn that has since passed;
- The Legislature has not approved an increase to recreational hunting and fishing fees since 2011;
- Federal funding is decreasing simultaneously; and
- Washington's fish and wildlife require more management, as the state's human population continues to grow.

2020 Supplemental Operating Funding Request: \$26 million

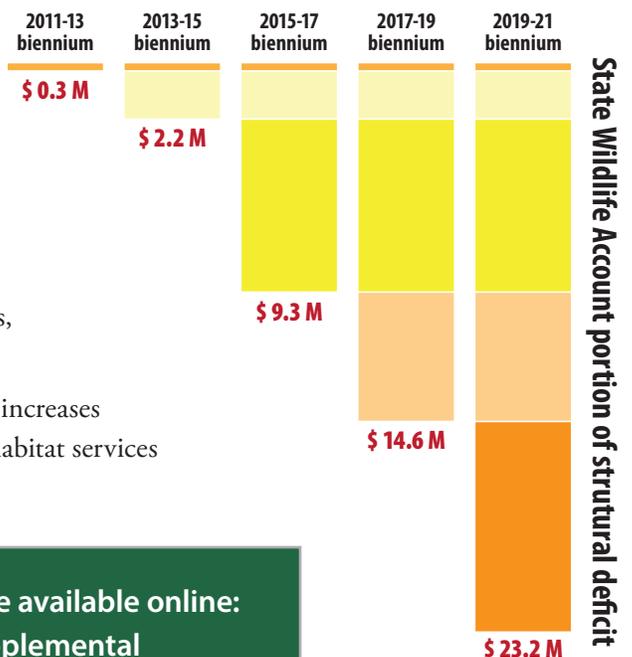


Need for ongoing operations funding fix

Each biennium, the State Wildlife Account is impacted by new and unavoidable legislated cost increases. Since 2017, the funding to address these cost increases has come as one-time appropriations. Yet, one-time appropriations fail to address the Department's structural deficit, which results in a deeper budget hole the following year.

These cumulative cost increases in the absence of ongoing revenue creates increasing uncertainty for commercial enterprises, recreationists, and employees.

Ongoing funds for existing public services and unavoidable cost increases would allow the Department to focus on the fish, wildlife, and habitat services that people value.



More detailed descriptions are available online:
wdfw.wa.gov/2020supplemental



\$6.8 million for emergent needs



\$2.5 million for monitoring salmon & steelhead fisheries

Meeting monitoring requirements and commitments allows the state to maintain fishing in areas where stocks are healthy and meet conservation objectives for threatened fish. There are new and existing needs in Puget Sound, Nisqually River, and Skagit River (catch and release). ★



\$402,000 for post-fire habitat recovery

In 2019, wildfires burned more than 22,000 acres of WDFW land. Funding is needed to restore native vegetation and prevent noxious weed infestations to preserve high quality fish and wildlife habitat and outdoor recreational opportunities.



\$1.7 million for assisting property owners with protecting fish

WDFW has an important emerging need to implement Southern Resident Orca Task Force recommendations and 2019 Chinook Abundance bill requirements which tell WDFW to implement new civil compliance tools to help landowners meet fish protection standards. The bill has WDFW working with violators to first offer technical assistance for voluntary compliance. However, without the ability to secure additional expertise, the department will have limited ability to coordinate with landowners and contractors on their construction activities.

\$924,000 for Columbia River pinniped predation

WDFW and co-managers submitted an application under the recently amended Marine Mammal Protection Act to reduce sea lion predation on listed salmonids in the Columbia River. New capacity is needed to increase removals of sea lions, reduce predation impact, and implement the recommendation of Governor's Southern Resident Killer Whale task force.

\$837,000 to meet Columbia River commitments

Research on alternative fishing is needed to meet the Commission's objectives for restructuring lower Columbia River commercial fisheries. Achieving these objectives will improve fishing opportunities while meeting salmon recovery objectives. The Department will also hire a consultant to work with the industry to develop a Columbia Gill Net License buy-back program.

\$172,000 to protect humpback whales

Commercial crab pots can unintentionally entangle whales. The Department's work will reduce the chance of entanglements and provide regulatory certainty for the fishing industry.

\$311,000 Mobile app for fishing in Washington

More than 100,000 people use the Fish Washington App to understand the state's complex fishing regulations. The app provides the most up-to-date information about rules in specific water bodies. Additional work is needed to fully provide the functionality anglers are seeking. ★

★ Continues current work



\$6.7 million in pending cuts to at-risk public services | \$30.2 million ongoing biennium needed

(Legislature provided \$8.5 M for SFY 2019 to fund the following)



Conserve species & habitat

19-21 biennium funding needed	21-23 biennium ongoing need
\$743 K	\$3.4 M

The agency would have to reduce help to landowners and local communities willing to voluntarily sustain healthy habitat – one of the most cost-effective methods of wildlife and fish protections available.



Fish and shellfish management and 8 salmon and trout hatcheries

\$2.1 M	\$9.4 M
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This would remove 4.5 million steelhead, trout, and salmon from Washington waters; negatively impact razor clamming, steamer clamming and oyster harvest at 15 popular Puget Sound beaches, and have a \$40 million potential economic impact to coastal communities.



Hunting impacts

\$673 K	\$3 M
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Less data means fewer hunting licenses. Hunter education and Westside pheasant programs would also be reduced. These cuts could have downstream consequences on the number of hunter education classes, hunting licenses, and revenue.



Conflict management

\$955 K	\$4.4 M
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Wildlife Conflict Specialists respond to calls of wildlife causing property damage, nuisance, and potential public safety issues and facilitate the use of non-lethal techniques to resolve the conflict. Without them, citizens would no longer receive this valuable service and there would be increased conflict with landowners.

Shellfish public safety

19-21 biennium funding needed	21-23 biennium ongoing need
\$553 K	\$2.5 M

The proposed 20 percent reduction in sanitary shellfish enforcement patrols would put small, family-run commercial businesses at risk as enforcement levels drop below the Department of Health standards needed for some commercial shellfish harvest and sale opportunities. This has a further potential impact to public safety. Fewer inspections means fewer opportunities to spot a problem.

Columbia River salmon and steelhead fishing

\$659 K	\$3 M
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The eliminated Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement funds reduces monitoring, which results in less fishing opportunity. This puts a multimillion dollar annual recreational and commercial economic opportunity at risk.

Land management

\$578 K	\$2.6 M
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Stewardship of 1 million acres of public land would suffer. The Department would leave severely burned lands unrestored, and give up 10 percent of its capacity to treat landscapes with prescribed fire - a recipe for poor future outcomes for forest health in Washington.

Customer service

\$410 K	\$1.9 M
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Customers who call WDFW during business hours are currently able to speak to fellow Washingtonians who know our state, its fish and wildlife, and lands. Instead, customers would speak with an outsourced answering service.

Why do Washingtonians need a healthy fish and wildlife department?

74%
OF WASHINGTONIANS
SUPPORT WDFW
FUNDING FROM BOTH
LICENSES AND PUBLIC
TAX DOLLARS. ¹

- **268 Washington species** are in need of conservation.
- **1 million people** will choose Washington as their home in the next decade adding development and recreation pressure on scarce resources.
- **24,300 times per year** our officers respond to calls for service, from wild animal conflicts to illegal poaching.
- **1 million acres of public WDFW land** supports habitat, clean water, and recreation.
- **\$3.5 billion in annual expenditures** are driven by Washington hunters and wildlife watchers. ²
- **\$1.8 billion in annual economic benefit** comes from sustainable Washington fisheries. ^{2,3}

¹ America's Wildlife Values—Washington State Report, 2018;

² 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation;

³ Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2016.

2020 Supplemental Capital Funding Request: \$21.3 million



\$1 million to plan salmon infrastructure for orcas

The department is working to increase food for endangered Southern Resident Orcas by 55 million juvenile salmon per year. WDFW is seeking \$1 million to fund a master planning process that will assess existing infrastructure, determine needs, and prioritize the projects for the most efficient, cost-effective improvements to meet production goals.

\$11.7 million for Hurd Creek Hatchery

With design and permitting complete, this construction funding will move the existing conservation hatchery out of a dangerous floodplain by 2022. The 2.9 million Chinook reared at this Clallam County facility are from critical stocks that can be reared only in this area to successfully recover imperiled Chinook runs on the Dungeness and Elwha rivers.



\$2.9 million for Soos Creek Hatchery

The department has nearly completed restoration of a 1901 hatchery that produces 6.5 million Chinook and 1.2 million coho juvenile salmon per year. Completing the project requires funds for demolition, water treatment, streamside restoration, and a public viewing area that invites 2.2 million King County residents to better understand their role in salmon recovery.

\$450,000 for Beaver Creek Hatchery

WDFW is shifting production to Beaver Creek from its Grays River Hatchery due to environmental compliance issues. Funds are needed to renovate this 1950s-era salmon hatchery in Wahkiakum County, where 250,000 Chinook, 225,000 coho, and 190,000 steelhead smolt are reared annually for release into the Columbia River.



\$5.2 million for Wiley Slough dike

The current WDFW-owned levee on Fir Island in Skagit County is too low, leaving hundreds of acres of public land, roads, farms, and homes at risk. If funded today, by 2022 these needed improvements would bring the levee up to Army Corps of Engineer standards and reduce the chance of expensive flood damage.