

WDFW BUDGET AND POLICY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING SUMMARY

January 5, 2022

10am – 11:30am

**Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, 1111 Washington St SE, Olympia WA 98501 –
Online Meeting**

BPAG Attendance

Alexei Calambokidis, Trout Unlimited
Jason Callahan, Washington Forest Protection Association
David Cloe, Inland NW Wildlife Council
Tom Davis, Washington Farm Bureau
Mitch Friedman, Conservation Northwest
Brittany Gallagher, The Nature Conservancy
Kathleen Gobush, Defenders of Wildlife
Lucas Hall, Long Live the Kings
George Harris, NW Marine Trade Association
Jess Helsley, Wild Salmon Center
Deborah Jensen, Washington Audubon
Eric Johnson, WA State Assoc. of Counties
Greg Johnson, Commercial Fisher
Dave Mastin, Association of Washington Business
Nora Nickum, Seattle Aquarium
Tom O’Keefe, American Whitewater
Mark Pidgeon, Hunters Heritage Council
Bill Richardson, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

Butch Smith, Ilwaco Charter Organization
Mindy Roberts, Washington Environmental Council
Rachel Voss
Lance Winecka, Regional Fisheries Coalition

Other Attendees

WDFW Staff

Nate Pamplin, Policy Director
Morgan Stinson, Chief Financial Officer
Tom McBride, Legislative Director
Kathy Backman
Tami Lininger
Sam Montgomery
Chalee Batungbacal

WDFW Commissioner Lorna Smith

Welcome, Opening Remarks, New Member Introductions

Nate Pamplin welcomed the members of the Budget and Policy Advisory Group and introduced two new members: Dave Mastin representing the Association of Washington Business (and replacing Gary Chandler) and Alexei Calambokidis representing Trout Unlimited (and replacing Jonathan Stumpf).

2022 Supplemental Legislative Session – Overview and Agency Request Legislation

Tom McBride reviewed the Department’s 2022 legislative proposals.

Carryover Bills from 2021:

- HB 1508 Sanitary Shellfish
- HB 1172 Repeal RCW 77.110

Agency Request Legislation 2022:

- ADA Advisory Committee Composition
- Recruitment/Licensure
- Electronic and Print-from-home Licenses
- Discover Pass Free Day Alignment and Vehicle Access Pass

The theme of the [2022 agency requests](#) is to make hunting and fishing more accessible.

Other bills of interest:

- Hydropower fee expiration date extension (Ecology)
- RFEG fund/percentage splits
- Governor's Salmon Recovery bill
- HB 1707 Personal Flotation Devices
- SB 5619 Conserving Kelp Forest and Eelgrass

Members of the BPAG expressed support for technology upgrades to licensing and expressed concern about adequate funding for state-managed recreation lands.

Governor's 2022 Supplemental Operating and Capital Budget Proposals

Morgan Stinson shared the status of the WDFW 2022 capital and operating budget requests. [Details of the Department's requests](#) and how they were addressed in the Governor's budget can be found on the WDFW website.

Morgan reviewed funding sources for the Department's operating budget and the level of funding for previous supplemental budget requests.

Operating Budget requests for the 2022 operating budget were fully funded with a few exceptions. The Columbia River Gillnet License Buyback and the Columbia River Alternative Gear Work requests were not funded as proposed; however, a gillnet buyback is proposed in the Governor's Salmon Recovery initiative. Also a request to back-fill a structural deficit in the Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account for \$9.7M was not proposed for funding. Morgan reviewed how each of the policy level requests align with WDFW strategic plan objectives.

BPAG members asked why the approach to fish passage rulemaking is being adjusted and were informed that the changes are to prepare for climate change and to build a comprehensive strategy for fish passage rulemaking. BPAG members also remarked that solar power support and placement of solar power equipment will impact both farmland and wildlife corridors.

Morgan reviewed the details of the Governors WDFW Salmon Proposals.

The legislature will release their final budget in March 2022, and funding for bills that pass begins July 1.

BPAG members had questions about the specifics of the gill net items in the Governor’s salmon bill, as the approach only allows one year to complete the buyback.

BPAG members also had questions about developing operating budget requests for 2023-25. Nate noted that work on the 2023-25 budget will begin this winter and spring. Pending how the Governor’s budget proposal is funded by the Legislature and given the emphasis on salmon recovery in it, it is likely that the priorities for 2023-25 will be on terrestrial wildlife diversity and bolstering operations and maintenance for Department lands.

Nate encouraged the BPAG members to contact him, Tom, or Morgan with any questions about 2022 budget or legislative requests.

Finalize BPAG Charter

Nate Pamplin provided an updated draft charter to the members of the BPAG in November 2021 and did not receive any comments or suggestions. The charter describes the membership, term length, decision making authority, and advisory role of the BPAG. The updated charter is adopted and will be distributed to the members of the BPAG and posted to their internet page.

Outreach Assessment Staffing Update

Nate Pamplin provided an update on the Department’s outreach assessment. Carrie McCausland is no longer with WDFW and Nate is covering the leadership of the Public Affairs group while the Department transitions to a centralized outreach and communication team.

Kate Elliot from Maul, Foster, & Alongi and Joy Juelson from Triangle Associates continue to work on strategies for increased audience engagement for new and existing customers, diversity, equity, and inclusion, environmental education, and Department advisory groups.

Public Comment

There was no public comment