

Frequently Asked Questions about the WAG recruitment process – last updated 1/3/2022

In 2013, WDFW created the Wolf Advisory Group to provide a broad range of perspectives to help guide wolf conservation and management in Washington. A primary task for this group is recommending strategies for reducing conflicts with wolves outlined in the state's [Wolf Conservation and Management Plan](#). The group also serves to increase the transparency and accountability of the department's activities and management actions related to wolves. Specific issues include encouraging livestock producers to take proactive, preventative measures to decrease the risk of loss; providing compensation for economic loss due to wolf depredation; monitoring recovery of the wolf population and its effect on prey species; and providing information to the public on wolf recovery in Washington.

How many seats does the WAG have?

WAG has a maximum of 18 members, but it may have fewer at any given time based on vacancies.

Does the WAG have seats dedicated to certain organizations? How are different perspectives represented in the group?

The WAG is intended to represent diverse interests, not only between identity groups (such as the livestock producer/ranching community, environmental community, or hunting community), but also diversity within identity groups. No one person represents the entirety of a community or an identity group, and we seek to have a diversity of perspectives on WAG.

The WAG does not have seats dedicated to specific organizations, agencies, or groups, nor are members appointed directly without successfully completing the application and interview process. The group may not have spots open for all identity groups at the same time. The WAG is structured to represent a variety of perspectives across Washington; as such, WDFW attempts to keep the WAG balanced across several variables (examples include, but are not limited to, a candidate's interest/perspective, where they live in the state, gender, living in an area with wolves/without wolves). Unfortunately, sometimes excellent candidates are not selected to serve on WAG so that a specific identity group does not become overrepresented on WAG.

How does the WAG recruitment process work?

If there are a large number of vacancies on the WAG, WDFW conducts a recruitment process.

The recruitment process starts with a public announcement [like this one](#). WDFW often receives interest letters from people outside of a recruitment period. We advise interested parties to send application materials any time and WDFW will keep them on file for the next active recruitment.

Interested applicants are asked to submit letters of interest or nominations that address the following items:

- The applicant or nominee's name, address, telephone number, and email address;
 - People or groups making nominations must also submit their own names and contact information;
- The candidate's relevant experience, organizational affiliations, and reasons why they would be an effective advisory group member;
- Familiarity with Washington's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and current wolf recovery status and management issues; and
- Experience in collaborating with people with different values, backgrounds, and perspectives.

How does the interview process work?

Once the application period closes, a subcommittee (representing various WDFW positions including district wildlife biologists, wildlife conflict specialists, wolf biologists, etc.) of the Wolf Internal Group (a diverse cross-section of WDFW staff who work on wolf topics) coordinate the interview process.

Members of the subcommittee conduct an initial phone call (with the same set of questions) with all applicants. The subcommittee then meets to discuss current vacancies on the WAG and what identity groups are more or less represented on WAG.

Once the subcommittee has discussed all the above factors, the applicant pool is considered and individuals are selected for second, in-person interviews. The typical number of in-person interviews conducted is ~10, but it depends how many vacancies need to be filled. When candidates are interviewed, they are asked questions that help WDFW assess their capacity for collaboration. **In particular, individuals are desired who are open to collaboration and willing to work with those whose views may differ—regardless of their personal views about wolves.** Successful candidates must value compromise and cohesion on issues, with the intent to resolve conflicts.

Following the interviews, the subcommittee provides appointment recommendations to WDFW's Director.

How long are membership terms? Can WAG members be reappointed?

WAG members are appointed for two-year terms (previously three-year terms). At the end of a WAG member's term, WDFW assesses their interest in continuing as WAG members and makes recommendations to the Director about whether to reappoint or excuse WAG members.

Who appoints WAG members?

The WDFW Director appoints WAG members.

What is the time commitment involved with being a WAG member?

WAG members should be prepared to participate in at least four two-day, in-person meetings per year in locations such as Spokane, Ellensburg, and Olympia (advisory group members may be reimbursed by WDFW for travel expenses to attend meetings). WAG members also participate in virtual meetings, phone calls, subgroup work, and outreach as needed. WAG members are expected to have excellent meeting attendance and participation. Being a WAG member is a significant work and time commitment.

I'm interested in applying for WAG! How should I prepare?

1. **Attend a meeting.** [Wolf Advisory Group](#) meetings have never been easier to attend because they have been virtual since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. They are open to the public and have public comment opportunities associated with most meetings. If you are interested in being on WAG, we strongly encourage you to attend a meeting so you can have a better idea of what the WAG is, who the members are, and how it works. This may help you to clarify whether a position on the WAG is an opportunity you would still like to pursue.
2. **Learn about wolf conservation and management in Washington.** If you are interested in applying for WAG membership, please be familiar with all of the materials available at wdfw.wa.gov/wolves, especially the [Wolf Conservation and Management Plan](#) and the [wolf-livestock interaction protocol](#).
3. **Familiarize yourself with Conservation Conflict Transformation.** The WAG follows the principles of Conservation Conflict Transformation (CCT). To learn more, watch and listen to the following presentation:

Building a Path to Peace, Conservation Conflict Transformation [presentation](#) and [audio](#)
4. **Sign up for wolf information updates.** [Sign up here](#); all past updates are available at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/at-risk/species-recovery/gray-wolf/updates>.

Still have questions? Contact wildthing@dfw.wa.gov.