



2014 Agency Request Legislative Proposals

Fish & Wildlife Commission Meeting

August 2, 2013

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2014 Proposal Timeline

- May 24 – submit draft proposals
- May 29 – Director’s Office review
- June 18 – EMT review
- **August 2 – FWC review**
- August 16 – FWC approval
- September 15 – submit to OFM/GOV
(with fiscal impacts)
- September 15 – submit to OFM/GOV
(without fiscal impacts)

Context for the 2014 Session



- ⦿ 60-day “short” session
- ⦿ Supplemental budget year
- ⦿ Bills that did not pass are retained for the following short session

2014 Agency-Request Summary



1. Invasive Species
2. Background Checks
3. Enforcement Omnibus
4. Wildlife Conflict Accounts
5. Hunter Education



Invasive Species

Problem:

- Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are an ongoing threat in WA;
- The spread of AIS could cost the state hundreds of millions in management and mitigation costs.
- Regulatory gaps have been identified by the WA Invasive Species Council; and,
- Current statutes on invasive species are scattered throughout Title 77 RCW.



Invasive Species

Proposed Solution:

- Consolidates invasive species statutes into a single chapter;
- Improves ability for rapid response;
- Improves inspection program; and,
- Links classification system with management actions.

Background Checks



Problem:

- WDFW lacks the statutory authority to perform background checks on certain employees and volunteers.
- Poses a liability risk as well as a risk to public safety.

Background Checks



Proposed Solution:

- ⦿ Authorizes background checks for employees and volunteers that have:
 - Access to sensitive data;
 - Been issued firearms to perform duties; and,
 - Access to children or vulnerable adults.

Enforcement Omnibus



Problem:

- ⦿ Insufficient penalties for crimes that threaten fish and wildlife.
- ⦿ Several technical amendments needed.

Enforcement Omnibus



- ⦿ Proposed Solution:
 - Increases penalties for protected fish;
 - Increases penalties for orca whales;
 - Strengthens prohibitions for shark finning;
 - Creates a crime for possessing wildlife taken illegally from another state or country;
 - Provides penalties for unlawful wildlife rehabilitation; and,
 - Refines definitions and statutes for commercial fish and shellfish catch-accounting.



Wildlife Conflict Accounts

Problem:

- Interactions between wildlife and people continue to increase;
- Gaps exists in wildlife conflict laws; and,
- Funding is needed to address bear and cougar damage.



Wildlife Conflict Accounts

- ◎ Proposed Solution:
 - Creates a wildlife conflict account.
 - Set a new limit of \$50K GF-S for payment of large carnivores depredation.
 - Unspent funds for deer and elk damage would roll over into wildlife conflict account.
 - Funds could then be used for proactive measures, mitigation, assessment, and payment of claims.

Hunter Education



Problem:

- Young hunters can hunt without supervision;
- Hunters register for multiple classes, but only attend one class; and,
- Instructors collect donations to pay for expenses, contrary to WDFW policy.

Hunter Education



Proposed Solution:

- ⦿ Requires all hunter education students be at least 8 years old;
- ⦿ Requires hunters between 8 and 14 be accompanied by an older licensed hunter;
- ⦿ Establishes a course fee up to \$20 to deter students from registering for more than one class; and,
- ⦿ Establishes a \$10 administrative fee for duplicate certificates.

Questions?