

# WDFW staff and volunteer safety



## 2025 Agency Request Legislation

\$3.1 million ongoing annually



The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) mission requires remote, water-adjacent, challenging field work throughout the state and is committed to preventing serious accidents and fatalities. **WDFW's safety vision is that WDFW has a robust culture of safety where every staff member and volunteer has the training and tools to mitigate the risks inherent in their work.**

To achieve our safety vision, WDFW continues to reinforce a culture of safety and deliver the necessary tools, policies, and trainings to staff and volunteers. This decision package supports both elements.

In 2024, WDFW established an internal Incident Command System (ICS) to rapidly scale the Department's safety and training program and to respond to three Department of Labor & Industries' (L&I) citations. To support this scaling, WDFW requested and received in the 2024 supplemental operating budget, \$4.8 million per fiscal year ongoing to add additional safety capacity in each region, expand the high-risk job task training program, and increase support for staff working in remote areas.

With this funding, WDFW is equipping field staff with job-specific first aid kits, field-based communication devices, and a system to ensure every field staff is accounted for at the end of the day. The Department also accelerated the delivery of field specific job task trainings across the state with both WDFW trainers and contractors. WDFW recognizes that one of the key challenges is the quantity, diversity, and geographic scope of field-based work that are a core part of the Department's mission. WDFW is also in the process of conducting a job task analysis to catalog field work activities. This job task analysis will help the Department identify and develop accident prevention plans, training programs, and equipment to mitigate field-based risks.

When WDFW requested funds in the 2024 supplemental operating budget, the Department acknowledged there would be additional hazards and risks that would require additional funds to mitigate. We acknowledged at that time the Department plans for future funding requests.

**This package represents the second part of a multi-stage funding strategy and includes the next three most important items the Department must address – volunteer safety, safety equipment, and staff safety data management.**

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