

WDFW BUDGET AND POLICY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING SUMMARY

May 23, 2024

10:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Natural Resource Building, Olympia, WA

ATTENDEES

BPAG Members

Alexei Calambokidis, Trout Unlimited
Bill Richardson, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
George Harris, NW Marine Trade Association
Jason Callahan, Green Diamond
Jessica Helsley, Wild Salmon Center
Kerston Swartz, Woodland Park Zoo
Lance Winecka, Regional Fisheries Coalition
Larry Phillips, American Sportfishing Association
Lucas Hall, Long Live the Kings
Marie Neumiller, Congressional Sportsman's Foundation
Mark Pidgeon, Hunters Heritage Council
Mitch Friedman, Conservation NW
Nora Nickum, Seattle Aquarium
Tom Davis, WA Forest Protection Association
Josh Wilund, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers
Trina Bayard, Audubon WA

WDFW

Kelly Susewind
Nate Pamplin
Tom McBride
Morgan Stinson
Kristen Kuykendall
Margen Carlson
Brandon Bean
Cristina Rodriguez
Kristina Lombardi
Chalee Batungbacal

Members of the Public

Robinson Low, WA Conservation Action

MEETING NOTES

Welcome, Introductions, and Agency Update with Director Susewind

Nate Pamplin welcomed the Budget and Policy Advisory Group (BPAG) members and other guests to the meeting.

WDFW Director Kelly Susewind provided agency updates that included the agency's efforts in prioritizing safety, the announcement of WDFW's new Region 6 Director, Heather Hall, and the upcoming [Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies \(WAFWA\) Summer Meeting](#). WDFW will be hosting this year's event June 3-7 in Stevenson, WA.

Kelly also provided WDFW Fish and Wildlife Commission updates.

- In May, the Commission delegated five petitions on the consent agenda to Director Susewind.
- The public comment period is open for cougar hunting season rule making through June 21. Members of the public can submit comments electronically, by phone, by mail, or in person during the public hearing at the June Commission meeting.
- The Commission will also be discussing the state listing status of wolves at the June meeting and are scheduled to make a decision on the Department's recommendation to downlist to State Sensitive in July.

2024 Legislative Session Re-cap & 2025 Agency Request Legislative Proposals

WDFW Legislative Director Tom McBride provided a summary of the 2024 legislative session including items funded as maintenance level, items funded as policy level, other funded provisions, and supplemental Capital items.

Tom also presented proposals for agency-request legislative for the 2025 Legislative session and BPAG members provided feedback. Tom will brief the F&W Commission on June 21 and the Commission is scheduled to make a decision on which proposals advance at their August meeting.

Please contact Tom McBride at tom.mcbride@dfw.wa.gov for additional information regarding agency legislative items.

Conservation Policy & SWAP Update

WDFW Director of Conservation Margen Carlson presented an [overview of the Conservation Policy Office and near-term priorities](#). Margen also updated BPAG members on milestones for the development of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The final plan is due to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on October 1, 2025.

Please contact Margen Carlson at margen.carlson@dfw.wa.gov for additional information regarding WDFW conservation policy or SWAP.

2025-27 Capital Budget Preliminary Proposals

WDFW Capital Asset and Management Program (CAMP) Director Kristen Kuykendall briefed BPAG members on the Capital Asset and Management Program team, the process and prioritization of proposals, timeline, minor works projects, major works projects, hatchery improvements, ongoing work, pass through projects, and next steps. The Commission will review the 2025-27 capital budget project list at the June meeting and approve the final project list in August before it is submitted to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) in September.

Please contact Kristen Kuykendall at kristen.kuykendall@dfw.wa.gov for additional information regarding WDFW Capital projects.

2025-27 Operating Budget Preliminary Proposals

WDFW Chief Financial Officer Morgan Stinson provided an overview of draft 2025-27 operating

budget requests and the timeline including maintenance level, policy requests to convert previous onetime appropriations to ongoing, and new policy level items. The proposals will be reviewed at the June Commission meeting, approved by the Commission in August, and submitted to OFM in September.

Please contact Morgan Stinson at morgan.stinson@dfw.wa.gov for additional information regarding the WDFW operating budget request.

Closing

There were no public in attendance seeking to provide comment. Nate closed the meeting and expressed gratitude for BPAG's support and engagement.

The next BPAG meeting will be held virtually on Tuesday, July 23. Please email Kristina Lombardi at Kristina.Lombardi@dfw.wa.gov to pre-register.