



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

Meeting date:

2/26/2021

Agenda item:

Periodic Status Review (PSR) for the Gray and Humpback Whales

Presenter(s):

Chris Sato, Wildlife Biologist, and Hannah Anderson, Wildlife Diversity Division Manager

Background summary:

The gray whale Eastern population has recovered and been at or near carrying capacity for several decades. But due to concerns regarding the small populations of the Pacific Coast Feeding Group and the federally endangered Western Population of gray whales in Washington and the threats described in this report, we recommend that the gray whale be retained as a state sensitive species in Washington. The humpback whale Central America DPS and the Mexico DPS, which together comprise about 80 percent of the humpback whales that visit Washington waters, remain below sustainable numbers and are federally listed as endangered and threatened, respectively. In order to align with federal listings, reflect the status of the most vulnerable DPS that visits the state, and support the conservation efforts of other agencies and organizations, we recommend that the humpback whale be retained as a state endangered species. WDFW received two public comments, one positive and one neutral.

Staff recommendation:

Maintain sensitive status for gray whale and endangered status for humpback whale.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

n/a

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

n/a

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

PSR posted on WDFW site for 90-day public review.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Decision on listing status recommendations.

Draft motion language:

n/a

Post decision communications plan:

n/a
