

# Expand Wildlife Conflict Response



2025-27 Funding Request  
\$7.4 million



As Washington's population continues to grow, the potential for human-wildlife interactions and conflict increases. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) Dispatch Center received 30,582 contacts specific to dangerous, problem, and injured wildlife between February 2022 and June 2024; over 1,000 contacts per day. WDFW is seeking to build capacity for wildlife conflict response by consolidating and expanding response to negative human-wildlife interactions.

Human safety, commercial crop losses from deer and elk damage, and livestock losses from bears, cougars, and wolves are the Department's primary concern. WDFW employs trained wildlife conflict specialists that currently work on deer and elk damage, bear timber damage, wolf conflicts, and other less dangerous human-wildlife interaction responses.

Currently, WDFW employs **23 wildlife conflict staff across 39 counties** in the state. More staff are needed to serve the entire state, reduce response times, and provide expanded response to statutorily required actions effectively and efficiently.

Funding this request allows wildlife conflict specialists to increase responsiveness to crop and livestock damage and negative human-wildlife interactions, while increasing preventative education and outreach. Proactive communication by wildlife conflict staff provides valuable wildlife coexistence information to the public and may help deter future negative interactions.

These changes will reduce agriculture and livestock producer frustrations, decrease costly damage claims, support agricultural producers and rural economies, and allow for a seamless response and follow-through to negative human-wildlife interactions with all species including black bears and cougars.

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