

# 2024 Supplemental Budget Request



Washington  
Department of  
**FISH &  
WILDLIFE**

October 5, 2023

# This document is not the official budget submittal for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

This is a reference document for business purposes. It excludes some components common to a standard submittal, the most pronounced being the reference documents for decision packages.

Please refer to the system of record, the Agency Budget Requests (ABR) system, for all details and reference documents related to the 2024 Supplemental Budget Request.

Agency Budget Requests (ABR) system: <https://abr.ofm.wa.gov/>

1. Select budget session 2024 Supplemental.
2. Select agency: Department of Fish and Wildlife (477).
3. Slick the "Search" button.

September 8, 2023

Mr. David Schumacher  
Director, Office of Financial Management  
P.O. Box 43113  
Olympia, Washington 98504-3113

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

Enclosed you will find the 2024 Supplemental Budget Request for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department), as approved by the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

Our mission is to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities. Our deep commitment to our mission is tied to each of our strategic goals and guides our budget request.

The Department manages more than 1 million acres of land, including over 30 wildlife areas and nearly 500 water access areas. More than 31 million people visited WDFW-managed lands in 2020 alone. Washington's fish and wildlife resources are central to the economy of the state. In Washington, all outdoor activities contribute \$12.3 billion to the economy each year and provide over 114,000 jobs for its residents.

We have developed this request to maintain current service levels and to deal with high priority budget and policy challenges we face after the development of the 2023-25 biennial budget. The Department has limited our requests to activities central to protection and preservation of the state's fish and wildlife resources and recreational opportunities.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these requests, and we look forward to supporting your efforts in developing the Governor's budget proposal for the 2024 supplemental. We welcome new ideas and further refinement of these proposals.

Department staff members are available to assist you with evaluating this request and will be happy to answer any questions as they arise.

If you have any questions, please contact Morgan Stinson, Chief Financial Officer, at (206) 949-7542.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kelly Susewind". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "S".

Kelly Susewind  
Director

Enclosure

cc: Jim Cahill, Senior Budget Assistant  
Matthew Hunter, Budget Assistant  
Ruth Musgrave, Senior Policy Advisor for Natural Resources  
Tom McBride, Legislative Director  
Morgan Stinson, Chief Financial Officer

# Table of Contents

<b>Agency Information</b> .....	1
Agency Organizational Chart.....	2
Agency Activity Inventory.....	3
<b>Recommendation Summary</b> .....	26
<b>Maintenance Level Decision Packages</b> .....	32
9Q – Equipment Maintenance and Software .....	33
9V – Capital Project Operating Costs .....	39
EW – Post-Wildfire Habitat Recovery .....	46
9S – Equipment Replacement Costs .....	60
CA – County and Other Assessments.....	66
AF – Hatchery Fish Food Increases.....	71
WA – Hatchery Wage Adjustments.....	78
RP – Hatchery Wage Adjustments.....	85
8U – Reclassified IT Positions.....	89
EC – WCC Contract Increase from ECY.....	99
9F – Federal Funding Adjustment .....	101
<b>Policy Level Decision Packages</b> .....	105
FH – Forest Health and Fuel Reduction.....	106
CS – Coastal Salmonids Management.....	116
CM – Critical Infrastructure Maintenance .....	123
RR – Non-lethal Wolf Deterrence .....	132
BI – Salmon ESA Regulatory Compliance .....	137
HA – Fish Health and Marking .....	146
DM – Secure Cloud-Based Data Migration .....	154
SR – Salmon Reporting Tool Replacement .....	163
AD – Deer and Elk Ag Damage Compensation.....	170

PR – Additional PRR Capacity .....	177
<b>Agency Supporting Information .....</b>	<b>183</b>
Agency DP Priority.....	184
Puget Sound Action Agenda Packages.....	185

---

Individuals who need to receive this information in an alternative format, language, or who need reasonable accommodations to participate in WDFW-sponsored public meetings or other activities may contact the Title VI/ADA Compliance Coordinator by phone at 360-902-2349, TTY (711), or email ([Title6@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Title6@dfw.wa.gov)).

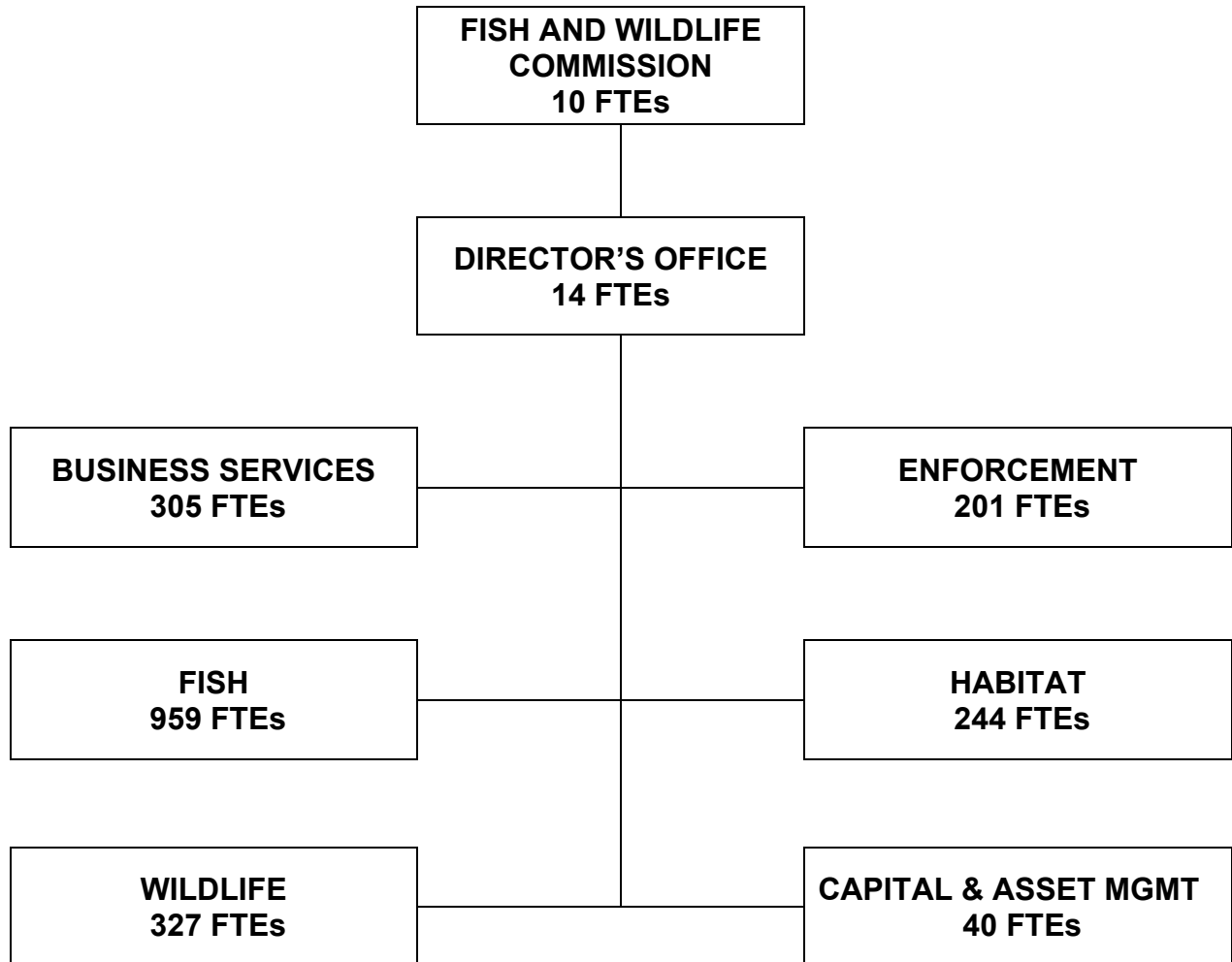
# Agency Information

---



Pink flowering sagebrush mariposa lily in the Columbia Basin Wildlife Area - Quincy Lakes Unit. Photo credit: Leia Althausen, WDFW.

**WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART BY PROJECTED FTEs  
2,100 FTEs**







*Dollars in Thousands*

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory  
477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife  
2024 First Supplemental Budget Session  
SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

---

**A046    Preserve and Restore Aquatic Habitats and Species**

---

Perpetuating and managing wildlife, fish and shellfish into the future requires healthy aquatic habitat. Washington's imperiled salmon and orca populations need healthy habitat to ensure ecosystem support throughout their life. The key reasons the state has seen a decline in wild salmon populations and subsequent orca health is due to habitat quality that has degraded over time.

The department strives to preserve aquatic habitat health by protecting habitat from the effects of construction projects through the Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) work, consulting with businesses, landowners and governments regarding aquatic species impacts, reducing the risk and devastation of oil spills, ensuring enough water remains in waterways to support healthy fish lifecycles, and monitoring and controlling invasive species. The department seeks to restore degraded habitat by improving fish passage through removal of stream barriers and screening of water diversions, developing and implementing plans to recover imperiled species and seeking out grant funding to use towards completing various restoration projects. Furthermore, effectively addressing the dual challenge posed by the changing climate and a rapidly growing human population is fundamental to WDFW's success in the 21st century in all of these areas. To ensure this success, the department studies and plans for climate impacts on aquatic lands and resulting effects on species.

In order to successfully preserve and restore aquatic habitats, the department maintains enforcement presence throughout the state to ensure construction projects near waterways are compliant with HPA permits, inspect vessels for invasive species, perform orca patrols and enforce all statewide rules and regulations that protect aquatic habitats and species.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>FTE</b>	336.8	355.4	346.1
<b>21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct</b>			
21S-1 State	\$33	\$39	\$72
<b>02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account</b>			
02R-1 State	\$523	\$550	\$1,073
<b>14G Ballast Water &amp; Biofouling Mgt Acct</b>			
14G-1 State	\$5	\$5	\$10
<b>26C Climate Commitment Account</b>			
26C-1 State	\$485	\$485	\$970
<b>07V Fish &amp; Wildlife Enforcement Reward</b>			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$9	\$9	\$18
<b>444 Fish &amp; Wildlife Equipment Revolving</b>			
444-6 Non-Appropriated	\$136	\$138	\$274
<b>24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc</b>			
24N-1 State	\$2,803	\$2,831	\$5,634
<b>001 General Fund</b>			
001-1 State	\$38,651	\$43,328	\$81,979
001-2 Federal	\$6,356	\$20,001	\$26,357
001-7 Local	\$1,906	\$1,896	\$3,802
<b>001 Account Total</b>	<b>\$46,913</b>	<b>\$65,225</b>	<b>\$112,138</b>
<b>104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account</b>			
104-1 State	\$766	\$1,003	\$1,769
<b>23P Model Toxics Control Operating Acct</b>			
23P-1 State	\$3,472	\$3,437	\$6,909
<b>26D Natural Climate Solutions Account</b>			
26D-1 State	\$527	\$639	\$1,166
<b>217 Oil Spill Prevention Account</b>			
217-1 State	\$508	\$617	\$1,125
<b>01B ORV &amp; Nonhighway Account</b>			
01B-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2
<b>04M Recreational Fisheries Enhancement</b>			
04M-1 State	\$7	\$7	\$14

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>200 Reg Fish Enhance Salmonid Recovery</b>			
200-2 Federal	\$2,377	\$2,624	\$5,001
<b>209 Regional Fisheries Enhance Group</b>			
209-6 Non-Appropriated	\$1,230	\$1,043	\$2,273
<b>110 Special Wildlife Account</b>			
110-7 Local	\$15	\$16	\$31

**Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment**

**Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes**

**Expected Results**

Aquatic habitats will contribute to a robust ecosystem that supports fish and wildlife in Washington. These healthy habitats will contribute to strong species diversity and abundant opportunities for hunting, fishing and non-consumptive outdoor recreation. Those hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities will contribute to economic health in rural communities reliant on outdoor recreation. Local and state governments will use the agency’s scientific knowledge in their land use and permitting decisions leading to sustained critical habitats.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

---

**A047    Preserve and Restore Terrestrial Habitats and Species**

---

Perpetuating and managing wildlife, fish and shellfish into the future requires healthy terrestrial habitat. The department strives to preserve terrestrial habitat health by consulting with businesses, landowners and governments regarding terrestrial species and habitat impacts and legalities, partnering with private landowners to implement conservation strategies, permitting and regulating wildlife-related businesses such as taxidermy and rehabilitation centers, and responding to and mitigating wolf conflicts. The department seeks to restore degraded terrestrial habitat and imperiled species by developing and implementing plans to recover and sustain diverse wildlife and seeking out grant funding to use towards completing various habitat restoration projects. Furthermore, effectively addressing the dual challenge posed by the changing climate and a rapidly growing human population is fundamental to WDFW's success in the 21st century in all of these areas. To ensure this success, the department studies and plans for climate impacts on lands and resulting effects on species.

In order to successfully preserve and restore terrestrial habitats, the department maintains enforcement presence throughout the state to respond to incidents such as wolf depredations, ensure compliance of wildlife related businesses such as taxidermists and rehabilitation centers and enforce all statewide rules and regulations that protect terrestrial habitats and species.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>FTE</b>	97.2	95.7	96.5
<b>02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account</b>			
02R-1 State	\$38	\$41	\$79
<b>26C Climate Commitment Account</b>			
26C-1 State	\$220	\$220	\$440
<b>098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct</b>			
098-1 State	\$3	\$4	\$7
<b>07V Fish &amp; Wildlife Enforcement Reward</b>			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$11	\$11	\$22
<b>24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc</b>			
24N-1 State	\$1,845	\$1,865	\$3,710
<b>001 General Fund</b>			
001-1 State	\$20,270	\$21,462	\$41,732
001-2 Federal	\$4,263	\$4,603	\$8,866
001-7 Local	\$466	\$467	\$933
<b>001 Account Total</b>	<b>\$24,999</b>	<b>\$26,532</b>	<b>\$51,531</b>
<b>104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account</b>			
104-1 State	\$2,157	\$2,909	\$5,066
<b>26D Natural Climate Solutions Account</b>			
26D-1 State	\$589	\$479	\$1,068
<b>217 Oil Spill Prevention Account</b>			
217-1 State	\$3	\$3	\$6
<b>01B ORV &amp; Nonhighway Account</b>			
01B-1 State	\$1	\$2	\$3
<b>110 Special Wildlife Account</b>			
110-7 Local	\$78	\$91	\$169
<b>14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account</b>			
14A-1 State	\$320	\$319	\$639
<b>19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account</b>			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$2	\$2	\$4

**Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment**

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

**Statewide Strategy:    Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes**

**Expected Results**

Terrestrial habitats will contribute to a robust ecosystem that supports healthy wildlife in Washington. These healthy habitats will contribute to strong species diversity and abundant opportunities for hunting, fishing and non-consumptive outdoor recreation. Those hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities will contribute to economic health in rural communities reliant on outdoor recreation. With their benefit in mind, local and state governments will use the agency's scientific knowledge in their land use and permitting decisions leading to sustained critical habitats.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

---

**A048    Acquire and Manage Lands**

---

WDFW owns and manages over one million acres of land throughout Washington. These lands provide habitat for fish and wildlife, as well as recreational opportunities for the public, such as hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing. WDFW's land base is strategically developed based on the conservation needs of fish and wildlife, and provides sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing and other recreational opportunities when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. To effectively and responsibly own and manage public lands, the department maintains and improves the ecological health of its lands, strategically acquires new lands or sells lands that no longer serve the mission, builds and maintains safe, sanitary and ecologically friendly water access sites and ensures public safety through enforcement presence.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>FTE</b>	156.7	156.1	156.4
<b>02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account</b>			
02R-1 State	\$331	\$349	\$680
<b>098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct</b>			
098-1 State	\$4	\$7	\$11
<b>22N Fish and Wildlife Fed Lnds Rev Acct</b>			
22N-6 Non-Appropriated	\$50	\$50	\$100
<b>07V Fish &amp; Wildlife Enforcement Reward</b>			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$18	\$18	\$36
<b>444 Fish &amp; Wildlife Equipment Revolving</b>			
444-6 Non-Appropriated	\$119	\$120	\$239
<b>24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc</b>			
24N-1 State	\$5,203	\$5,215	\$10,418
<b>25F Forest Resiliency Account</b>			
25F-1 State	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000
<b>001 General Fund</b>			
001-1 State	\$5,220	\$5,177	\$10,397
001-2 Federal	\$8,817	\$9,520	\$18,337
001-7 Local	\$909	\$902	\$1,811
<b>001 Account Total</b>	<b>\$14,946</b>	<b>\$15,599</b>	<b>\$30,545</b>
<b>104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account</b>			
104-1 State	\$479	\$636	\$1,115
<b>26D Natural Climate Solutions Account</b>			
26D-1 State	\$638	\$335	\$973
<b>01B ORV &amp; Nonhighway Account</b>			
01B-1 State	\$321	\$309	\$630
<b>110 Special Wildlife Account</b>			
110-1 State	\$1,480	\$1,446	\$2,926
110-2 Federal	\$266	\$265	\$531
110-7 Local	\$1,477	\$1,787	\$3,264
<b>110 Account Total</b>	<b>\$3,223</b>	<b>\$3,498</b>	<b>\$6,721</b>
<b>14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account</b>			
14A-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2



**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

Account	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial Total
<b>19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account</b>			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$7	\$7	\$14

**Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment**  
**Statewide Strategy:    Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes**

**Expected Results**

Land management will result in the conservation and restoration of diversity of Washington’s fish and wildlife species and their habitats, while providing affordable access to hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching opportunities. Department land and sites will be managed appropriately to balance hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing with ecosystem preservation. Land management will successfully preserve or enhance its habitat value, minimize the spread of invasive species, and support the conservation of biodiversity and the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

---

**A049    Manage Fishing Opportunities**

---

WDFW is responsible for the management of Washington commercial and recreational fisheries. Management of these fisheries includes maintaining compliance with complex intersections of tribal treaties, international agreements, case law, federal Endangered Species Act restrictions and monitoring of species health and populations. To manage fisheries, the department monitors and manages populations of both shellfish and fin fish; develops, negotiates and implements fisheries co-management plans; markets and sells fishing licenses; and manages licenses for commercial fishing groups. In order to effectively manage fisheries, the department maintains enforcement presence in commercial marine areas as well as recreational fishing locations for trout and anadromous fish, such as salmon.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>FTE</b>	402.8	402.4	402.6
<b>21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct</b>			
21S-1 State	\$68	\$82	\$150
<b>02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account</b>			
02R-1 State	\$2,754	\$2,891	\$5,645
<b>259 Coastal Crab Account</b>			
259-6 Non-Appropriated	\$39	\$38	\$77
<b>320 Puget Sound Crab Pot Buoy Tag Acct</b>			
320-6 Non-Appropriated	\$20	\$15	\$35
<b>098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct</b>			
098-1 State	\$8	\$14	\$22
<b>07V Fish &amp; Wildlife Enforcement Reward</b>			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$108	\$108	\$216
<b>24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc</b>			
24N-1 State	\$9,604	\$9,645	\$19,249
<b>001 General Fund</b>			
001-1 State	\$37,451	\$39,118	\$76,569
001-2 Federal	\$11,920	\$12,869	\$24,789
001-7 Local	\$8,877	\$8,750	\$17,627
<b>001 Account Total</b>	<b>\$58,248</b>	<b>\$60,737</b>	<b>\$118,985</b>
<b>104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account</b>			
104-1 State	\$4,256	\$5,729	\$9,985
<b>217 Oil Spill Prevention Account</b>			
217-1 State	\$20	\$24	\$44
<b>01B ORV &amp; Nonhighway Account</b>			
01B-1 State	\$6	\$6	\$12
<b>507 Oyster Reserve Land Account</b>			
507-1 State	\$314	\$75	\$389
<b>04M Recreational Fisheries Enhancement</b>			
04M-1 State	\$271	\$232	\$503
<b>209 Regional Fisheries Enhance Group</b>			
209-6 Non-Appropriated	\$0	\$1	\$1

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>12G Rockfish Research Account</b>			
12G-6 Non-Appropriated	\$236	\$226	\$462
<b>06A Salmon Recovery Account</b>			
06A-1 State	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000
<b>110 Special Wildlife Account</b>			
110-7 Local	\$58	\$69	\$127
<b>09J WA Coast Crab Pot Buoy Tag Account</b>			
09J-6 Non-Appropriated	\$60	\$62	\$122
<b>14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account</b>			
14A-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2
<b>19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account</b>			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$5	\$5	\$10

**Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment**

**Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes**

**Expected Results**

Fishing season decisions support healthy fish populations and ensure that commercial and recreational fishing harvest levels are sustainable. Fishing opportunities contribute towards economic activity, while complying with federal endangered species and other environmental requirements. WDFW and tribes work cooperatively to effectively manage fish populations. WDFW honors tribal treaty rights that were signed by the federal government in 1854-55 and upheld by *United States v. Washington*, 384 F. Supp. 312 (W.D. Wash. 1974).

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

---

**A050    Produce Hatchery Fish**

---

WDFW maintains 81 hatcheries, either through direct ownership or management contracted with cities or counties in order to meet their mitigation requirements. These hatcheries produce healthy fish to benefit the citizens of Washington while providing conservation to natural origin salmonids. Production of hatchery fish is critical for the majority of fishing opportunities throughout Washington – trout and anadromous salmon and steelhead fisheries rely on the presence of hatchery fish in our waterways. Additionally, production of salmon, specifically Chinook, is critical to the recovery of southern resident killer whales. Hatchery conservation programs contribute to protecting and preserving natural runs of salmon and steelhead. Hatchery programs also help us meet co-management plans and court ordered directives.

The production of hatchery fish also requires facility maintenance of the system of 81 hatcheries owned or managed by the department.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>FTE</b>	379.2	392.0	385.6
<b>21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct</b>			
21S-1 State	\$13	\$13	\$26
<b>02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account</b>			
02R-1 State	\$1,735	\$1,813	\$3,548
<b>259 Coastal Crab Account</b>			
259-6 Non-Appropriated	\$2	\$2	\$4
<b>07V Fish &amp; Wildlife Enforcement Reward</b>			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$53	\$53	\$106
<b>444 Fish &amp; Wildlife Equipment Revolving</b>			
444-6 Non-Appropriated	\$556	\$556	\$1,112
<b>24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc</b>			
24N-1 State	\$7,041	\$7,087	\$14,128
<b>001 General Fund</b>			
001-1 State	\$28,016	\$34,378	\$62,394
001-2 Federal	\$17,977	\$19,385	\$37,362
001-7 Local	\$16,283	\$16,035	\$32,318
<b>001 Account Total</b>	<b>\$62,276</b>	<b>\$69,798</b>	<b>\$132,074</b>
<b>104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account</b>			
104-1 State	\$1,341	\$1,770	\$3,111
<b>01B ORV &amp; Nonhighway Account</b>			
01B-1 State	\$1	\$1	\$2
<b>507 Oyster Reserve Land Account</b>			
507-1 State	\$25	\$6	\$31
<b>04M Recreational Fisheries Enhancement</b>			
04M-1 State	\$1,569	\$1,354	\$2,923
<b>209 Regional Fisheries Enhance Group</b>			
209-6 Non-Appropriated	\$0	\$1	\$1
<b>12G Rockfish Research Account</b>			
12G-6 Non-Appropriated	\$15	\$15	\$30
<b>071 Warm Water Game Fish Account</b>			
071-1 State	\$1,022	\$1,025	\$2,047

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

**Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment**

**Statewide Strategy:    Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes**

**Expected Results**

Fishing opportunities are maintained or increased, without adversely affecting wild salmon and steelhead. Fish production supports Washington's sport and commercial fishing industry, creating economic activity and recreational opportunities throughout the state. Wild salmon and steelhead populations are stable or recovering. Native fish populations are recovering and hatchery operations do not adversely affect wild fish.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

---

**A051    Manage Hunting Opportunities**

---

WDFW’s wildlife population monitoring, protection and research help us ensure that wildlife populations will endure and provide future generations the opportunities to enjoy an abundant resource. These hunting opportunities, if protected in perpetuity, will promote a healthy economy; protect community character; maintain an overall high quality of life while delivering high-quality hunting experiences for the human populations we serve. In order to effectively manage hunting opportunities, the department surveys game populations and population trends, as well as health of the populations, sets sustainable hunting seasons, secures hunting access on private lands, provides opportunities for hunter education, responds to game wildlife conflicts and markets and sells hunting licenses.

In order to sustainably manage hunting, the department maintains enforcement presence throughout the state to deter and address instances of poaching, ensure hunting safety and make sure that regulations, such as time, place and method of hunts, are upheld and statewide natural resources are protected.



**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>FTE</b>	125.8	125.2	125.5
<b>21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct</b>			
21S-1 State	\$23	\$28	\$51
<b>02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account</b>			
02R-1 State	\$353	\$372	\$725
<b>098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct</b>			
098-1 State	\$215	\$363	\$578
<b>07V Fish &amp; Wildlife Enforcement Reward</b>			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$2	\$2	\$4
<b>24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc</b>			
24N-1 State	\$6,063	\$6,074	\$12,137
<b>001 General Fund</b>			
001-1 State	\$8,696	\$8,538	\$17,234
001-2 Federal	\$8,480	\$9,154	\$17,634
001-7 Local	\$498	\$498	\$996
<b>001 Account Total</b>	<b>\$17,674</b>	<b>\$18,190</b>	<b>\$35,864</b>
<b>104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account</b>			
104-1 State	\$944	\$1,266	\$2,210
<b>217 Oil Spill Prevention Account</b>			
217-1 State	\$3	\$3	\$6
<b>01B ORV &amp; Nonhighway Account</b>			
01B-1 State	\$2	\$2	\$4
<b>507 Oyster Reserve Land Account</b>			
507-1 State	\$4	\$1	\$5
<b>04M Recreational Fisheries Enhancement</b>			
04M-1 State	\$11	\$10	\$21
<b>110 Special Wildlife Account</b>			
110-7 Local	\$14	\$15	\$29
<b>071 Warm Water Game Fish Account</b>			
071-1 State	\$66	\$67	\$133
<b>14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account</b>			
14A-1 State	\$2	\$2	\$4

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account</b>			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$6	\$6	\$12

**Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment**

**Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes**

**Expected Results**

Successful management of hunting opportunities will result in sustained healthy and abundant game species populations. Those populations will maintain hunting opportunities and outdoor quality of life, opportunities to harvest quality protein, boosts to local economies reliant on outdoor recreation and private lands access for hunting opportunities. Additionally, educational programs and enforcement of state regulations will promote public safety. Careful management will continue to allow Washington hunters the opportunity to hunt 10 big game species, 19 small game species and 42 migratory bird species. Hunters will have a convenient and simple way to understand and purchase their license options.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

**A052    Provide Non-Consumptive Recreational Opportunities**

Non-consumptive recreation passively benefits from all work of the department. WDFW promotes the opportunity to actively enjoy those passive benefits by working with local communities to develop and promote wildlife-viewing activities and festivals, providing wildlife web cameras featuring bald eagles, salmon, owls and more on its website, maintaining interpretive signs at select wildlife areas, and producing self-guiding pamphlets and birding trail maps. Additionally, WDFW promotes wildlife festivals, citizen science, bird watching, land-based whale watching, fish-migrator viewing, beach combing, target shooting, outdoor learning, outdoor skill building, self-guided outdoor experiences, community-centric resources to interpret local wildlife and fish resources and active lifestyle opportunities that allow the public direct contact with wilderness and wild native places.

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>FTE</b>	13.9	13.9	13.9
<b>02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account</b>			
02R-1 State	\$27	\$28	\$55
<b>07V Fish &amp; Wildlife Enforcement Reward</b>			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$5	\$5	\$10
<b>24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc</b>			
24N-1 State	\$68	\$69	\$137
<b>001 General Fund</b>			
001-1 State	\$563	\$373	\$936
001-2 Federal	\$43	\$46	\$89
001-7 Local	\$99	\$98	\$197
<b>001 Account Total</b>	<b>\$705</b>	<b>\$517</b>	<b>\$1,222</b>
<b>104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account</b>			
104-1 State	\$458	\$620	\$1,078
<b>04M Recreational Fisheries Enhancement</b>			
04M-1 State	\$152	\$128	\$280

**Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment**

**Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes**

**Expected Results**

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

Through promotion of outdoor recreation, WDFW fosters a network of conservation partners, engaged communities, communications specialists and the public both in person and online. This network collaboratively supports wildlife viewing and wildlife-based outdoor recreation, fostering durable community-supported conservation solutions. These conservation solutions maintain and improve opportunities for future generations to experience Washington's wildlife and fish resources firsthand, and contribute to a wildlife-based outdoor economy.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

---

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

---

**A053    Business Management and Obligations**

---

An effective agency requires administrative infrastructure that successfully supports the needs of staff who perform work directly in service to the mission. The department's business management work comprehensively supports the entire agency and meets obligations by providing agency leadership and strategy, communicating with the public and legislature, managing finance and contracts, managing human resources, managing information technology infrastructure, building and maintaining office facilities, maintaining agency records, responding to public safety incidents (obligation to general policing by fully commissioned WDFW officers) and accessing legal counsel from the Office of the Attorney General.

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>FTE</b>	401.6	409.0	405.3
<b>21S Aquatic Invasive Species Mngmt Acct</b>			
21S-1 State	\$386	\$471	\$857
<b>02R Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account</b>			
02R-1 State	\$1,132	\$1,187	\$2,319
<b>26C Climate Commitment Account</b>			
26C-1 State	\$1,056	\$932	\$1,988
<b>259 Coastal Crab Account</b>			
259-6 Non-Appropriated	\$9	\$9	\$18
<b>320 Puget Sound Crab Pot Buoy Tag Acct</b>			
320-6 Non-Appropriated	\$4	\$3	\$7
<b>098 East Wash Pheasant Enhancement Acct</b>			
098-1 State	\$21	\$36	\$57
<b>07V Fish &amp; Wildlife Enforcement Reward</b>			
07V-6 Non-Appropriated	\$9	\$9	\$18
<b>444 Fish &amp; Wildlife Equipment Revolving</b>			
444-6 Non-Appropriated	\$136	\$135	\$271
<b>24N Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Acc</b>			
24N-1 State	\$9,084	\$9,143	\$18,227
<b>001 General Fund</b>			
001-1 State	\$25,013	\$29,927	\$54,940
001-2 Federal	\$11,897	\$12,842	\$24,739
001-7 Local	\$6,159	\$6,082	\$12,241
<b>001 Account Total</b>	<b>\$43,069</b>	<b>\$48,851</b>	<b>\$91,920</b>
<b>104 Limited Fish and Wildlife Account</b>			
104-1 State	\$5,334	\$7,186	\$12,520
<b>23P Model Toxics Control Operating Acct</b>			
23P-1 State	\$409	\$406	\$815
<b>26D Natural Climate Solutions Account</b>			
26D-1 State	\$296	\$245	\$541
<b>217 Oil Spill Prevention Account</b>			
217-1 State	\$46	\$57	\$103

**ACT001 - Agency Activity Inventory**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

*Dollars in Thousands*

*Appropriation Period: 2023-25    Sort By: Activity*

<b>Account</b>	<b>FY 2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>Biennial Total</b>
<b>01B ORV &amp; Nonhighway Account</b>			
01B-1 State	\$21	\$22	\$43
<b>507 Oyster Reserve Land Account</b>			
507-1 State	\$80	\$19	\$99
<b>209 Regional Fisheries Enhance Group</b>			
209-6 Non-Appropriated	\$2	\$0	\$2
<b>12G Rockfish Research Account</b>			
12G-6 Non-Appropriated	\$16	\$17	\$33
<b>110 Special Wildlife Account</b>			
110-7 Local	\$101	\$122	\$223
<b>09J WA Coast Crab Pot Buoy Tag Account</b>			
09J-6 Non-Appropriated	\$6	\$6	\$12
<b>071 Warm Water Game Fish Account</b>			
071-1 State	\$453	\$455	\$908
<b>14A Wildlife Rehabilitation Account</b>			
14A-1 State	\$7	\$7	\$14
<b>19W Wolf-Livestock Conflict Account</b>			
19W-6 Non-Appropriated	\$30	\$30	\$60

**Statewide Result Area: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment**

**Statewide Strategy: Preserve, maintain and restore natural systems and landscapes**

**Expected Results**

This work will result in: strong, clear agency direction and leadership; efficient agency internal operations and a skilled, productive workforce; compliance with various financial, technology and other laws and requirements; maximized value from investment in WDFW administrative operations; decreased agency financial risk; and compliance with all state, federal and local regulations regarding financial management, contracting, budget, human resources, records management, technology and technology security.

# Recommendation Summary



Reflection at Osborn Bay boat launch in the Columbia Basin Wildlife Area - Banks Lake Unit. Photo credit: Alan Bauer.





Dollars in Thousands

**ABS024 Recommendation Summary**  
**Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**2024 First Supplemental Budget Session**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

	Average Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
CB T0PL Current Biennium Base	1,829.1	322,813	400,977	723,790
<b>2023-25 Current Biennium Total</b>	<b>1,829.1</b>	<b>322,813</b>	<b>400,977</b>	<b>723,790</b>
<b>Total Carry Forward Level</b>	<b>1,829.1</b>	<b>322,813</b>	<b>400,977</b>	<b>723,790</b>
Percent Change from Current Biennium	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%
<b>Maintenance – Other Changes</b>				
ML 8U Utility Rate Adjustments	0.0	218	42	260
ML 9F Federal Funding Adjustment	0.0	0	13,140	13,140
ML 9Q Equipment Maintenance and Software	0.0	1,303	0	1,303
ML 9S Equipment Replacement Costs	0.0	801	0	801
ML 9V Capital Project Operating Costs	6.3	1,568	0	1,568
ML AF Hatchery Fish Food Increases	0.0	442	40	482
ML CA County and Other Assessments	0.0	300	0	300
MLEC WCC contract increase from ECY	0.0	80	0	80
MLEW Post-Wildfire Habitat Recovery	0.7	1,657	0	1,657
MLRP Reclassified IT Positions	0.0	253	0	253
<b>Maintenance – Other Total</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>6,622</b>	<b>13,222</b>	<b>19,844</b>
<b>Maintenance – Comp Changes</b>				
ML WA Hatchery Wage Adjustments	0.0	178	126	304
<b>Maintenance – Comp Total</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>304</b>
<b>Total Maintenance Level</b>	<b>1,836.1</b>	<b>329,613</b>	<b>414,325</b>	<b>743,938</b>
Percent Change from Current Biennium	.4%	2.1%	3.3%	2.8%
<b>Policy – Other Changes</b>				
PL AD Deer and Elk Ag Damage Compensation	0.9	1,176	0	1,176
PL BI Salmon ESA Regulatory Compliance	2.4	2,139	0	2,139
PL CM Critical Infrastructure Maintenance	3.8	1,869	0	1,869
PL CS Coastal Salmonids Management	9.3	3,231	0	3,231
PL DM Secure Cloud-Based Data Migration	2.5	4,056	0	4,056
PL FH Forest Health and Fuel Reduction	0.0	0	2,000	2,000
PL HA Fish Health and Marking	1.0	2,048	0	2,048
PL PR Additional PRR Capacity	2.0	827	0	827
PL RR Non-lethal Wolf Deterrence	0.0	707	0	707
PL SR Salmon Reporting Tool Replacement	1.3	515	0	515
<b>Policy – Other Total</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>16,568</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>18,568</b>
<b>Subtotal - Policy Level Changes</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>16,568</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>18,568</b>
<b>2023-25 Total Policy Level</b>	<b>1,859.2</b>	<b>346,181</b>	<b>416,325</b>	<b>762,506</b>
Percent Change from Current Biennium	1.6%	7.2%	3.8%	5.3%

**ABS024 Recommendation Summary**  
**Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

**ML 8U Utility Rate Adjustments**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests funding to meet increased utility costs at all facilities. Without funding to offset increased electricity, natural gas, sewer, garbage, and heating oil costs, key activities protecting Washington's fish, wildlife, and ecosystems will decline, including salmon and trout production. Moreover, WDFW hatcheries produce fish that support Washington's tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries, contribute to recovery efforts for salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and contribute significantly to the state economy. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**ML 9F Federal Funding Adjustment**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) needs more federal expenditure authority to carry out the Transformational Chinook Recovery in Whidbey Basin Watersheds federal grant which will result in pass through dollars to Snohomish County, Tulalip Tribes, The Nature Conservancy, and American Rivers. We are also contracting with the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) for them to manage agreements with Skagit River Systems Co-op and Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, so that they may complete habitat restoration. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**ML 9Q Equipment Maintenance and Software**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) faces increasing costs for mission-critical technologies, such as hardware leases and data backup solutions. WDFW requests additional funding to maintain these essential functions for daily operations without compromising core Departmental activities. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation]

**ML 9S Equipment Replacement Costs**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is required by state law (RCW 77.95.290) to clip the adipose fin of hatchery released salmonids to ensure they are externally recognizable as hatchery origin. In addition to externally marking, a coded wire tag can also be inserted into the snout at the time of fin clipping, allowing for identification of the originating hatchery. Each year, WDFW clips and tags more than 110 million hatchery produced salmon and steelhead and the most time and cost-efficient method of doing so is by using an automatic trailer equipped with the AutoFish System. Of the thirteen trailers WDFW currently owns, three are at or approaching their end of useful life. This request will fund the rebuild of one AutoFish System per fiscal year, thereby allowing WDFW to maintain current hatchery production levels. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**ML 9V Capital Project Operating Costs**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) enters into land leases or management agreements to further the Department's mission to secure prime habitat that meets conservation values or increases public outdoor recreation opportunities. The Department received approval to buy new lands through the capital budget, which means the Department's obligation for operations and maintenance (O&M) on WDFW-managed lands will increase. This proposal identifies the land acquisitions from the capital budget and requests ongoing funding to operate and maintain these lands.

**ML AF Hatchery Fish Food Increases**

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) hatcheries produce fish that support Washington's tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries and contribute to fish recovery efforts listed under the Endangered Species Act. WDFW requests increased funding to meet fish food costs that continue to rise due to the global market conditions associated with fish food production. Without funding to offset increased fish food costs, salmon and trout plants into local waters will likely be reduced and/or potential hatchery closure(s) may be needed. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**ABS024 Recommendation Summary**  
**Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

**ML CA County and Other Assessments**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns over one million acres of land throughout Washington. These lands are subject to general assessments, in both county and non-county, including water service agreements and various assessments such as weed, irrigation, lake management district, dike, and fire protection assessments. Additionally, the Department leases land from private, local, federal, and state entities for conservation and mitigation of certain species. Cost of these assessments have risen, and this package seeks funding for the increased costs to maintain land continuity for the public to recreate, hunt, fish, and view wildlife. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation]

**ML EC WCC contract increase from ECY**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) utilizes Department of Ecology's (Ecology) Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) crew for monitoring of forage fish, and Ecology has notified the WDFW of a cost increase effective October 1, 2023. Forage fish are a foundation of marine food webs and several critical species spawn in nearshore habitat, increasingly at risk from shoreline development, armoring, toxic runoff, and chemical spills. WDFW is a leader in protecting forage fish species, which include herring, sand lance, smelt, and anchovy, and their habitat by documenting the location, condition, and seasonal use of spawning habitat. Funding this cost increase ensures that WDFW can maintain critical monitoring and research. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**ML EW Post-Wildfire Habitat Recovery**

During the 2023 wildfire season, statewide wildfires decimated public lands, causing extensive damage to habitat and facilities in several Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) managed lands. Usually in early autumn with follow-up treatment in the spring, WDFW implements efforts to recover habitat, reestablish native vegetation, prevent noxious weed infestations, and restore infrastructure in wildfire impacted areas. Successful recovery efforts depend on starting this work as early as possible following a wildfire. This investment supports vital habitat recovery and restoration work starting in the fall 2023 through fiscal year 2024. Habitat and infrastructure damage from wildfires may take several years to fully restore. This request includes higher costs and continued work to fully rehab the Vantage Highway 2 fire, Lick Creek, and Cub Creek 2 fires of previous supplemental requests. This request only includes work that may be completed in fiscal year 2024.

**ML RP Reclassified IT Positions**

During the 2019-21 biennium, the state created an Information Technology (IT) Professional Structure, which resulted in some IT staff being reclassified in a lower position. Some staff could file an appeal to have the new position assignment reviewed. Some WDFW reclassified IT staff did not win their appeal. One of these employees filed an appeal against the process. The determination was sent back to WDFW, and the agency reclassified both the IT Support Technician 2 and IT Customer Support Entry positions. The agency is seeking additional funding for the difference between the prior and current reclassified positions for these employees.

**ML WA Hatchery Wage Adjustments**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is required by state law to clip the adipose fin of millions of juvenile hatchery Chinook and coho salmon intended for harvest, a process known as mass-marking. This proposal requests funding for the critical staff hired through a private temporary labor firm to conduct yearly mass-marking activities. Without additional funding to support these cost increases, the ability to release hatchery salmon that support Washington's fish populations, endangered Southern Resident killer whales, and the economy will decline. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation].

**ABS024 Recommendation Summary**  
**Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

**PL AD Deer and Elk Ag Damage Compensation**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW, Department) requests funding and staff for elk and deer commercial crop damage claims. Since 1996, RCW has limited claim payments at \$150,000 per year, and claims over \$10,000 require an administrative appeal, regardless of the Department's consensus. In addition to these legal limitations, funding has not kept up with increases in crop damage values and claim volume, resulting in a backlog of appeals processing. Claims to be paid in biennium 2023-25 from biennium 2021-23 exceed current funding levels, and there is no capacity to pay new claims in biennium 2023-25. The Department requires legislative assistance to address the backlog by raising the appeal limit, increasing ongoing General Fund State appropriations to meet demand, and adding staffing resources to support timely claim processing. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**PL BI Salmon ESA Regulatory Compliance**

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) have developed Biological Opinions (BIOPs) on current WDFW hatchery operations and have concluded that additional measures, known as terms and conditions, must be made to hatchery operations and infrastructure to minimize impacts to Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species and critical habitat. Implementation of these terms and conditions also requires additional monitoring, evaluation, and research to determine if these measures are minimizing impacts to species as intended. To continue operating at current levels, WDFW must adhere to these new terms and conditions, many of which include unfunded mandates. Thus, WDFW hatcheries are facing substantial cost increases to meet the new terms and conditions, and if funding is not obtained hatchery programs may be discontinued or significantly reduced to meet ESA requirements. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**PL CM Critical Infrastructure Maintenance**

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns and/or operates 80 hatcheries statewide, many of which are aging. Years of deferred critical infrastructure maintenance has created unsafe conditions for staff and the public and increases the risk of a catastrophic fish loss due to critical equipment failure. New funding will allow WDFW to begin working toward a more proactive approach to critical infrastructure maintenance, which focuses on preventative maintenance, resulting in WDFW better safeguarding our facilities and fish stocks. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**PL CS Coastal Salmonids Management**

Salmon and steelhead have declined across most of their range, including the Olympic Peninsula, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and southwest Washington rivers. Given the cultural, economic, and ecological significance of salmon and steelhead populations, declines of these species and associated declines in angling opportunities have highlighted the need to design and fund recreational fisheries management strategies that balance angling opportunities with conservation objectives. Lack of vital information in planning and implementation of these fisheries is identified as a critical gap by numerous management partners. We propose filling this gap by adding to existing monitoring programs and expanding evaluation and management capacity. This information will inform fisheries and policy decisions focused on the conservation and management of these resources. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**PL DM Secure Cloud-Based Data Migration**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)'s Information Technology (IT) infrastructure currently housed in the state data center. The hardware is reaching the end of its life cycle, must be replaced in fiscal year (FY) 2025, and does not have the capacity to support WDFW's growing business needs. Migrating WDFW's IT infrastructure from the state data center to a cloud-based platform and building a data architecture team will provide a more scalable, cost-effective, and secure data solution. WDFW must take this opportunity to modernize its' infrastructure to support the agency's mission and develop science and policy more effectively. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**ABS024 Recommendation Summary**  
**Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**  
*Dollars in Thousands*

**PL FH Forest Health and Fuel Reduction**

The enacted 2023-25 budget reduced forest health and fuel reduction funding from \$6 million to \$4 million and moved the funds from the capital budget to the Forest Resiliency Account. This reduction presents a threat to the sustainability and momentum of the Department's forest health program. Restoring adequate funding is critical to WDFW's implementation of forest health and resilience, as outlined in the "All Hands, All Lands" strategy. Funding reductions jeopardize the 20-year treatment goals that keep communities safe, enhance biodiversity, maintain public working lands' contributions to local economies, and improve public lands' resilience to climate change. This \$2 million request will help implement forest health treatments on more acres, cover increased fuel and infrastructure costs, cover the costs of more complex projects, and help ensure equipment safety.

**PL HA Fish Health and Marking**

State operated hatchery facilities need additional capacity for current and expanded production, including additional fish health services and mass marking of hatchery salmonids. This proposal will support those needs and if not funded hatchery production goals may not be met, the Fish Health Unit will not be staffed adequately to monitor state and commercial aquaculture, and fish intended for harvest will not be mass marked. This funding ensures ongoing measures to support recreational and commercial harvest, tribal harvest, Southern Resident killer whale prey, and conservation efforts for wild salmonids. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**PL PR Additional PRR Capacity**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has seen a significant increase in large, complex public record requests in recent years. The staff who handle public records requests (PRR) are increasingly challenged to respond in a timely and complete manner, which increases the Department's legal and financial exposure. Additional staff and software tools to conduct electronic searches and review will significantly increase WDFW's ability to meet deliverable deadlines with assurance of completeness, which in turn reduces potential litigation and financial exposure. The additional resources will also allow for improved training of agency staff and overall records management.

**PL RR Non-lethal Wolf Deterrence**

As Washington's wolf population continues to grow, the potential for human-wolf interactions and conflicts will likely increase. WDFW needs the resources to address emerging human-wolf conflict in areas outside of the 4 northeast counties where conflict reduction funding has been primarily focused. Wolf-livestock conflict is expected to expand over a larger geographic area as wolf populations recover and spread throughout Washington. Historical data in the western states has shown approximately 15-20% of wolf packs may be involved in conflict. For these reasons, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW, the Department) requests that current wolf conflict reduction funding be increased to cover existing costs; be extended to the second fiscal year of the biennium; and be ongoing for outlying years.

**PL SR Salmon Reporting Tool Replacement**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) public-facing website and data system for salmon and steelhead status and trends information, the Salmon Conservation Reporting Engine (SCoRE), is antiquated and increasing the Department's cybersecurity risk profile. WDFW needs to build a new salmon data application to meet state open-data strategies, provide accurate and transparent information on salmon management, serve as a dependable data source for our tribal co-managers, and keep pace with increasing reporting demands from the salmon recovery community, including the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO). [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

# Maintenance Level Decision Packages



WDFW staff with hatchery Chinook raised for the Stillaguamish River salmon habitat restoration. Photo credit: Chase Gunnell, WDFW.



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Maintenance Level - 9Q - Equipment Maintenance and Software

### Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) faces increasing costs for mission-critical technologies, such as hardware leases and data backup solutions. WDFW requests additional funding to maintain these essential functions for daily operations without compromising core Departmental activities. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation]

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$641	\$662	\$1,303	\$662	\$662	\$1,324
Total Expenditures	\$641	\$662	\$1,303	\$662	\$662	\$1,324

### Decision Package Description

At the current budgeted level, WDFW is only able to fund a portion of its most basic technological tools that allow staff to perform core Department work. As WDFW faces increasing costs for foundational technology tools, including those that enable all staff to deliver work products, it is attempting to minimize expenditures when possible. However, even with this fiscally conscious approach, WDFW is experiencing an increase in operation costs.

#### Hardware Leases

WDFW has shifted to a mobile workforce, and in alignment with the Office of the Chief Information Officer’s (OCIO) Statewide IT Strategic Plan, the Department has replaced most of its leased PC desktops with mobile PC laptops, as desktops reach end of lease. WDFW currently leases more than 2,600 PCs, laptops, servers, and tablets from the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) for WDFW staff to use statewide.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, the Department will replace 806 total devices, 606 of the devices are under active leases and the 200 devices out-of-lease that will be replaced with devices that are under lease. WDFW assumes that the out of lease devices previously received funding for the lease costs. This decision package only requests funding for the difference between the average existing lease cost and the new lease costs.

The Department will replace 401 Dell Latitude 5400 Series devices, 309 leased devices and 92 non-leased devices. The devices being replaced have an average lease cost of \$42.39 per month. The new lease cost will be \$56.00 per month, a 32% cost increase.

The Department will replace a total of 25 Dell Latitude Rugged Series devices, 9 leased devices and 16 non-leased devices. The devices being replaced have an average lease cost of \$74.95 per month. The new lease cost will be \$86.44 per month, a 15% cost increase.

The Department will replace a total of 331 Dell Latitude 7400 Series devices, 239 leased devices and 92 non-leased devices. The devices being replaced currently have an average lease cost of \$55.96 per month. The new lease cost will be \$61.12 per month, a 9% cost increase.

The Department will replace a total of 49 “Other” devices (e.g., Optiplex 7070, Precision 5820, Dell Latitude 7200 2-in-1). The devices have an average lease cost of \$60.13 per month. The new lease cost will be \$78.00 per month, a 30% cost increase.

FY2024 Hardware Lease Replacements					
Model	Quantity	Average Monthly Cost	New Average Monthly Cost	Cost Difference	Total Yearly Difference (Rounded)
Latitude 5400 Series	401	\$ 42.39	\$ 56.00	\$ 13.61	\$ 65,491
Latitude Rugged	25	\$ 74.95	\$ 86.44	\$ 11.49	\$ 3,447
Latitude 7400 Series	331	\$ 55.96	\$ 61.12	\$ 5.16	\$ 20,496
Other*	49	\$ 60.13	\$ 78.00	\$ 17.87	\$ 10,508
<b>Totals (Rounded)</b>	<b>806</b>				<b>\$ 100,000</b>

In FY2025, the Department will replace 220 devices, all of which are under active leases.

The Department will replace a total of 150 Dell Latitude 5400 Series devices. The devices have an average lease cost of \$47.15 per month. The new lease cost will be \$56.00, a 19% cost increase.

The Department will replace 15 Dell Latitude Rugged Series devices. The devices have an average lease cost of \$74.56 per month. The new lease cost will be \$86.44 per month, a 16% cost increase.

The Department will replace 50 Dell Latitude 7400 Series devices. The devices have an average lease cost of \$57.97 per month. The new lease cost will be \$61.12 per month, resulting in a 5% cost increase.

The Department will replace a total of 5 “Other” devices (e.g., Precision 5820, Dell Latitude 7200 2-in-1). The devices have an average lease cost of \$61.63 per month. The new lease cost will be \$78.00 per month, resulting in a 27% cost increase.

FY2025 Hardware Lease Replacements					
Model	Quantity	Average Monthly Cost	New Average Monthly Cost	Cost Difference	Total Yearly Difference (Rounded)
Latitude 5400 Series	150	\$ 47.15	\$ 56.00	\$ 8.85	\$ 15,930
Latitude Rugged	15	\$ 74.56	\$ 86.44	\$ 11.88	\$ 2,138
Latitude 7400 Series	50	\$ 57.97	\$ 61.12	\$ 3.15	\$ 1,890
Other	5	\$ 61.63	\$ 78.00	\$ 16.37	\$ 982
<b>Totals (Rounded)</b>	<b>220</b>				<b>\$ 21,000</b>

Total costs are \$100,000 in FY2024 and \$121,000 in FY2025 and ongoing.

**Contract Software - \$45,000 per fiscal year**

WDFW’s contract software, Novatus, is a mission critical service used to manage the entire lifecycle of every Department contract and grant. Vendor costs are increasing in FY2024, from \$162,000 to \$189,000 per fiscal year, an increase of \$27,000 per fiscal year. Additionally, the prior contract required the vendor to pay the sales tax. Under the new contract, effective for FY2024, WDFW will be responsible for paying the sales tax. Total cost increase is \$18,000 per fiscal year ( $\$189,000 * 9.5\% = 18,000$ ).

The total cost increase is \$45,000 in FY2024 and ongoing, a 27.5% increase, including the sales tax.

**Adobe Licenses - \$8,000 per fiscal year**

Adobe annual license costs increased from \$85,000 to \$120,000 between FY2022 and FY2023. WDFW purchases many types of licenses including Adobe Acrobat Stock licenses, Standard and VIP Digital Cloud licenses, as well as licenses for Photoshop, Creative Cloud, Indesign, Illustrator, and Premier. The total cost increase (\$35,000) includes both increase in the number of licenses (\$27,000) and an increase in the cost per license (\$8,000).

The Department is requesting \$8,000 in FY2024 and ongoing to fund the increase cost per license.

	Total Cost (Rounded)	Matching License Count Cost (incl. Tax) (Rounded)
FY2023	\$ 85,000	\$ 84,000
FY2024	\$ 120,000	\$ 92,000
<b>Cost Increase</b>	<b>\$ 35,000</b>	<b>\$ 8,000</b>

**SimplyFile - \$3,000 per fiscal year**

SimplyFile’s annual license costs are increasing from \$5.86 per license in FY2023 to \$7.47 per license in FY2024, and the Department currently maintains 1803 licenses. This cost increase is bringing the total costs from \$10,562 in FY2023 to \$13,466 in FY2024.

The total cost increase will be \$3,000 for FY2024 and ongoing.



	Licenses	Cost Per License	Cost
FY23	1803	\$ 5.86	\$ 10,562
FY24	1803	\$ 7.47	\$ 13,466
<b>Cost Increase (Rounded)</b>			<b>\$ 3,000</b>

**Tenable IO - \$4,000 per fiscal year**

As the state standardizes hybrid working environments, WDFW cannot solely rely on the legacy perimeter defense posture provided by the state government network (SGN). Approximately 80% of the Department’s endpoint fleet is expected to continue working outside of the SGN without robust security controls or traffic visibility. Nessus Pro, the Department’s current vulnerability scanning solution, can only scan assets connected to the SGN; Tenable is required to scan any internet-connected WDFW asset. The cost for Tenable IO is going from \$71,000 to \$75,000.

The total cost increase for Tenable IO will be \$4,000 for FY2024 and ongoing.

**Zscaler - \$481,000 per fiscal year**

As the state standardizes hybrid working environments, WDFW cannot solely rely on the legacy perimeter defense posture provided by the state government network (SGN). Approximately 80% of the Department’s endpoint fleet is expected to continue working outside of the SGN without robust security controls or traffic visibility.

Zscaler is a Secure Access Service Edge (SASE), a cloud access security service which provides traffic visibility, deep packet inspection, access control, proxy services, secure application access for on-premises or cloud-based software that sits between cloud service users and cloud applications, monitors all activity, and enforces security policies.

In 2021, OCIO mandated that all agencies use Microsoft Office365 and DES purchased enterprise-wide licenses. Currently there are no Microsoft shared-tenant products available to cover all aspects of security (endpoints, servers, IoT, etc.) across home networks and other non-SGN connections.

The cost for Zscaler is \$481,000 for FY2024 and ongoing.

**Alternative Solutions**

One alternative is to maintain the status quo. This will mean that staff will be assigned out-of-date equipment, requiring Information Technology (IT) business units to troubleshoot equipment failures and stand by while equipment assigned to them is assessed. Critical software licenses will expire, preventing staff from having the tools needed to complete their job. Out-of-date equipment connected to WDFW servers will put the agency at risk of cyber-attacks. This will result in degradation of services to the public and will hinder WDFW from accomplishing its mission.

The option to request funding for cost increases was chosen because it allows IT to maintain the level of service it has provided in the past, supports the state’s lifecycle schedule for IT resources, and maintains standard software and equipment agency wide.

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

N/A

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

Below is a summary of biennial costs for all items:

- Hardware Leases - \$221,000
- NOVATUS Contracts Software - \$90,000
- Adobe Licenses - \$16,000
- Simply File - \$6,000
- Tenable IO - \$8,000
- Zscaler - \$962,000

Total costs are \$1,303,000 per biennium (\$641,000 in FY2024 and \$662,000 in FY2025 and ongoing).

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

N/A

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This request provides important support to the Governor's Results Washington Goal, Efficient Effective and Accountable Government, by increasing the Department's technological functioning and ensuring a dependable network that will provide greater reliability to our customers who seek hunting or fishing information, hydraulic project approval status, and other core service information.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This request is essential in implementing WDFW's Strategy: Move WDFW Towards Operational and Environmental Excellence. Maintaining the Department's technology helps to build an effective and efficient organization by supporting the workforce, improving business, and investing in technology. This package works toward the objective of achieving operational excellence through effective business processes and investments in technology.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Business Management & Obligations – \$1,303,000 per biennium ongoing (\$641,000 FY2024 and \$662,000 FY2025) General Fund-State.

An effective agency requires administrative infrastructure that successfully supports the needs of staff who perform work directly in service to the mission. The department's business management work comprehensively supports the entire agency and meets obligations by providing agency leadership and strategy, communicating with the public and legislature, managing finance and contracts, managing human resources, managing information technology infrastructure, building and maintaining office facilities, maintaining agency records, responding to public safety incidents (obligation to general policing by fully commissioned WDFW officers) and providing appeal processes.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

WDFW will utilize funding to maintain essential technical tools that allow the Department to continue its fundamental day-to-day activities. All staff require Microsoft Office products, email exchange, network access, and data storage to perform the necessary functions of their positions. Ensuring all staff have the fundamental tools to create, retrieve, share, and store information is critical to accomplishing the agency's mission.

## Equity Impacts

### **Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department maintain mission-critical technologies to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying cost increases for these technologies that will have a negative impact on the Department's business operations and restrict mission critical work or advances/improvements throughout the Department.

### **Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

Funding for maintenance level decision packages is frequently inwardly focused. This funding request is responding to cost increases for technologies that support core agency functions. Without additional funding for these increased/new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not directly connected to specific communities, however cutting services and shifting resources will hinder the Department's ability to apply an equitable lens.

### **Target Populations or Communities:**

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support specific communities such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted groups. The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities and many others are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

## Other Collateral Connections

### **Puget Sound Recovery:**

N/A

### **State Workforce Impacts:**

N/A

### **Intergovernmental:**

N/A

### **Stakeholder Response:**

N/A

### **State Facilities Impacts:**

N/A

### **Changes from Current Law:**

N/A

### **Legal or Administrative Mandates:**

Presidential Policy Directive 21 (PPD-21) identifies WDFW as part of the nation's Critical Infrastructure given the risk to the nation's food supply based on the significant quantity of fish produced by the agency. Federal requirements for IT security and resiliency cannot be met without maintaining enough sustainable technology solutions as proposed in this decision package.

### **HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions**

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[IT addendum - 9Q Equipment Maintenance and Software.docx](#)

## IT Addendum

***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

Yes

## Objects of Expenditure

<b>Objects of Expenditure</b> <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2023-25</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2025-27</b>
Obj. C	\$45	\$45	<b>\$90</b>	\$45	\$45	<b>\$90</b>
Obj. E	\$596	\$617	<b>\$1,213</b>	\$617	\$617	<b>\$1,234</b>

## Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
(360) 870-4691  
jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Maintenance Level - 9V - Capital Project Operating Costs

### Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) enters into land leases or management agreements to further the Department’s mission to secure prime habitat that meets conservation values or increases public outdoor recreation opportunities. The Department received approval to buy new lands through the capital budget, which means the Department’s obligation for operations and maintenance (O&M) on WDFW-managed lands will increase. This proposal identifies the land acquisitions from the capital budget and requests ongoing funding to operate and maintain these lands.

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$782	\$786	\$1,568	\$786	\$786	\$1,572
Total Expenditures	\$782	\$786	\$1,568	\$786	\$786	\$1,572

### Decision Package Description

Following the direction of RCW’s 77.04.012, 77.12.039, 77.12.320 and 79a.15, in support of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW’s) mission, Washington state buys land, accepts land donations and enters into lease or management agreements to ensure fish and wildlife habitat and related recreational opportunities that would otherwise be at risk. The Department strategically develops this land based on fish and wildlife conservation needs and opportunities for sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other recreation opportunities. WDFW manages over one million acres of land in 33 wildlife areas throughout Washington state. This includes over 450 boat launches that provide access to 220 lakes, 44 rivers and the Puget Sound. All land (to include newly acquired land or under WDFW leases or management agreements) has basic maintenance needs. As Washington state’s population grows, so do the pressures on habitat, the importance of maintaining wildlife areas and water access areas, and the demand for outdoor recreation.

WDFW-managed lands are managed to provide conservation, hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching benefits for the public in accordance with the objectives of the acquisition or management agreement. This is different than the focus of other state, federal, and local public lands. Management involves critical stewardship, biological, restoration, real estate, public engagement, forestry, recreation, ecosystem, and weed control activities. The current budget for WDFW-managed lands stewardship is vastly insufficient to meet the stated management goals for both conservation and recreation of existing land, let alone, these newly acquired lands. This request addresses the increased management needs of newly increased acres through acquisition or management agreements or lease agreements. Actual management costs vary significantly depending on the land’s use, management complexity, and ecological condition. This budget request is for \$1.6 million per biennium of operations and maintenance costs for 2,542 acres of land acquired or under new management agreement from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, based on tiered rates specific to the area and level of maintenance and stewardship needs, as well as for multiple CAMP projects completed from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

Prior to the 2017-2019 biennium, WDFW acquired land or entered into lease or management agreements thereby increasing land base under WDFW’s management. WDFW was not in practice to request increase to operation and maintenance funding. A 1991 analysis of capacity vs. need for the Department’s water access areas indicated that funding levels at that point only supported 30% of the Department’s goals, objectives, and deliverables to the public. Until the recent request for funding in the 2021-23 biennium, increase in funding specific to recreation infrastructure backlog, the budget amount for managing these areas has not increased – this means that for the last 30 years, the Department’s ability to meet goals has continued to diminish below that 30% rate as it increased the number of water access areas. In an assessment of WDFW’s wildlife area lands, the true cost of average per acre stewardship cost (not including restoration or development enhancements) is \$52/acre, however the Department has less than half of that amount to work with.

A Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee study further substantiated the large gap in funding levels for the Department to fully execute the expected deliverables. This proposal identifies the land acquisitions from the capital budget and requests ongoing funding to operate and maintain these lands. The Department is now in the practice to provide estimated operation and maintenance costs to the Legislature and Office and Financial Management (OFM) upon funding requests for acquisition or capital improvement projects. If acquisition and capital improvement projects are enacted, the expectation is for the Department to request the operational funding needed once the property is acquired. This request supports the expectation that the Department will no longer create further disparaging funding gaps by not requesting operation funds. Rather, the

Department attempts to rectify past practices and now request funding as needed. If this request is not funded, the Department would do a disservice to the public by not requesting funding upon newly acquired or newly managed acres. The Department strives to produce excellence in meeting its mission and the needs of the recreating public and vital conservation values. By not requesting funding, WDFW-managed lands would be unsafe for recreationists and threatened or endangered species risk being in jeopardy.

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

N/A

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

WDFW Region	County	Wildlife Area/Water Access Site	Acquisition Date	Instrument	Fund Source of Purchase	Acres Acquire	Per Acre Rate	Direct Costs Per Fiscal Year
Region 1	Asotin	Boggan	5/24/23	Deed	APPROP	1.11	N/A	\$12,000
Region 2	Grant	Columbia Basin	8/29/23	Deed	DUCKSTAMP	59.9	\$52	\$3,115
Region 2	Grant	Columbia Basin	6/8/23	Deed	BRC	158.85	\$52	\$8,260
Region 2	Okanogan	Methow	8/31/23	Deed	WWRP	199.48	\$67.87	\$13,539
Region 2	Okanogan	Methow	9/1/23	Deed	WWRP	21.37	\$67.87	\$1,450
Region 2	Okanogan	Methow	6/15/23	Deed	WWRP	401.06	\$50	20,053
Region 2	Okanogan	Sinlahekin	3/3/23	Deed	WWRP	338.92	\$51.33	\$17,398
Region 3	Yakima	Wenas	8/24/23	Deed	WWRP	1033.88	\$54.65	\$56,502
Region 3	Yakima	Wenas	3/3/23	Deed	WWRP	36.31	\$54.65	\$1,984
Region 6	Grays Harbor	South Montesano	5/23/23	Deed	Donation	0.45	N/A	\$12,000
Region 6	Grays Harbor	Johns River	6/2/23	Deed	Donation	291.13	\$32	\$9,316
Region 6	Mason	Eells Spring Hatchery Renovation	-	CAMP	CBR	-	-	\$100,000
Region 6	Pacific	Naselle Hatchery Renovation	-	CAMP	CBR	-	-	\$200,000
Region 6	Thurston	Deschutes Watershed Center	-	CAMP	CBR	-	-	\$100,000
-	Statewide	Automated Salmon Marking Trailer	-	CAMP	CBR	-	-	\$20,000
<b>Grand Totals</b>						<b>2,542.46</b>		<b>\$576,000</b>

BRC = Budget Reprioritization Criteria

CBR = Capital Budget Request

Donation = Private local donated property to WDFW

DUCKSTAMP = State Migratory Waterfowl Fund

WWRP = Washington Wildlife Recreation Program state grant funds

Ongoing funding of this request provides for operations and maintenance for newly acquired lands and completed hatcheries as identified in the capital budget request for Mitigation Projects and Dedicated Funding. Salaries and benefits (Objects A and B) for 6.3 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions total \$567,000, beginning in fiscal year 2024 and \$583,000. Goods and services (object E) totals \$95,000 in fiscal year 2024 (and \$91,000 thereafter), which includes both employee related goods and services such as WDFW standard costs, and general supplies for maintenance of fencing, weed control, facilities, roads, forests, habitats. Travel costs (object G) total \$20,000 in fiscal year 2024 (and \$16,000

thereafter) for motor pool and other costs for staff to travel to new maintenance sites.

Funding is based proportional to lands purchased as prescribed in the table above. Goods and services (object E) are included per year, for as well as central agency costs. An infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03 percent is included in O&M costs in object T calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

In 2018, the stakeholder-based Budget and Policy Advisory Group developed a WDFW long-term funding plan, concluding that sources should be more expansive, more stable, and only supplemented by, not reliant on, license fees. Therefore, this decision package requests 100 percent General Fund-State.

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

N/A

## **Strategic and Performance Outcomes**

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: Goal 2: Prosperous Economy, and Goal 3: Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's mission is to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities. Land acquisition is one of many ways the Department has worked to meet this mandate. WDFW manages more than one million acres of public-owned land, including over 500 water access areas. These lands provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife and offer fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other conservation-based recreational opportunities for the public. In addition, acquired land is critical habitat for threatened or endangered species or for sustaining game populations, such as the winter range. WDFW-managed lands offer access to the public for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and a multitude of other recreational opportunities. WDFW management protects ecosystems services, including carbon sequestration, clean water, clean air, scenic beauty, and other benefits of conservation. The outdoor recreation industry and ecosystems services provide substantial monetary and non-monetary benefits to Washingtonians. A recent Earth Economics study reported that WDFW-managed lands generate \$2.5 billion per year in direct and indirect economic impact.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This proposal aligns with the Department's Strategic Plan strategy to "Proactively Address Conservation Challenges." The Department ensures that land-use planning and decisions contribute to the conservation and recovery of fish and wildlife, and work with partners towards implementing and increasing net ecological gain. In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance outcome:

- 10 percent net gain in the quality and quantity of our most important fish and wildlife habitat.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Acquire and Manage Lands 1.4 FTE and \$207,000 in fiscal year 2024, General Fund-State and \$211,000 in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing.

Produce Hatchery Fish 4.9 FTE and \$571,000 in fiscal year 2024, General Fund-State and \$572,000 in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing.

#### Acquire and Manage Lands

WDFW manages over one million acres of land throughout Washington. These lands provide habitat for fish and wildlife and recreational opportunities for the public, such as hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. WDFW's land base is strategically developed based on the conservation needs of fish and wildlife. It provides sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other recreational opportunities when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and their habitats.

To manage public lands effectively and responsibly, the Department maintains and improves ecological health. The WDFW strategically acquires new lands, builds and maintains safe, sanitary, and ecologically friendly water access areas, and ensures public safety through enforcement presence. These activities are accomplished through a variety of actions, including weed control, timber thinning (to help control wildfire and improve habitat quality), maintaining infrastructure (fences, signs, parking lots, trails, culverts, water control structures, wells, and irrigation

systems), and removing garbage and litter. In addition, maintaining the staff and services addressed in this request will allow continuation of:

- Current level of sanitation and litter removal
- Wildlife area plans developed through cross-programmatic, local community, and stakeholder collaboration (two to four plans per year on average)
- Clear stewardship and recreation priorities for wildlife area management to direct on-the-ground priorities
- Capacity to maintain and repair boundary fences and fences associated with other management needs
- Hundreds of weed treatments per year protecting ecological integrity on thousands of acres and preventing weeds from spreading to adjacent landowners

#### Produce Hatchery Fish

WDFW hatcheries produce healthy fish to benefit the citizens of Washington State while providing conservation to natural origin salmonids. Hatchery production is critical for fishing opportunities throughout the state – trout, steelhead, and salmon rely on the presence of hatchery fish to protect and preserve natural runs. The Department operates over 80 hatcheries for fish production that benefit commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfill obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights and comanager management plans. The additional funding requested to cover increased costs due to fish feed price increases is necessary to ensure the department can continue producing fish at the required levels.

#### **Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Indicators:

- Acres of protected fish and wildlife habitat
- Road miles improved
- Percent change in hunter or fisher opportunities

Land stewardship will result in the efficient use of state resources to conserve and restore Washington's fish and wildlife species and their habitats, while providing low-cost and safe access to hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching opportunities. WDFW manages land to balance hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing with ecosystem preservation. Land management will successfully preserve or enhance its habitat value, minimize the spread of invasive species, and support the conservation of biodiversity and the recovery of threatened and endangered species. WDFW will be able to conduct its current level of legal and fiduciary responsibilities toward these new acquired lands.



## Equity Impacts

### ***Community outreach and engagement:***

The Department completes community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying inflationary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the Departments business operations and restrict the mission critical work, or advances/improvements throughout the Department.

This package specifically supports the Department's responsibility to stewards owned or managed lands for public benefit statewide. Access to public lands provides low-cost outdoor recreational opportunities to Washington communities. According to the Washington State Department of Health, increasing access to natural areas like parks or wildlife areas generally decreases a community's risk of chronic diseases. By securing funding to manage these lands, the Department ensures Washingtonians in these areas have access to quality outdoor experiences and a connection to nature.

### ***Disproportional Impact Considerations:***

This funding request is responding to a new cost increase in land stewardship, operational and management costs associated to newly acquired and leased lands that allow for public recreation throughout the state. Without additional funding for these new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities, however cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as the Department is forced to shift resources.

### ***Target Populations or Communities:***

WDFW lands are located throughout the state and both urban and rural communities make up the neighboring landowners. Having lands located all over Washington State helps diverse geographic communities when the Department shares the cost of these assessments and not creating an undue burden upon the local populace taxpayers.

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support target populations, such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted communities. The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities and many others are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by ensuring WDFW's ability to support salmon recovery through hatchery production of salmon and salmonids to meet tribal, commercial, and recreational fishery commitments. Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, directly implements the Puget Sound relevant orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant salmon strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

WDFW hatchery production is a crucial element of fisheries co-management with tribes, in addition to collaborating and working with community partners to reach Department conservation goals.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

WDFW Hatcheries operate across the state, providing tribal, recreational, and commercial fishing opportunities for residents, tourists, and conservation groups.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

N/A

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## IT Addendum

### ***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

No

**Objects of Expenditure**

<b>Objects of Expenditure</b> <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2023-25</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2025-27</b>
Obj. A	\$304	\$313	<b>\$617</b>	\$313	\$313	<b>\$626</b>
Obj. B	\$156	\$158	<b>\$314</b>	\$158	\$158	<b>\$316</b>
Obj. E	\$95	\$91	<b>\$186</b>	\$91	\$91	<b>\$182</b>
Obj. G	\$20	\$16	<b>\$36</b>	\$16	\$16	<b>\$32</b>
Obj. T	\$207	\$208	<b>\$415</b>	\$208	\$208	<b>\$416</b>

**Agency Contact Information**

Jon Neville  
 (360) 870-4691  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Maintenance Level - EW - Post-Wildfire Habitat Recovery

### Agency Recommendation Summary

During the 2023 wildfire season, statewide wildfires decimated public lands, causing extensive damage to habitat and facilities in several Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) managed lands. Usually in early autumn with follow-up treatment in the spring, WDFW implements efforts to recover habitat, reestablish native vegetation, prevent noxious weed infestations, and restore infrastructure in wildfire impacted areas. Successful recovery efforts depend on starting this work as early as possible following a wildfire. This investment supports vital habitat recovery and restoration work starting in the fall 2023 through fiscal year 2024. Habitat and infrastructure damage from wildfires may take several years to fully restore. This request includes higher costs and continued work to fully rehab the Vantage Highway 2 fire, Lick Creek, and Cub Creek 2 fires of previous supplemental requests. This request only includes work that may be completed in fiscal year 2024.

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	1.4	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$1,657	\$0	\$1,657	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$1,657	\$0	\$1,657	\$0	\$0	\$0

### Decision Package Description

In the 2023 wildfire season, wildfires impacted habitat, infrastructure, and resources in some areas of WDFW-managed lands. This funding request estimates the costs of all habitat recovery efforts from each wildfire. This maintenance level budget request is typically reviewed in the fall with a budget bill that is passed in the following spring. Due to wildfire season typically lasting from May through December, more fires may occur after this request is submitted. Therefore, the Department may require additional assessment and revision of the total request to include additional wildfire impacts. Delayed rehabilitation work from cultural reviews, permitting, cost overruns, snow melt or fire conditions may require funding requests in out years. Any additional needs may be requested in future supplementals.

This request increases supplemental funds beyond existing carry forward base budget, for immediate habitat recovery and restoration efforts starting in the fall of 2023 and through fiscal year 2024. Based on current estimate, WDFW anticipates the full capacity of restoration needs to be \$2,664,000 over a 2-year period. However, only work that may be completed through fiscal year 2024 is estimated at \$1,797,000 less \$140,000 from carry forward for a request amount of \$1,657,000. Restoration efforts take multiple years. This request covers costs for fiscal year 2024 only in the amount of \$1,657,000.

The consequences of not funding this much needed recovery work include habitat degradation, erosion issues with potential damage to infrastructure (roads, power lines, riparian and protected areas), sedimentation into streams impacting salmonid health, and an overrun of noxious weeds. Fence replacement to secure boundary lines after a fire is critical to the regeneration of a healthy habitat and to resolve trespass cattle. Cattle grazing too soon after a fire destroys habitats. These added consequences create greater costs for the state of Washington to mitigate with other governments and private landowners. Without funding for recovery efforts and to maintain healthy habitats to prior conditions, WDFW will be out of compliance with other federal, state, and local entities that funded purchase of these lands for WDFW stewardship.

Fire Event Date	County	Fire Event Name	WDFW Location	WDFW Acres Burned	Total Statewide Acres Burned	FY 2024 WDFW Recovery Cost
6/14/2023	Grant	Rocky Ford / Drumheller Fire	Columbia Basin WLA* / Rocky Ford Unit	490.06	1,263.42	\$75,000.00
6/17/2023	Grant	Lower Crab Creek Fire	Columbia Basin WLA / Lower Crab Creek Unit	300.00	300.00	\$75,000.00
6/27/2023	Yakima	Roza Creek Fire	Wenas WLA	700.00	720.59	\$56,000.00
7/2/2023	Yakima	I-82 Wapato Exit Fire	Sunnyside / Snake River WLA	78.60	130.00	\$83,000.00
7/29/2023	Okanogan	Eagle Bluff Fire	Scotch Creek WLA	1,500.00	16,428.00	\$301,000.00
8/6/2023	Grant	Pleasant Valley Fire	Columbia Basin WLA / Banks Lake Unit	100.00	100.00	\$42,000
8/18/2023	Spokane	Gray Fire	West Medical Lake and Silver Lake WAA**	4.3	10,014	\$119,000.00
8/1/2022	Kititas	Vantage Highway 2 Fire	LT Murray WLA	23	188	\$273,000.00
7/7/2021	Asotin	Lick Creek / Dry Gulch Fire	Asotin Creek WLA / Weatherly Unit (completion of Smoothing Iron and Harlow Ridge fence reconstruction)	34,283	80,421	\$623,000.00
7/16/2021	Okanogan	Cub Creek Fire	Methow WLA / Rendezvous and Methow Units (completion of Cub Creek fence reconstruction)	730	70,166	\$150,000.00
						\$1,797,000
					Less Existing Carry Forward	(140,000)
					Total Supplemental Request	\$1,657,000

**\$75,000 - Rocky Ford Fire (Drumheller Fire) – Columbia Basin Wildlife Area/Rocky Ford Unit (490.06 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

Habitat recovery requires funding to support cultural resources review in addition to weed control activities. Riparian and shrubsteppe habitats may take up to 30 years to revive in this location. It’s imperative to treat for weeds so that the habitat will not turn into non-desirable vegetation. This area is prone to heavy amounts of cheatgrass from previous fires. Impacted species of the Rocky Unit include mule deer, waterfowl, pheasants, bald eagles, Hungarian partridge, cottontail and jack rabbits, and a variety of songbirds. The area burned was shrubsteppe habitat and grass land.



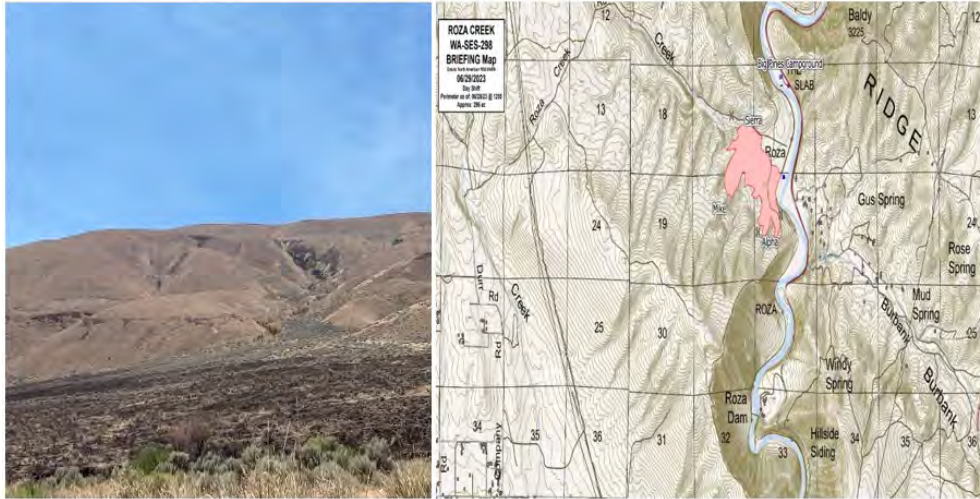
Figures 1 & 2: The close-up pictures left and right show the fire burning in heavy fuels, such as old mature sagebrush/shrubsteppe, when it crossed Rocky Ford Creek to the East. While the overall area has a history of fire and fire dominated vegetation, this portion previously had intact shrub steppe. ~ Photo credit and caption, Chad Eidson, Wildlife Area Manager

**\$75,000 – Lower Crab Creek Fire – Columbia Basin Wildlife Area/Lower Crab Creek Unit (300 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

This fire burned about 300 acres in total, all on Department-managed land. Grant County Fire Districts 10, 11 and Bureau of Land Management responded to the fire. This footprint has burned cheatgrass repeated times over the last 10 years. If cheatgrass is not mitigated, then we will continue to see fires in this same location. This request will fund cultural review, weed control and native seeding in order to suppress the growth of cheatgrass. Restoration is necessary to allow for native bunch grasses and sagebrush shrubs to revive. Impacted species of this fire include, mule deer, chukar, badgers, coyotes, cotton tails and jack rabbits.

**\$56,000 – Roza Creek Fire – Wenas Wildlife Area (700 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

The affected area is primarily shrubsteppe habitat and critical wintering elk, mule deer, upland birds habitat. This request provides for secondary cultural resources review, and to buy native seed for grass, forbs and shrubs for planting on about 50 acres. Funding will also provide for weed control work, such as aerial and spot spraying in spring 2024 on all 700 affected acres.



Figures 3 & 4: Wenas WLA facilitates shrubsteppe habitat. The picture (left) above represents a small section of a much larger area of adversely impacted shrubsteppe habitat. This fire also burned through about 50 riparian acres. ~ Photo credit, Melinda Hughes, Wildlife Area Manager

**\$83,000 – I-82 Wapato Exit Fire – Sunnyside/Snake River Wildlife Area (78.60 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

This fire burned riparian zones, destroying cotton wood trees alongside the Yakima River. Many shrubs and understory burned, adversely impacting deer, turkey, and upland birds. The devastation along the riparian zone may harm salmon and steelhead fish in that portion of the Yakima River. A dozer line was established for fire breaks, which the disturbed soil now needs rehabilitation. Weed control and seeding is necessary this fall to re-establish healthy vegetation. Additional weed control work will be conducted next spring. The Department would use this funding will be for seed and herbicides and to pay for application as well as cultural resources review.



Figures 5 & 6: Migrating salmon and other popular sport fish rely on shade of mature cotton wood trees to provide cooler temperatures along the riverbank. Absent of adequate riparian habitat causes much strain on fish during migration and could result in decrease of fish populations. Photo credit, Patrick Kaelber, Wildlife Area Manager



*Figure 7: Shows the hay field that caught fire on the 4-O Ranch Unit of the Asotin Wildlife Area. ~ Photo credit, Bob Dice, Wildlife Area Manager.*

**\$0 – Grouse Flats Fire – Chief Joseph Wildlife Area/4-O Ranch Unit (20.30 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

An overheated bearing from hay baling equipment was the likely source of this fire. The neighbor put the fire out using his water truck, which was a favorable result in minimal damage. The location of the fire did not have a major impact to wildlife and no restoration work is needed.



*Figure 7: Shows the hay field that caught fire on the 4-O Ranch Unit of the Asotin Wildlife Area. ~ Photo credit, Bob Dice, Wildlife Area Manager.*

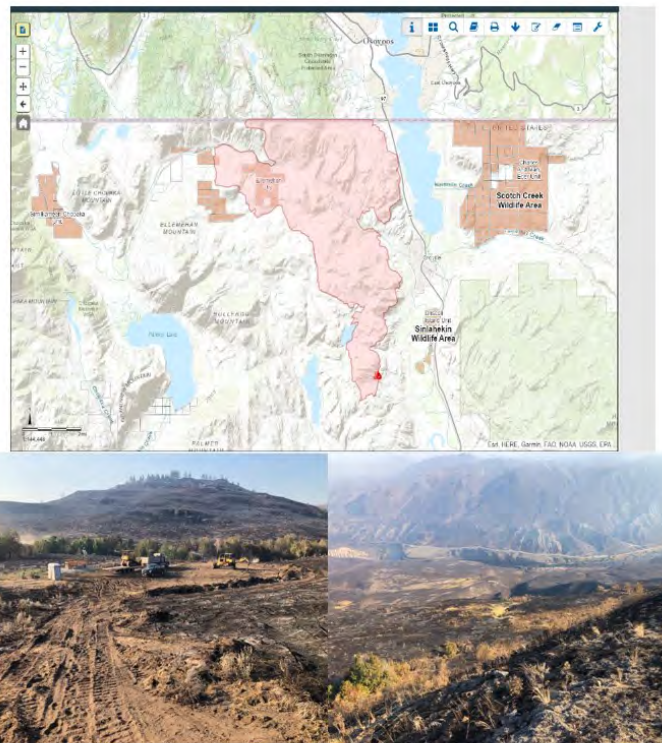
**\$0 – Baird Springs Fire – Columbia Basin Wildlife Area/Quincy Lakes Unit (51.62 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

No fire rehabilitation work will be conducted due to powerline interference and cultural review will not allow for ground disturbance in this location.

**\$301,000 – Eagle Bluff Fire – Scotch Creek Wildlife Area/Ellemehan Unit (1,500 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

The Ellemehan Unit burned in day 2 and 3 of the fire (map below). Infrastructure costs include replacement of 3 miles of exterior boundary fence and .5 miles of interior fence. The Department anticipated tearing out and replacing fencing on high, rugged and steep terrain, over a two-year rehabilitation process. The Department would also use this funding for aerial seeding of 500 acres, plus dozer lines and a safety zone/parking area. Weed control work is needed on about 50 acres. Cultural resources compliance costs are anticipated to be higher for this location, in order to complete fence replacement. Cultural review work on this project likely includes a pedestrian survey, reporting, and possible

monitoring during construction upon indicators of cultural significance. Delayed rehabilitation work from cultural reviews, permitting, cost overruns, snow melt or fire conditions may require funding requests in out years. Any additional needs may be requested in a future supplemental.



Figures 8, 9 & 10: The map above shows the fire area highlighted in lighter pink color with the affected department land in the darker pink. Dozer lines were established to aid in fire breaks and will need reseeding and planting. ~ Photo credit, Bryan Dupont, Wildlife Area Manager

**\$42,000 – Pleasant Valley Fire – Columbia Basin Wildlife Area/Banks Lake Unit (100 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

Funding will support cultural resources review in addition to weed control activities. Shrubsteppe may take up to 30 years to revive. It's imperative to immediately treat for weeds control so that the habitat will not turn into non-desirable vegetation. Impacted species of the Banks Lake Unit include mule deer, golden eagles, bald eagles, chukar and Hungarian partridge, cottontail and jack rabbits, and songbirds. The area burned was shrubsteppe habitat, such as sagebrush and bitter brush. Cultural resources review is a limiting factor in getting funding on the ground in time for the weed treatments. Weed control is a necessary and timely first step to avoid the establishment of non-desired vegetation.



Figures 11 & 12: Both pictures were taken within 20 mins of the fire starting. The pictures show the fire burning in heavy fuels in previously intact Shrub Steppe Habitat on the Northwest shore of Banks Lake near Pleasant Valley. ~ Photo credit and caption, Chad Eidson, Wildlife Area Manager

**\$0 – Hutchins Fire – LT Murray Wildlife Area/Hutchins Unit (.5 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

This area currently facilitates thinning operations to promote healthy forests and to reduce fire fuels. Washington regulates forest management activities to reduce fire risk by requiring contractors to possess firefighting and communications equipment on site and conduct fire watches under certain circumstances. On August 16, 2023, per regulations, the contractor shut down for the afternoon, stayed on-site for the 1-hour fire watch and then went home. Shortly thereafter a fire started. The contractor was notified, immediately returned to the site and began suppressing the fire. The Department of Natural Resources reported to the event and successfully eliminated the fire. Minimal rehabilitation is needed, and the department will use existing seed on hand to spread onto the small area that was burned.





Figure 13 & 14: A fire watch continues as smoldering occurs even after active suppression activities subside. ~ Photo credit, Shaun Morrison, Wildlife Area Manager

**\$119,000 – Wanes Gray Fire (Gray Fire) – West Medical Lake, Silver Lake Water and Clear Lake Access Areas (WDFW land damaged by wildfire include about 4.2 acres at West Medical Lake, .1 acres at Silver Lake)**

The Gray Fire started west of Medical Lake burning up a large portion of the Department-managed water access area. The fire spread by way of shifting winds and also burned a smaller portion of the Silver Lake Water Access Area. The burned timber and understory, to include tall grasses and brush, adversely impacts small mammal and bird habitat. Dead quail were found at West Medical Lake in the aftermath of the fire. Car counters have tracked ten thousand to seventeen-thousand vehicles at each of these sites annually. The Department’s responsibility to provide a safe and quality recreation experience requires replacement of public toilets, signs, fencing, as well as removal of debris and hazard trees. Due to the timing of survey, cultural review, and permitting, the construction of four vault toilet replacements will complete in FY2025. Further delayed rehabilitation work from cultural reviews, permitting, cost overruns, snow melt or fire conditions may require funding requests in out years. Any additional needs may be requested in a future supplemental. Funding for restoration of the facilities and the land impacted by wildfire is imperative to opening these sites back up for our recreating community.

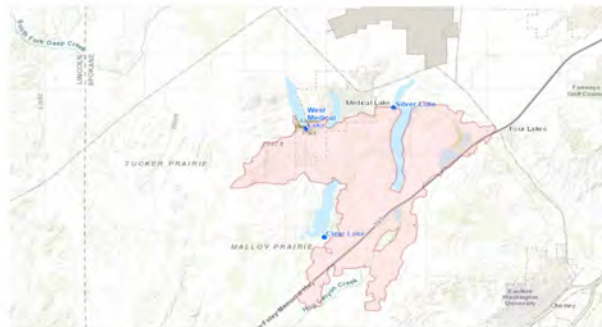


Figure 15: The department’s Land Information System depicts large portions of West Medical Lake and Silver Lake Water Access Areas affected by the wildfire. The cause of fire is under investigation.



Figure 16: The West Medical Lake Access Area is black, it’s technically safe from fire since there isn’t anything left to burn. However, travel to that area remains hazardous due to the surrounding portions of active fire and downed power lines. ~ Photo credit and caption, Daniel Dziekan, Water Access Manager



Figures 17 & 18: The toilets at West Medical Lake are hazardous since they are just open pits now. Toilet debris covers the pits and will need to be cleared and new toilets installed. The photos above show the melted fiberglass housing of four outhouses covering the inground waste tank. – Photo credit, Daniel Dziekan, Water Access Manager



Figures 19 & 20: The structural integrity of burned fencing around utility and boundary areas are no longer safe and must be replaced. Dziekan, Water Access Manager



Figures 21 & 22: Signage to inform the public of access area rules and other site information were burned and in some places disintegrated. – Photo credit, Daniel

**\$273,000 – Vantage Highway 2 Fire of 2022 fire season – LT Murray Wildlife Area (22,000 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

In August 2022, a wildfire started along Vantage Highway during Red Flag weather conditions, and over the course of a month nearly 31,000 acres of sagebrush steppe habitat was burned and or influenced by suppression activities. A funding request was submitted within the 2023 supplemental and was received. Total fire rehab may take one to five and sometimes 30 years to restore depending on the type of vegetation and habitat that was impacted. Upon cultural resources phase 1 review of the Vantage Highway 2 fire, the Department learned of extreme cultural significance of the burned area. As one of the most profound archeological significant sites in recent years, the agency will need to complete additional phases of the cultural review prior to executing further restoration work. Therefore, this request will ensure additional funding for phase 2, 3 and 4 of cultural reviews. Furthermore, certain delayed restoration work to buy plant materials and pay for contractors to do the planting, will need to conclude in FY2024 and FY2025. Further delays in rehabilitation work from cultural reviews, permitting, cost overruns, snow melt or fire conditions may require funding requests in out years. Any additional needs may be requested in a future supplemental.



*Figures 23 & 24. Among a number of cultural resource findings, the picture (left) above shows an arrowhead found on top of the barren soil after all the vegetation was burned away from the fire. The picture (right) a retrieved pile of previously looted petrified wood from the burn site. Pacific Northwest Indigenous people will often use petrified wood to make other tools, hunting equipment and jewelry. Extra care and funding is necessary to properly assess this site prior to restoration efforts. ~ Photo credit, Noel Winegeart, Assistant Wildlife Area Manager*



*Figures 25 & 26. The picture (left), from Google Earth, shows the same area of landscape prior to the fire. It is a photo of the Pumphouse Road entrance to the Whiskey Dick-Quilomene Unit in 2021 demonstrating the dense shrubsteppe habitat. Whereas the picture (right) shows how barren the soil is in the same location after the fire. Returning this burned site to original conditions will take fall and spring plantings with monitoring and adaptive management. ~ Photo credit, Noel Winegeart, Assistant Wildlife Area Manager.*

**\$623,000 – Lick Creek (Dry Gulch) Fire of 2021 fire season – Asotin Wildlife Area/Weatherly Unit (34,283 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

The Lick Creek fire, of the 2021 fire season, is deemed the most significant fire to affect the agency to date. The agency has achieved much habitat restoration work during fiscal years 2022 and 2023. Due to higher contractor costs, the agency could only facilitate a portion of the fence work up through June 30, 2023, and upon expiration of available funding. With more fence work needed to fully restore, the agency requests an additional \$623,000 for the Smoothing Iron and Harlow Ridge portions of the Lick Creek Fire fence replacements. The Lick Creek Fire has destroyed infrastructure such as 3.3 miles of elk and 26.5 miles of livestock fencing.



*Figures 27, 28, 29, & 30: These pictures of destroyed elk fences, of the Lick Creek Fire from 2021 fire season. Additional funding is necessary to complete the fence replacement. Fencing costs for materials and contracted services have largely increased. Contracted service providers are limited for the areas where work is needed. Additionally, the terrain is hard rock requiring additional resources to install fence posts. Local contractors are bidding much higher than anticipated for this work.*

**\$150,000 – Cub Creek 2 Fire of 2021 fire season – Methow Wildlife Area/Rendezvous and Methow Units (730 WDFW acres damaged by wildfire)**

This wildfire impacted three Department-managed campgrounds (Boulder Creek, Upper Bobcat and Lower Bobcat), and the Ramsey Creek thinning project. About 100 acres is USFWS owned but managed by WDFW. Due to the rugged terrain fire suppression activities were limited, resulting in much of the affected acres left to burn until stopped by natural fire barriers. Habitat restoration work such as aerial seed on the Ramsey unit, weed control, hazard tree removal on campgrounds were completed upon approved 2022 supplemental funds. Fence replacement is still underway and funding to complete this work is running short due to higher fence costs for materials and labor. If no funding is received to complete the fence replacement, neighboring cows on private property and USDA forest service land will trespass on department land and adjacent private property. Trespassing cattle will rob native plants from growing and hinder the regeneration of healthy habitats. This burned location may take up to 5 years to re-establish the native vegetation for a thriving ecosystem.

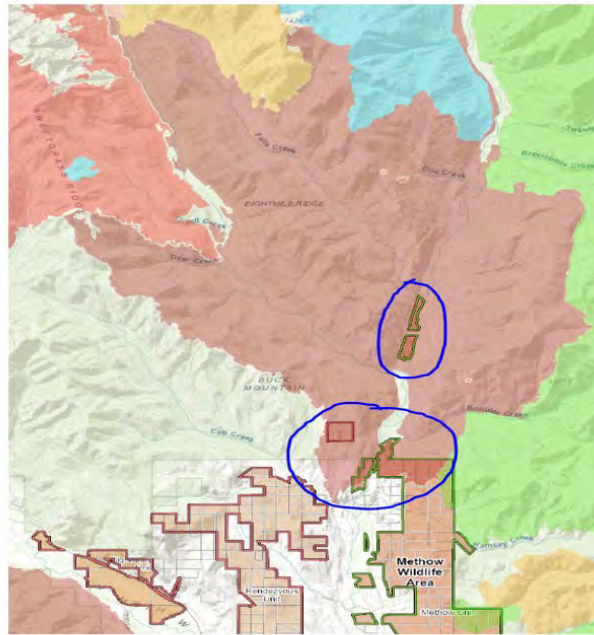


Figure 31: The department's Land Information System tracks GIS data of historical fire perimeters on affected department lands. The Cub Creek 2 fire burned over 70,000 acres in total with about 730 acres burned on the Methow Wildlife Area.



Figures 32 & 33: This fire burned so hot that there only remains about six fence posts out of 2 miles of fence. Left and right pictures show about only six fence posts remain intact from the fire. ~ Photo credit, Brad Noddings and Chris Alston, CAMP Project Managers.



Figures 34 & 35: The left picture shows the same fence posts from the opposite camera angle. This is where the fence stops and the remaining 2 miles of fence completely disintegrated. ~ Photo credit, Brad Noddings and Chris Alston, CAMP Project Managers.



Figure 36: The fence line, prior to the fire, ran from mid-center bottom up through center of this picture above. There are zero remains of the burned fence and will need to be replaced. ~ Photo credit, Brad Noddings and Chris Alston, CAMP Project Managers.

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

This request is for a one-time, supplemental increase of \$1,657,000 beyond the existing carry forward base of \$140,000, to recover from damage during the 2023 wildfire season and continuation of restoration from previous wildfire seasons. Planned restoration under this request pertains to work that must be completed in fiscal year 2024 only. Funding for this package is a one-time expansion of a current program to recover agency assets impacted by wildfire. Further delays in rehabilitation work from cultural reviews, permitting, cost overruns, snow melt or fire conditions may require funding requests in out years. Any additional needs may be requested in a future supplemental.

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

#### FY2024:

Salaries and benefits (objects A and B) total \$171,000, to include cultural resources and Capital Asset Management Program project management and survey staff to support infrastructure repair, planting, and weed control. Personal Service Contracts (object C) total \$712,000, to contract cultural reviews, fencing contractors to repair and replace fence and gates. (object E) total \$298,000, for the Department to buy services for aerial application, herbicides, planting of seed, shrubs, trees, forbs, sign materials, fence materials, toilet rentals, permits, hazard tree removal and centralized service costs. An infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% is included (object T) and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

#### FY2024:

- 1.0 FTE, Commerce Specialist 4, to conduct cultural review and oversee contracted services to survey impacted lands prior to weed control, seeding or planting, signage, toilet and fence replacement activities.
- 0.2 FTE, Construction Project Coordinator 3, to oversee contracted services work on toilet and fence replacement activities.
- 0.2 FTE, Land Surveyor-Wildlife, to survey toilet replacement locations and boundary fence.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal of a Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. This proposal guarantees essential activities in habitat recovery and restoration, including planting vegetation and weed control activities. Furthermore, post wildfire habitat recovery is necessary for the Department to enhance fishing and hunting opportunities for all residents while preserving, protecting, and perpetuating wildlife in the state.

#### **WDFW 25Year Strategic Plan**

This decision package aligns directly with the Department's mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities. This request proactively supports recovery from devastation from wildfires posing extreme conservation challenges. In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance outcomes:

- 90% of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state
- 10% net gain in the quality and quantity of our most important fish and wildlife habitat

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Preserve & Restore Terrestrial Habitat & Species: \$1,797,000 (including current appropriation of \$140,000) fiscal year 2024, General Fund State.

The Department restores habitat to preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems. The Department seeks to restore degraded habitat and endangered species by implementing plans to recover wildlife and seek funding to use toward completing various habitat restoration projects. That includes weed control, timber thinning and management, and habitat quality improvement. In addition, the Department maintains and improves the ecological health of state lands, maintains safe, sanitary water access sites to provide habitat for fish and wildlife, and recreational hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing opportunities for the public.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

The Department anticipates meeting the informal measure of improved habitat restoration following annual wildfire seasons. In addition, supported performance indicators include:

- Acres of protected fish and wildlife habitat
- Threatened and endangered species population increases the percent change in hunter opportunities

This request is essential to secure stable funding at the most effective time following a fire season and to support emergent habitat restoration recovery across the state. Habitat recovery and restoration contribute to a robust ecosystem that supports healthy wildlife, species diversity and increases hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities. Restoring vital habitat in the aftermath of extensive fire damage, provides essential habitat for fish and wildlife and provides fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other conservation-based recreation opportunities for the public. These lands are often either critical habitat for threatened or endangered species, or critical habitat for sustaining game populations, such as winter range. Rehabilitation of these lands directly benefit the public's interests.

Funding this package allows WDFW to pay for necessary restoration work, without significantly decreasing the level of Department activities such as land management and enforcement, or other areas of the Department such as selective fisheries, hatchery production, fish and wildlife management and research, salmon recovery, and Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) permitting activities. WDFW will maintain Department-managed lands, continuing its management programs that benefit fish and wildlife and provide public recreation such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, wildlife photography, hiking, and equestrian pursuits.

## Equity Impacts

### ***Community outreach and engagement:***

WDFW completes community engagement and public outreach through public engagement. The Communication and Public Engagement divisions are committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that WDFW can maintain these functions to prevent degrading services for the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying non-discretionary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the business operations of WDFW and restrict mission-critical work.

### ***Disproportional Impact Considerations:***

If this request is not funded, other areas of the budget could be cut, which will cause reductions in other programs and projects currently funded. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities. However, cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as WDFW will be forced to shift resources.

### ***Target Populations or Communities:***

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support target populations such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted communities. WDFW is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems so these resources are sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities, and many others, are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.



**Other Collateral Connections**

**Puget Sound Recovery:**

N/A

**State Workforce Impacts:**

N/A

**Intergovernmental:**

This proposal does not adversely impact tribal, regional, county or city governments, or any political subdivision of the state, nor any other Washington state agencies. Rather, restoring healthy habitats effect opportunity for the public to recreate while drawing them to participate in local economies.

**Stakeholder Response:**

Wildlife and recreational communities, partners and local volunteers support healthy habitat restoration and repair work necessary to recover from catastrophic fires. More specifically, vested volunteer groups with Pheasants Forever and Inland Northwest Council provide the Department additional volunteer hours to help plant in some damaged areas. The Department expects positive impact to all stakeholders.

**State Facilities Impacts:**

N/A

**Changes from Current Law:**

N/A

**Legal or Administrative Mandates:**

N/A

**HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions**

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

**IT Addendum**

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

No

**Objects of Expenditure**

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$127	\$0	\$127	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. B	\$44	\$0	\$44	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. C	\$712	\$0	\$712	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. E	\$298	\$0	\$298	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. T	\$476	\$0	\$476	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Agency Contact Information**

Jon Neville  
 (360) 561-5079  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Maintenance Level - 9S - Equipment Replacement Costs

**Agency Recommendation Summary**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is required by state law (RCW 77.95.290) to clip the adipose fin of hatchery released salmonids to ensure they are externally recognizable as hatchery origin. In addition to externally marking, a coded wire tag can also be inserted into the snout at the time of fin clipping, allowing for identification of the originating hatchery. Each year, WDFW clips and tags more than 110 million hatchery produced salmon and steelhead and the most time and cost-efficient method of doing so is by using an automatic trailer equipped with the AutoFish System. Of the thirteen trailers WDFW currently owns, three are at or approaching their end of useful life. This request will fund the rebuild of one AutoFish System per fiscal year, thereby allowing WDFW to maintain current hatchery production levels. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

**Fiscal Summary**

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$801	\$801	\$801	\$801	\$1,602
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$801	\$801	\$801	\$801	\$1,602

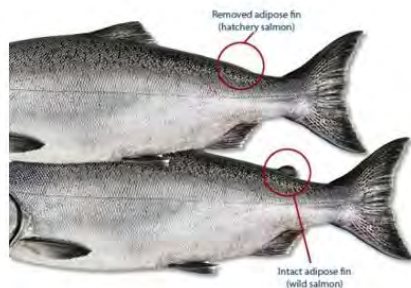
**Decision Package Description**

The Department currently utilizes a fleet of 14 AutoFish systems, 27 manual mass marking trailers, and three manual tagging trailers to facilitate marking and tagging statewide including some tribal and PUD hatcheries. In conjunction with the concurrent policy level funding request to purchase 11 new AutoFish systems over the next six biennia, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is requesting additional funding to allow for the rebuilding of six currently owned aging AutoFish systems over the next three biennia. When combined, these requests will allow WDFW to expand and maintain the optimal marking and tagging fleet of 25 AutoFish systems and 12 manual marking and tagging trailers going forward, as outlined in “WDFW 9S Equipment Replacement Costs (Attachment A).”

With the expansion of the fleet, ongoing maintenance and replacement of aging systems will need to be addressed. An AutoFish system, with proper storage and maintenance, has an assumed useful life of approximately 20 years or more. As shown in Attachment A, WDFW has a replacement schedule in place to rebuild AutoFish systems once they are past their useful life. Rebuilding these systems costs approximately one half of the price to purchase a new system and extends the useful life an additional 20 years. WDFW is requesting funding to rebuild one AutoFish system per fiscal year for the next six years and after that will require funding beginning in biennium 2039, to rebuild two systems each biennium going forward.

WDFW must (RCW 77.95.290) clip the adipose fin of Chinook and coho, so they are recognizable as hatchery originated. Additionally, a tag is inserted in the snout, identifying which hatchery. WDFW accomplishes the required marking by removing the adipose fin, which is the small fin on the lower back of the fish near the tail, of hatchery-raised salmonids. This fin removal process differentiates hatchery salmonids from wild populations as wild salmonids will have their adipose fin intact leading to the quick visual identification of hatchery salmonids by anglers and researchers alike.

At the time of adipose fin clipping, a coded wire tag (CWT) is also inserted into the snout of juvenile hatchery raised salmonids when they are a minimum size of 64mm, ideally 70-79mm. Coded wire tags allow the originating hatchery to be easily identified using unique coding based on when and where they were released. This process is accomplished most efficiently using one of the Department’s thirteen automatic trailers equipped with the AutoFish System.



*Figure 1. Hatchery salmonids with adipose fin removed compared to intact adipose fin of wild salmonids (WDFW)*



*Figure 2. Coded wire tag on fingertip (WDFW)*

Without the funding to rebuild the current fleet, WDFW would need to surplus trailers as they age out of service. Having to surplus equipment without an option for replacement will negatively impact the ability to maintain current levels of marking and tagging, potentially leading to a decrease in hatchery production, which could also have a negative economic impact on local economies, impact federal court orders made with treaty tribes and reduce prey availability for Southern Resident Orca. Further, as WDFW is actively moving towards lowering manual marking programs and their associated increasing labor costs, losing an AutoFish system trailer will set-back the transition WDFW is actively working towards by forcing programs currently utilizing AutoFish system trailers, and their increased volume capability and accuracy, to shift to manual marking to meet current requirements which will also lead to increased labor costs.

For these reasons, WDFW is requesting funding to rebuild one currently owned AutoFish system trailer per fiscal year over the next three biennia. The ability to rebuild six currently owned and aging trailers, combined with the purchase of 11 new AutoFish system trailers over the next six biennia, will allow WDFW to grow and maintain the optimal fleet of 25 AutoFish systems while reducing manual marking and tagging trailers down to 12 resulting in the reduction of their associated labor costs.

While WDFW will never be able to fully transition away from manual mass marking, due to timing issues and/or fish being out of size to run through the AutoFish system, maintaining a fleet of 25 AutoFish systems is the only path that ensures salmon and steelhead will be successfully mass marked into the future.



*Figure 3. Trailer containing AutoFish System  
Source: Northwest Marine Technology*



*Figure 4. Computer controlled AutoFish System inside trailer containing a sorter and six marking and tagging lines. Adipose fins are clipped via black mechanisms and then CWT inserted using blue injectors.  
Source: Northwest Marine Technology*

### Alternatives Explored

WDFW has explored alternative strategies over the years to maintain current levels of production, with the primary alternative being manually marking and tagging salmonids before release. Manually marking hatchery salmonids is not as desirable as automatically marking due to decreased capacity and accuracy, and increased labor costs. To see the same number of fish processed by a trailer in an eight-hour period, it would require between 12 to 14 workers. Each worker processes roughly 6,000 fish in an eight-hour period.

Correct staffing levels have become more difficult to maintain, even with labor cost increases. Over 70% of marking and tagging occurs in April, May, and June each year (117,300,371 total fish marked and tagged in 2022 and of those 87,184,472 were in April, May, and June). The ability of WDFW to mark and tag the required number of fish is in jeopardy, if WDFW is not able to obtain the necessary number of temporary staff to optimally run manual marking trailers during this short window of time. To provide the needed staff to match automatic processing, WDFW has previously utilized state inmates under the supervision of the Department of Corrections, maintaining well-trained seasonal staff and

temporary staffing agencies. Relying upon the ability to source correct staffing levels for manual marking is not sufficient to ensure the success of the mass marking program going forward.

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

WDFW currently operates thirteen automatic trailers equipped with AutoFish System. This proposal will allow for the rebuild of one trailer, per fiscal year, ongoing.

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

Equipment cost, object J, totals \$801,257 per fiscal year, includes \$731,742 for one AutoFish system trailer rebuild, plus \$69,515 in sales tax at 9.5%, Thurston County.

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

N/A

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve three Results Washington goals:

- Efficient Effective & Accountable Government;
- Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment; and
- Prosperous Economy.

This proposal is fundamental for the Department to efficiently mass mark all hatchery Chinook and coho salmon destined for harvest and required by state law (RCW 77.95.290). Furthermore, the mass marking is essential to protect the marine ecosystems and support the survival of Southern Resident orcas and ESA-listed Chinook. In addition, mass marking is critical to managing recreational, commercial, and tribal fisheries while protecting native salmonid runs and other economically and culturally important species.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This decision package supports the following Department Strategic Plan priorities:

- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship, delivering hunting and fishing customer service, including needs for predictability, as the Department continues to focus on maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations.
- Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions, developing an agency-level data management system to provide better science for agency decision-making and constituent outreach.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Produce Hatchery Fish \$801,000 fiscal year 2025 through fiscal year 2030, General Fund State.

This package supports our activity inventory item "Produce Hatchery Fish" and applicable support strategy:

- Produce salmon and steelhead

Hatchery mass marking is critical to provide prey opportunities for endangered Southern Resident Orcas and recover endangered and threatened species to healthy, self-sustaining levels. Furthermore, hatchery mass marking benefits commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfills obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights in salmon and steelhead. In addition, mass marking is critical to enforce rules and regulations in fishing activities. Therefore, efficient mass marking is critical for the Department's activities enforcing fishing regulations, monitoring, and managing fish populations to conserve and protect native fish and wildlife.

**Performance Outcomes:**

The funding for the purchase of one replacement automatic trailer equipped with the AutoFish System, will help WDFW reach the following performance measures:

- Mass marked hatchery produced Chinook salmon
- Mass marked hatchery produced coho salmon
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals
- Mark-selective fisheries
- Hatchery programs in compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- Threatened and endangered species population increases

**Equity Impacts**

**Community outreach and engagement:**

WDFW completes community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions and committed is to improving and evolving community engagement with communities historically excluded and marginalized. It is important that WDFW can maintain these functions to prevent a degradation of services to the communities we serve. This request will fund the purchase of one replacement automatic trailer per biennium thereby allowing WDFW to maintain current hatchery production levels.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

Funding for maintenance level decision packages is frequently inwardly focused. This funding request is responding to a need to replace aging automatic trailers to maintain current hatchery productions levels. Without additional funding for these replacement costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities, however cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as WDFW will be forced to shift resources.

**Target Populations or Communities:**

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support target populations such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted communities. WDFW is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems so these resources are sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities, and many others, are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents. Washington’s hatcheries support recreational Fishing opportunities throughout the state and contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses. This package will:

- Support local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses),
- Provide family recreational opportunities, and
- Protect Washington’s Fishing cultural heritage.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods by ensuring WDFW's continued hatchery production of salmon and other game fish across the state is efficient and supports a mark-selective fishery to inform adaptive management. Through these efforts, this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations. This decision package is also indirectly aligned with Action (ID#89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring that fish marking capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon hatchery that supports adaptive management of salmon recovery. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, by ensuring fish marking capacity for WDFW salmonid hatcheries is maintained to adaptively manage a mark-selected fishery. Through these efforts, this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

Replacement of equipment once the useful life has been met, satisfies OSHA, L&I, and union requirements for safe, reliable equipment that promotes safety and job performance proficiency and effectiveness.

### ***Intergovernmental:***

N/A

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

WDFW anticipates support from stakeholders, which include tribes, commercial fisheries, and the public.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

In addition to RCW 77.95.290, the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1544) requires hatchery raised Chinook, coho and steelhead (salmonids) to be marked prior to their release into the environment allowing for quick visual differentiation from wild populations.

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[Attachment A - WDFW 9S Equipment Replacement.pdf](#)

**IT Addendum**

***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

No

**Objects of Expenditure**

<b>Objects of Expenditure</b> <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2023-25</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2025-27</b>
Obj. J	\$0	\$801	<b>\$801</b>	\$801	\$801	<b>\$1,602</b>

**Agency Contact Information**

Jon Neville  
(360) 870-4691  
jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Maintenance Level - CA - County and Other Assessments

### Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns over one million acres of land throughout Washington. These lands are subject to general assessments, in both county and non-county, including water service agreements and various assessments such as weed, irrigation, lake management district, dike, and fire protection assessments. Additionally, the Department leases land from private, local, federal, and state entities for conservation and mitigation of certain species. Cost of these assessments have risen, and this package seeks funding for the increased costs to maintain land continuity for the public to recreate, hunt, fish, and view wildlife. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation]

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$150	\$150	\$300	\$150	\$150	\$300
Total Expenditures	\$150	\$150	\$300	\$150	\$150	\$300

### Decision Package Description

Following the direction of RCWs 77.04.012, 77.12.039, 77.12.320 and 79a.15 and in support of WDFW’s mission, the State of Washington has received approval to lease or purchase lands and accept land donations to secure fish and wildlife habitat and related recreational opportunities otherwise at risk. This strategically developed land base addresses fish and wildlife conservation needs and provides sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other recreational opportunities when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and their habitats.

WDFW is legally required to pay assessments for owned or managed land. The Department pays assessments annually to counties, irrigation and lake management districts, weed control boards, conservation districts, fire districts, home-owners associations, and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Although the service level is not increasing, the cost of the services are. WDFW requests \$150,000 each fiscal year (FY) above current appropriations:

**County Assessments - \$16,000 per year**

- County assessment rates increased costs in FY2023 and continues into consecutive fiscal years.

**Non-County Assessments - \$133,000 per year**

- Irrigation District assessment rates increased costs in FY2023 and continues into consecutive fiscal years.
- DNR fire protection assessments rates increased costs in FY2023 and continues into consecutive fiscal years.

**Lease Agreements - \$1,000 per year**

Lease rates and assessments increased in FY2022-23 and continues into consecutive fiscal years.

WDFW stewards over one million acres of land, portions of which include lease or management agreements with many partners and require associated assessment payments. The Department pays assessments on acquired and managed lands annually, with costs often increasing each year. To avoid an operating budget gap produced by these rising costs, the Department monitors the budgets and submits funding requests to ensure funding levels are supported to pay the assessments due. WDFW is legally required to pay assessments for land that it owns or manages. The Department established an annual process to review changes to the assessment levels and to request operation and maintenance funding to coincide with these increased assessment costs. Funding this package allows WDFW to pay for county and non-county assessments, as required by law, without significantly decreasing Department activities.

The alternative to this proposal is to reduce our stewardship across these lands. Given the significant gap in current funding for land stewardship overall, not funding this proposal was rejected and considered unacceptable.



## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

N/A

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

Goods and services (object E) totals \$150,000 per year, beginning in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing support is necessary for increased county assessments, fire protection assessments and DNR lease agreements and assessments.

Various local governments and DNR submit invoices to the Department for services provided. Actual payments for fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023 to the irrigation and lake management districts, weed control boards, fire districts, and DNR have increased. The local fire districts and DNR provide fire-suppression readiness services for WDFW owned and managed lands when a particular parcel of WDFW land is located outside of otherwise mandated coverage areas. The cost varies by jurisdiction and is determined by applying a base rate to the number of acres covered by this service.

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

N/A

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### Governor's Results Washington Goals

This request provides important support to the Governor's Results Washington Goal: Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment by ensuring habitat protection and outdoor recreational opportunities. It is necessary to have the correct funding available to make payments to affected districts and counties depending on land use type in different areas.

#### WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

The Department works to conserve and protect native fish and wildlife and provide sustainable fishing, hunting, and other wildlife-related recreational and commercial opportunities. This request is essential in implementing WDFW's Strategic Plan "Proactively address conservation challenges" by using the budget for managing WDFW lands, rather than diverting existing operating funds to cover this increased cost in legal obligations, which would reduce our service delivery on conservation and recreation.

#### WDFW Activity Inventory

##### Acquire and Manage Lands, \$150,000 General Fund-State

WDFW's strategically-developed land base serves the conservation needs of fish and wildlife and provides sustainable fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing and other recreational opportunities when compatible with healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. To effectively and responsibly own and manage public lands, the Department maintains and improves the ecological health of its lands; strategically acquires new lands, or sells lands that no longer serve the Department's mission; builds and maintains safe, sanitary, and ecologically friendly water access sites; and ensures public safety through enforcement presence.

Through land management, the Department can conserve and restore the diversity of Washington's fish and wildlife species and their habitats, while providing affordable access to hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching opportunities. Department lands will continue to be managed appropriately to balance hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing while promoting a healthy ecosystem. Land management preserves and enhances habitat value, minimizes the spread of invasive species, and supports biodiversity and the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

**Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following performance outcomes:

- Acres of protected fish and wildlife habitat
- Percentage of assets maintained to an adequate operational standard

WDFW owns and manages over one million acres of land, including hundreds of water access sites. These lands provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife and provide fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, and other conservation-based recreation opportunities for the public. WDFW often acquires land as critical habitat for threatened or endangered species and/or game populations. The opportunities these lands afford the public are an important contribution to the state’s economy, especially in rural areas of the state. Outdoor recreation contributes over \$20 billion to the state economy every year. Recent work by Earth Economics estimates that WDFW lands contribute \$1.8 billion directly to the Washington economy.

Funding this package allows WDFW to pay for county and non-county assessments, as required by law, without significantly decreasing Department activities and services due to budget constraints. With adequate funding, WDFW can continue management programs that benefit fish and wildlife and provide public recreation opportunities such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, wildlife photography, hiking, and horseback riding.

**Equity Impacts**

**Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure continued services to local communities. This proposal was developed by WDFW after identifying inflationary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the Department’s business operations and restrict mission critical work or advances/improvements throughout the Department.

This package specifically supports the Department’s responsibility to steward owned or managed lands for public benefit statewide. Access to public lands provides low-cost outdoor recreational opportunities to Washington communities. According to the Washington State Department of Health, increasing access to natural areas like parks or wildlife areas decreases a community’s risk of chronic diseases. By securing funding to continue managing these lands, we will ensure Washingtonians have access to quality outdoor experiences and a connection to nature.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

Without additional funding to address increased/new costs associated with WDFW’s land management, other areas of the budget could be cut. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities; however, cutting services will hinder the Department’s ability to provide services equitably to Washingtonians. WDFW-managed lands are open to all Washingtonians and conservation efforts benefit all Washingtonians. The Department is identifying barriers to access and participation amongst populations that disproportionately do not take advantage of that opportunity.

**Target Populations or Communities:**

WDFW lands are located throughout the state and are proximate to diverse urban and rural communities. Payments made by the Department to county and local entities support services to the public. It is crucial that the Department be able to continue to contribute funding to support assessments that address local and statewide issues, preventing an undue burden on local taxpayers. WDFW-managed lands are open to all Washingtonians, and conservation actions benefit all Washingtonians.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: “Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship” by ensuring that land acquisition programs continue benefiting fish and wildlife and providing public recreation such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, wildlife photography, hiking, and horseback riding. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: “Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery” by ensuring that land acquisition programs continue to support critical habitat for salmon recovery and ensure operations of hatcheries. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – “support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring continued WDFW program capacity to acquire land to support wildlife, conservation, and public recreation needs.” Through these efforts, this package also indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce Recommendation 1: “Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas,” and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 1: “Protect and restore vital salmon habitat.”

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

WDFW’s assessment payments to districts and counties are an important component in their financial management. These funds provide financial support to counties for services provided.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

Conservation and recreation organizations would benefit from improved habitat conditions, recreational access, public safety, and public engagement opportunities. Others that stand to benefit from this proposal include;

- Farm and livestock owners
- Recreation businesses that rely on commercial permits on WDFW lands
- Diverse conservation and recreation groups that want to participate in WDFW wildlife area planning, including the Department’s diverse advisory committees
- Stakeholders who care about WDFW’s land management and acquisition process, including land trusts, Cattlemen’s Association, Farm Bureau, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation, Pheasants Forever, Audubon Society, Conservation Northwest, The Nature Conservancy, the timber industry, recreation groups like the Washington Trails Association, Back Country Horsemen of Washington, and the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

N/A

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

### IT Addendum

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

No

### Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$150	\$150	\$300	\$150	\$150	\$300

### Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
(360) 870-4691  
jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Maintenance Level - AF - Hatchery Fish Food Increases

### Agency Recommendation Summary

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) hatcheries produce fish that support Washington’s tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries and contribute to fish recovery efforts listed under the Endangered Species Act. WDFW requests increased funding to meet fish food costs that continue to rise due to the global market conditions associated with fish food production. Without funding to offset increased fish food costs, salmon and trout plants into local waters will likely be reduced and/or potential hatchery closure(s) may be needed. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$221	\$221	\$442	\$221	\$221	\$442
Fund 02R - 1	\$10	\$10	\$20	\$10	\$10	\$20
Fund 04M - 1	(\$4)	(\$4)	(\$8)	(\$4)	(\$4)	(\$8)
Fund 104 - 1	\$14	\$14	\$28	\$14	\$14	\$28
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$241</b>	<b>\$241</b>	<b>\$482</b>	<b>\$241</b>	<b>\$241</b>	<b>\$482</b>

### Decision Package Description

Fish food purchased by WDFW supports salmon and trout production for tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries in the state of Washington, as well as recovery and conservation programs for fish populations listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. Until fiscal year 2022, the price of fish food had stayed relatively level. Since the Fish Program’s Hatchery Division established its biennial budgets for fish food for the 2023-2025 biennium, the top two fish food vendors used have increased their prices.

	7/1/22-12/31/22	1/1/23-6/30/23
Vendor	Price increase %	Price increase %
Bio Oregon	15%	0%
EWOS	5%	1%

*Additional details on fish food prices are available in the Pricing Sheet Matrix document.*

These price increases have resulted in overspending of fish food budgets in state accounts by \$237,000 in fiscal year 2023. Given where fish food prices started in fiscal year 2024 and the amount of funds budgeted in 2024, the Hatchery Division is anticipating a \$241,000 shortfall in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing.

Fund	EAI	Annual Fish Food Budget	Annual Estimated Expenditures	Annual Shortfall/Surplus
001	01*	\$1,641,397	\$1,861,844	(\$220,447)
02R	090	\$257,867	\$268,277	(\$10,410)
24N	030	\$270,577	\$270,577	\$0
04M	1M0	\$253,468	\$249,115	\$4,353
104	TPF	\$25,755	\$39,858	(\$14,103)
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$2,449,064</b>	<b>\$2,689,671</b>	<b>(\$240,607)</b>

*See Assumptions and Calculations section below for details on how the budget and expenditure estimates are established.*

The global market conditions (including fish meal and fish oil shortages) that drove the recent price increases continue to persist, inflating this necessary cost associated with fish production. The Fish Hatchery Division expects fish food prices to continue to rise.

The Department is requesting additional authority in the various state fund sources used to purchase fish food. This increased authority will ensure hatcheries have the proper level of funding to purchase the amount of fish food needed to produce the number of fish required to meet tribal, commercial, and recreational fishery commitments.

The Department's main priority is maintaining current fish production levels and fish health while remaining within hatchery operational budgets. Various strategies are used to offset minor fish food cost increases when possible. These include reprioritizing activities and budget resources within the Fish Program when opportunities allow as well as buying fish food ahead of new contract pricing when funding allows. However, the latter is not always viable due to the fish food having a relatively short shelf life.

There are alternative vendors that produce fish food at lower prices. However, every vendor uses slightly different ingredients, therefore not all fish food is created equally. There is a significant risk associated with using a new type of fish food, the highest risk being the loss of fish, most commonly due to the fish rejecting the feed given to them. If the lower-priced fish food were as effective at raising fish, hatcheries would utilize it. Unfortunately, this is not the case which is why changing vendors is not a viable alternative.

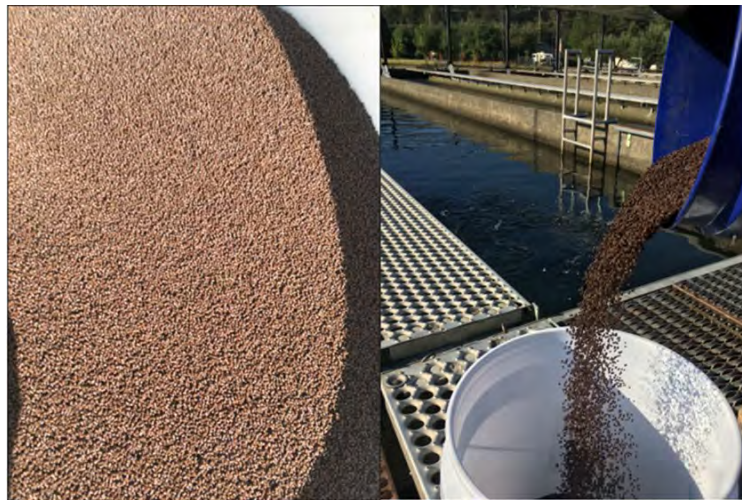


Figure 1. Fish Food in bulk (WDFW)

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

This is not an expansion or alteration of a current program. This request is needed to keep hatchery production funded at its existing production levels.

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

Goods and services, Object E, total \$241,000 for fiscal year 2024 and fiscal year 2025 and ongoing for fish food costs. To estimate the impacts of the fish food price increases the Department compared the differences between the amount that was budgeted for fish food in fiscal year 2024 and the actual fish food expenditures in fiscal year 2023. The Department estimates that fiscal year 2024 and 2025 expenditures are going to be at least the amount of its fiscal year 2023 expenditures, because salmon and trout production goals remain the same in 2024 and 2025 as they were in 2023. This funding request is the difference between the expected fiscal year 2024 and 2025 expenditure amount and the funding amount available for fish food in fiscal year 2023, for state funded hatcheries.

Given this, how the fish food budget estimates are established for the biennium is a critical piece of information. Fish food costs are estimated by each stock (there are multiple stocks within each species of salmon and trout) produced at each individual hatchery. Each hatchery produces multiple stocks. These cost estimates are done separately by all 80 plus hatcheries. However, all hatcheries use the same methodology to estimate total fish food costs.

In this analysis it's important to understand the fundamentals of raising fish. When fish first hatch from the egg, they are very small, therefore they require a smaller feed size. As the fish grow, they are transitioned to larger feed sizes. Feed prices vary by feed sizes. Fish food manufacturers provide a scale informing which feed size is optimal for a fish size, which is measured by fish per pound. Feed costs are then estimated at each size interval until the fish reach their release size.

The following is an example of the methodology used by each hatchery to estimate fish feed costs per stock. Below the table you find definitions of each column.

POP	Start fish/lbs	Total start lbs	End fish/lbs	Total end lbs	Total lbs gain	Feed conversion	Lbs feed need	PPP	Cost	TYPE
600,000	1000	600	525	1143	543	0.6	326	2.35	\$765.43	Bio Vita #0
600,000	525	1143	275	2182	1039	0.6	623	2.35	\$1,464.94	Bio Vita #1
600,000	275	2182	125	4800	2618	0.6	1571	2.35	\$3,691.64	Bio Vita #2
600,000	125	4800	90	6667	1867	0.6	1120	2.08	\$2,329.60	Bio Vita 1.2
600,000	90	6667	70	8571	1905	0.7	1333	1.96	\$2,613.33	Bio Vita 1.5
									\$10,864.93	

Column Title	Description
POP	population size, which is the starting number of hatched fish, based on production goals established in the brood stock document
Start fish/lbs	the starting number of fish per pound
Total start lbs	the total pounds of fish to start
End fish/lbs	the number of fish per pound which is the goal to reach before transitioning the fish to the next size of feed. These amounts are typically recommended by the fish feed manufacturer
Total end lbs	the total pounds of fish once the ending fish per pound goal is reached
Total lbs gain	the difference between the total starting pounds and the total ending pounds. This is the total pounds needed to gain to get the fish from the starting pounds to the ending pounds before transitioning
Feed conversion	the feed conversion rate is the total pounds of feed needed to gain one total pound of fish. For example, in smaller fish only .6 lbs of feed is needed (in some cases) to produce 1 pound of fish
Lbs feed need	the pounds of fish feed needed which is equal to the total pounds gained times the conversion rate
PPP	the price per pound of the size of feed needed
Cost	the price per pound times the pounds of feed needed
Type	feed type and size

The above calculation is done for each individual stock produced at each hatchery. The total state budget for fish food is the summation of these estimates. For state-funded hatcheries, these calculations are completed at the beginning of the biennium when state budgets are established. Current feed prices at the time are used, which is why fish food price increases that occur during the biennium are so impactful to our state funded hatchery budgets. Note that federal and local contract-funded hatchery production is not impacted by feed price increases in the same way because the department is able to factor any price changes into the future contract budgets since contracts start and end throughout a biennium.



**Workforce Assumptions:**

N/A

**Strategic and Performance Outcomes****Strategic Framework:****Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the following Results Washington goal of a Prosperous Economy. Producing hatchery salmon and trout helps protect marine ecosystems and support the survival of Southern Resident orcas and ESA listed Chinook. In addition, hatchery salmon and trout contribute to commercial and recreational fishing opportunities across the state, supporting jobs and communities that rely on the economic benefits of fishing.

**WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This decision package supports the Department Strategic Plan strategy of "Proactively address conservation challenges," expanding current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish and wildlife species. In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the performance outcome of a 25 percent increase in wild salmon.

**WDFW Activity Inventory**

Produce Hatchery Fish - \$221,000 State General Fund, \$10,000 ALEA, Wildlife, and Conservation account, \$14,000 Limited Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account, and (\$4,000) Recreational Fisheries Enhancement Account starting in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing.

WDFW hatcheries produce healthy fish to benefit the citizens of Washington State while providing conservation to natural origin salmonids. Hatchery production is critical for fishing opportunities throughout the state – trout, steelhead, and salmon rely on the presence of hatchery fish to protect and preserve natural runs. The Department operates over 80 hatcheries for fish production that benefit commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfill obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights and comanager management plans. The additional funding requested to cover increased costs due to fish feed price increases is necessary to ensure the department can continue producing fish at the required levels.

**Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Threatened and endangered species population increases
- Value of commercial fishing in Washington State
- Total license sales achieved

The primary purpose of this proposal is to address cost increases in fish food, without this funding the Department may not be able to achieve these outcomes.



## Equity Impacts

### ***Community outreach and engagement:***

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain its existing hatchery production levels to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying inflationary cost increases to hatchery fish food that will have a negative impact on the Department's business operations and restrict mission critical work or advances/improvements throughout the Department if additional funding is not received.

### ***Disproportional Impact Considerations:***

Without funding to offset increased fish food costs, salmon and trout plants into local waters will likely be reduced and/or a potential hatchery closure(s) may be needed. It is yet to be determined which hatcheries would be impacted, but a decrease in production at a specific hatchery would impact the local tribal, commercial, and recreational fishing communities by reducing fishing opportunities.

### ***Target Populations or Communities:***

Washington's hatcheries provide economic opportunities for rural businesses and communities statewide that rely on commercial and recreational fishing revenue. They are also essential to preserving the historical and cultural heritage of fishing for tribal communities within the state.

This package supports the production of hatchery fish, which allows the department to continue:

- Supporting local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses),
- Providing family recreational opportunities, and
- Protecting Washington's fishing cultural heritage.

Commercial and recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by ensuring WDFW's ability to support salmon recovery through hatchery production of salmon and salmonids to meet tribal, commercial, and recreational fishery commitments. Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, directly implements the Puget Sound relevant orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant salmon strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

WDFW hatchery production is a crucial element of fisheries co-management with tribes, in addition to collaborating and working with community partners to reach Department conservation goals.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

WDFW Hatcheries operate across the state, providing tribal, recreational, and commercial fishing opportunities for residents, tourists, and conservation groups.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

N/A

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[Attachment 1 - Bio-Oregon Fish Feed Matrix.pdf](#)

[Attachment 2 - EWOS Fish Feed Matrix.pdf](#)

## IT Addendum

***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

No

**Objects of Expenditure**

<b>Objects of Expenditure</b> <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2023-25</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2025-27</b>
Obj. E	\$241	\$241	<b>\$482</b>	\$241	\$241	<b>\$482</b>

**Agency Contact Information**

Jon Neville  
 (360) 870-4691  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Maintenance Level - WA - Hatchery Wage Adjustments

### Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is required by state law to clip the adipose fin of millions of juvenile hatchery Chinook and coho salmon intended for harvest, a process known as mass-marking. This proposal requests funding for the critical staff hired through a private temporary labor firm to conduct yearly mass-marking activities. Without additional funding to support these cost increases, the ability to release hatchery salmon that support Washington's fish populations, endangered Southern Resident killer whales, and the economy will decline. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation].

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$89	\$89	\$178	\$89	\$89	\$178
Fund 001 - 2	\$37	\$37	\$74	\$37	\$37	\$74
Fund 001 - 7	\$26	\$26	\$52	\$26	\$26	\$52
Total Expenditures	\$152	\$152	\$304	\$152	\$152	\$304
<b>Revenue</b>						
001 - 0315	\$37	\$37	\$74	\$37	\$37	\$74
001 - 0549	\$26	\$26	\$52	\$26	\$26	\$52
Total Revenue	\$63	\$63	\$126	\$63	\$63	\$126

### Decision Package Description

#### Detailed Package Description

#### Chinook and Coho Salmon - External Marking of Hatchery-Produced Fish - Program (RCW 77.95.290)

Washington has one of the largest systems of salmon hatcheries in the world, raising more than 100 million juvenile fish at state, federal, and tribal facilities each year. These hatcheries produce most of the salmon caught in Washington waters, contributing significantly to the statewide economy. In addition, these fish provide commercial, tribal, and recreational fishing opportunities while protecting wild Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed populations.

Mass-marking had played a vital role in salmon management since the mid-1990s when WDFW launched a pioneering effort to visibly mark hatchery-raised salmon so they can be readily distinguished from wild fish in Northwest waters. In addition, mass-marking supports a growing number of "mark-selective fisheries" which require anglers to release unmarked salmon or steelhead. These rules protect wild salmon while permitting anglers to retain hatchery-produced fish for harvest. Mass-marking has also helped increase the accuracy of population assessments of wild salmon through sampling and catch-record card data.

#### Problem to address

#### Mass-marking temporary labor

Since 2016, the number of hours needed to accomplish the mass-marking goals has increased on average by 14%. As a result, the current hours required by the fiscal year total 126,825 hours. (See Table 1). Labor staff positions and contracted hours are necessary to meet the Department's mass-marking objectives. Today, WDFW utilizes a fleet of 27 mass-marking trailers, each staffed with 12 to 14 contracted labor staff, to mass-mark over 100 million juvenile Coho, Chinook salmon, and steelhead trout.

In addition, the Department faced an unprecedented retention challenge at the beginning of CY22, which is the most critical mass-marking time, between March-June. At that time, the Department agreed to update hourly rates, starting March 2022, to \$16.49. (See Contract Amendment 10). Still, the provider has submitted a request to increase the hourly worker's rates for the CY23 to \$17.74, anticipating hiring process difficulties, leading because of areas like King County and Seattle, where the minimum salary is higher (Seattle Minimum Wage CY23 is \$18.69).

*Table 1. Mass-marking temporary labor hours increase by fiscal year.*

<i>Position</i>	<i>Hours FY16</i>	<i>Hours FY23</i>	<i>% Increased</i>
Fish ID Technician	94,774	104,100	9.8%
Assistant Lead	3,732	7,033	88.5%
Lead	12,252	15,692	28.1%
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>110,758</b>	<b>126,825</b>	<b>14.5%</b>

**Describe your proposed solution. How will this purchase solve the problem?**

The Mass-Marking strategy has revolutionized salmon management and provided an indispensable tool in the broad-based effort to recover wild salmon stocks throughout the region while maintaining the salmon fishing economy and recreational opportunities. However, the Washington State minimum wage increase, and personnel retention goals will make mass-marking fish prohibitively expensive for WDFW.

In addition, in recent years, WDFW has already had difficulty finding adequate staffing to perform this critical work. Before mass-marking, ESA-imposed restrictions threatened to close historic salmon fisheries throughout the region. In addition to the recreational and cultural values involved, the potential loss of fishing opportunities presented a severe economic threat to fishing families and entire communities, especially in rural areas of the Northwest. Funding this request would prevent impacts on local economies and food security statewide by ensuring that mass-marking can continue at needed levels.

**Alternatives Explored**

Several alternatives to mitigate this have been considered, including producing less fish that require mass-marking, which could violate state law (RCW 77.95.290). In addition, commercial and recreational fishing opportunities would be reduced, impacting Washington’s economy. Hatchery brood-stocks would also be compromised, and WDFW’s ability to assess the health and status of wild salmon stocks would be greatly reduced.

Another option is for WDFW to invest in Auto-Fish marking systems to mass-mark hatchery-produced salmon and steelhead more efficiently using improved technology. WDFW has requested additional funding to bolster its auto-marking efforts, reducing reliance on manual marking. The expected number of hours offset will be variable. Based on an analysis of hours worked and throughput between an auto trailer and a manual trailer, it could be a decrease of up to 3,120 contracted labor hours, depending on the circumstances. We could see a reduction in hours as early as Spring 2023/24 thanks to recent investments into auto-marking trailers, which will be a significant cost saving over time.

Another alternative is to redirect other funding to the mass-marking program, which would compromise WDFW’s other hunting and fishing activities. This funding request has been determined to be the least expensive alternative for continued mass-marking of WDFW’s hatchery production of Chinook, coho, and steelhead without a corresponding reduction in production.

**Connections to Salmon Recovery (Governor's Salmon Recovery Office)**

This request is consistent with the goal of aligning hatcheries with salmon recovery. Although this is a maintenance level request and salmon committee support is typically reserved for policy level asks, the content of this request is similar to our asks that have been determined to directly support the salmon strategy. The purpose of this request is to adequately fund mass marking of hatchery fish, which is essential for salmon recovery as hatchery-origin fish must be identifiable in order to be managed and accounted for, and thereby reduce the genetic and ecological risks to wild salmon populations.

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

WDFW is requesting additional funding for labor costs, driven by a lack of personnel retention goals, and hiring process difficulties, leading because of areas like King County and Seattle minimum wage increases. It does not expand or alter the current mass marking program.

WDFW also has additional maintenance and policy level decision packages in the 2024 Supplemental budget request related to this topic:

- “9S” Equipment Replacement Costs
- “HA” Fish Health and Marking

If the additional funds are provided for the expansion of the autotrailer fleet in the “HA” decision package, then the costs for mass marking will see a corollary reduction over time, in future biennia.

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

Goods and services, Object E, total \$152,000 for FY 2024 and ongoing for the mass marking contracted labor costs. The wage rate adjustment is due to the lack of retention and recruitment to meet mass marking objectives for the Department. See the WDFW attachment (Attachment 1 – Wage Increase Impact) for details. However, the assumptions and calculations are based on the current contract. An amendment request and update could occur anytime during FY.

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

New Annual Base Funding Level: The FY 2016 mass-marking expenses (\$1,421,362) were used as the annual base funding level prior to the increases in the minimum wage from I-1433. This was the last full year prior to the increases in the minimum wage. The 2018 Supplemental budget line item “4B” Mass Marking – Minimum Wage Costs plus the carryforward level adjustment per year (\$473,000) was added, increasing the annual base to \$1,894,362 for BN 2019-21. The 2019-21 BN budget line item “11” Mass-Marking Minimum Wage plus carryforward level adjustment per year (\$236,000) was added to the annual base for BN 2019-21, increasing the annual base to \$2,130,362. The 2021-23 BN budget line item “11” Mass-Marking Minimum Wage adjustment per year (\$1,000) and the 2022 Supplemental budget (\$220,000) was added to the annual base for BN 2021-23, increasing the annual base to \$2,351,362. The BN 2023-25 budget line item “8C” Minimum Wage Adjustment (\$846,000) was added increasing the annual base to 3,197,362 used for the 2024 supplemental request.

Base Average Hours: The updated base hours correspond to the hours worked by marking staff in FY 2023 to meet the Department’s mass-marking objectives.

Hourly Wages: The mass-marking positions were paid based on the annual minimum wage increases. The calendar year (CY) 2023 minimum wage (\$15.74) was published by L&I on September 30, 2022, taking effect January 1, 2023, and can be found on their website (<https://lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/wages/minimum-wage/>). However, the Department requests an hourly salary rate over the Washington State minimum wage (\$17.74) anticipating hiring process difficulties, leading because of areas like King County and Seattle, where the minimum salary is higher (Seattle Minimum Wage CY23 is \$18.69).

Consistent with the previously reported hourly wages for CY 2023 by the private temporary labor firm, the CY 2023 wages of the Assistant Lead and Lead positions are 10% and 29%, respectively, higher than the Fish ID Technician position. Therefore, premiums are estimated Jan-Jun CY 2024 wages for the Assistant Lead and Lead positions, which are held constant through the remaining periods.

Administrative Overhead: Adding to the wage cost of the contracted staff, the private temporary labor firm charges a 40% administrative overhead of the staff wages per hour.

Seasonal Spending Trend: To translate the wage increase that takes effect in the middle of a fiscal year, the calculation of the estimated total cost for a fiscal year was split into the period before the wage increase and after. Due to the seasonality of the mass-marking work being done in Spring and early Summer, the split was based on the average expenditures from FY 2016 - 2022. WDFW estimates 20% of the mass-marking hours occurring from July through December and 80% from January through June.

Wage Increase Impact: The fiscal year estimated total cost is reduced by the annual new base (see New Annual Base Funding Level above for details) to calculate the contracted labor cost driven by the wage increase per fiscal year. The increase from base for FY 2024 is \$152,000 and \$152,000 for FY 2025 and forward.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal of a Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. The hatchery production of Coho and Chinook salmon is critical to preserve and protect threatened and endangered species, like the Southern Resident orcas (Executive Order 18-02) and perpetuating wildlife in the state. Furthermore, hatchery production is essential to manage and support recreational and commercial fishing opportunities while balancing conservation needs and meeting tribal co-management obligations.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This request supports two strategies: 1) proactively address conservation challenges, and 2) engage communities through recreation and stewardship. This request also contributes to the following performance goals:

- 90% of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.
- 25% increase in wild salmon populations.
- 80% of species of greatest conservation need have been surveyed and incorporated into strategies and plans that ensure their conservation.
- 25% increase in participation in fish and wildlife-related activities, particularly among youth, racially diverse communities, hunters, anglers, and watchable wildlife enthusiasts.
- 90% of employees report that they would recommend WDFW as a great place to work.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Produce Hatchery Fish \$89,000 General Fund-State, \$37,000 General Fund-Federal, \$26,000 General Fund-Local (GF-L) in fiscal year 2024 and ongoing.

Since it created the program in 1998, the Legislature has funded state hatcheries' mass marking with state general fund to provide recreational and commercial fishing opportunities. Mass marking contributes to the following activities:

- Produce salmon and steelhead.
- Enforce recreational fishing opportunities and regulations.
- Monitor and manage finfish populations.

Hatchery mass marking is critical to provide prey opportunities for endangered Southern Resident Orcas and recover endangered and threatened species to healthy, self-sustaining levels. Furthermore, hatchery mass marking benefits commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfills obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights in salmon and steelhead. In addition, mass marking is critical to enforce rules and regulations in fishing activities. Therefore, efficient mass marking is critical for the Department's activities enforcing fishing regulations, monitoring, and managing fish populations to conserve and protect native fish and wildlife.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

The outcome of this request will help WDFW to continue to produce hatchery fish and directly maintain our performance metrics:

- Mass-marked, hatchery-produced Chinook salmon.
- Mass-marked, hatchery-produced coho salmon.

Continuing support at its current performance level will also help maintain other related performance metrics:

- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals.
- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA.
- Mark-selective fisheries.

## Equity Impacts

### ***Community outreach and engagement:***

The Department completes community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain mass-marking functions to ensure there is not degradation services to the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying labor hours and minimum wage increase that will have a negative impact on the Departments business operations and restrict the mission critical work.

### ***Disproportional Impact Considerations:***

Without additional funding for these increased costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities, however cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as the Department is forced to shift resources.

### ***Target Populations or Communities:***

This package supports commercial and recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contributing to a significant amount of revenue to diverse communities of Washington state. Rural and geographically isolated communities in Washington will benefit from the economic opportunities provided by this package. This package also provides economic benefits for Washington residents who rely on seasonal mass-marking positions as part of their income and commercial fishing and related industries that rely on access to hatchery fish as part of their income. Without funding for this package, seasonal job offerings will be cut back, limiting economic opportunities for both parties.

Additionally, this package allows Washington's hatcheries to support local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses), provide family recreational opportunities for all Washington residents, and protect Washington's fishing cultural heritage. This cultural heritage is significant especially for tribal and rural communities in the state.



## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by ensuring WDFWs continued hatchery production of Chinook and coho salmon and associated mass marking of hatchery fish that informs adaptive management, environmental health, and mark-selective fisheries. This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations by ensuring adequate WDFW hatchery staffing capacity to maintain hatchery production and support a mark-selective fishery of coho and chinook salmon. Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, by ensuring that staffing capacity for WDFW salmon hatcheries is maintained to maximize salmon production in the face of increased labor costs. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery by continued hatchery production of Chinook and coho salmon and associated mass marking of hatchery fish that informs adaptive management, environmental health, and mark-selective fisheries.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

If this request is not funded, hatchery production will need to be reduced to levels that can be marked with existing funds, reducing the number of fish available to harvest for all fisheries, including tribal. Recreational fishing opportunities generate revenue for WDFW through license sales. Most of the salmon production at WDFW-owned hatcheries is linked to federal court orders with treaty tribes.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

The Department anticipates support from recreational, commercial, and tribal anglers. Salmon and steelhead fishing contribute a significant amount to the economy and culture of Washington.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

This budget request is an effort to align the contracted labor cost with the state's minimum wage requirements under RCW 49.46.020. Additionally, RCW 77.95.290 requires WDFW to mass-mark all juvenile hatchery Chinook and coho intended for harvest.

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[Attachment 1 - Wage Increase Impact.pdf](#)

### IT Addendum

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

No

### Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$152	\$152	\$304	\$152	\$152	\$304

### Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
(360) 870-4691  
jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Maintenance Level - RP - Reclassified IT Positions

### Agency Recommendation Summary

During the 2019-21 biennium, the state created an Information Technology (IT) Professional Structure, which resulted in some IT staff being reclassified in a lower position. Some staff could file an appeal to have the new position assignment reviewed. Some WDFW reclassified IT staff did not win their appeal. One of these employees filed an appeal against the process. The determination was sent back to WDFW, and the agency reclassified both the IT Support Technician 2 and IT Customer Support Entry positions. The agency is seeking additional funding for the difference between the prior and current reclassified positions for these employees.

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$125	\$128	\$253	\$128	\$128	\$256
Total Expenditures	\$125	\$128	\$253	\$128	\$128	\$256

### Decision Package Description

#### IT Professional Structure

The new IT classification and compensation structure was created in response to the state’s need to have a flexible and adaptable structure to keep pace with the rate of change in the technology industry. The structure effectively responds to recruitment and retention challenges within the state IT workforce. The new IT Professional Structure (ITPS) ensures organizational alignment and equity and creates a clear path for career advancement within the state.

Targeted wage increases were provided for the state’s IT workforce as a part of a state-wide initiative. IT positions across all state government were evaluated and reclassified to match job responsibilities more appropriately. Following the initial reclassification, either a staff member or their manager could file an appeal to have the new position assignment reviewed. These appeals were filed directly with State Human Resources (SHR), which had the sole responsibility of reviewing all appeals following the reclassification. Once reviewed, the staff member and the manager were notified of the decision.

One of WDFW’s staff, who did not win their appeal with SHR, filed an appeal with the Personnel Resources Board of Washington State claiming an incorrect evaluation process, which resulted in the lower classification being upheld when presented for a Director’s Review. These issues were, 1) the evaluation process between IT Professional and Paraprofessional IT Worker are different, the Position Description (PD) was not reviewed in its entirety, nor did it follow the same rigorous structure and process of evaluation for reviewing a professional position, 2) the 2017 PD was used instead of the 2019 PD. It was determined that the PD is a vital piece in this process and shows the expectation of the position and the range of duties to be performed which removes any guessing as to what should or should not be performed by whoever holds the position.

It was found that the parties must collaborate to account for an accurate PD that reflects the work done on or prior to July 1, 2019, and the Board determined there were grounds to refer this matter back to WDFW to resolve internally. WDFW has met all the requirements to develop procedures and has been released by SHR to evaluate IT positions at WDFW. The Board’s determination was sent back to WDFW in September 2022, and because of this ruling, in December 2022, WDFW reclassified both the IT Support Technician 2 and IT Customer Support Entry positions.

Because of the IT Reclass and appeals process, the agency is obligated to pay staff at a certain level and without additional funding, WDFW will have to decrease direct program services that the public expects in activities such as hatchery production, fisheries management, shellfish, public safety, conservation, hunting, and recreational activities.

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

N/A

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, total \$125,000 in FY 2024 and \$128,000 in FY 2025 for the reclassified IT staff. The following table represents the total salary and benefit increase for these IT staff members for FY 2024 and FY 2025.

*Below - breakout of salaries and benefits*

<b>2023-25 BN Reclassified IT Positions</b>			
	Salary	Benefits	Total
Total Salary and Benefits	1,834,000	330,000	2,164,000
Total After Reclassification	2,047,000	370,000	2,417,000
Requested in DP	213,000	40,000	253,000

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

N/A

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor’s Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal of Efficient, Effective & Accountable Government. This proposal aligns with the statewide initiative of the new information technology (IT) structure created in response to the state's needs to have a flexible and adaptable structure in the technology industry. The new IT professional structure ensures organizational alignment, career advancement, and equity within the state.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This decision package supports the strategic plan strategy of Model Operational and Environmental Excellence by developing measures for strengthening employee satisfaction and adopting best practices for staff retention and advancement. In addition, this proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following performance outcomes:

- 90 % of employees report that they would recommend WDFW as a great place to work

#### **Activity Inventory**

Business Management & Obligations: \$125,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$128,000 ongoing, thereafter.

An effective agency requires administrative infrastructure that supports the Department's mission, addressing the state's environmental concerns while working within the challenging sociopolitical and technology climate. The Department's business management unit supports the entire agency and meets obligations by providing agency leadership and strategy, communicating with the public and legislature, managing finance and contracts, managing human resources, and managing information technology infrastructure.

**Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal aligns with the statewide initiative of the new IT Professional Structure created in response to the state's need to have a flexible and adaptable structure in the technology industry. The reclassification of these positions ensures organizational alignment, career advancement, and equity within the state.

- This proposal aligns with the statewide initiative of the new IT Professional Structure created in response to the state's need to have a flexible and adaptable structure in the technology industry.
- The reclassification of these positions ensures organizational alignment, career advancement, and equity within the state.

**Equity Impacts**

**Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. However, this decision package is focused solely on staff that currently work for WDFW.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

This funding request is responding to a cost increase in a specific area that is required, and the bills must be paid. Without additional funding for these increased/new costs, other areas of the budget will be cut. These reductions are not directly connected to specific communities, however, cutting services and shifting resources will hinder the Department's ability to apply an equitable lens.

**Target Populations or Communities:**

Providing funding for the wage increase of these positions, because of reclassification, ensures an equitable standard of compensation at WDFW. Information Technology staff provide support to the agency which allows WDFW to uphold their mission for commercial and recreational outdoor activities throughout the state which helps contribute revenue to local businesses and communities.

## Other Collateral Connections

**Puget Sound Recovery:**

N/A

**State Workforce Impacts:**

N/A

**Intergovernmental:**

N/A

**Stakeholder Response:**

N/A

**State Facilities Impacts:**

N/A

**Changes from Current Law:**

N/A

**Legal or Administrative Mandates:**

N/A

**HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions**

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[2024 Supplemental IT Reclassified IT Positions.xlsx](#)

## IT Addendum

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

No

## Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$106	\$109	\$215	\$109	\$109	\$218
Obj. B	\$19	\$19	\$38	\$19	\$19	\$38

## Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
 (360) 870-4691  
[jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov)



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Maintenance Level - 8U - Utility Rate Adjustments

### Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) requests funding to meet increased utility costs at all facilities. Without funding to offset increased electricity, natural gas, sewer, garbage, and heating oil costs, key activities protecting Washington’s fish, wildlife, and ecosystems will decline, including salmon and trout production. Moreover, WDFW hatcheries produce fish that support Washington's tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries, contribute to recovery efforts for salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and contribute significantly to the state economy. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$109	\$109	\$218	\$109	\$109	\$218
Fund 001 - 2	\$9	\$9	\$18	\$9	\$9	\$18
Fund 001 - 7	(\$17)	(\$17)	(\$34)	(\$17)	(\$17)	(\$34)
Fund 04M - 1	\$14	\$14	\$28	\$14	\$14	\$28
Fund 098 - 1	\$1	\$1	\$2	\$1	\$1	\$2
Fund 110 - 1	\$1	\$1	\$2	\$1	\$1	\$2
Fund 110 - 7	\$12	\$12	\$24	\$12	\$12	\$24
Fund 21S - 1	\$1	\$1	\$2	\$1	\$1	\$2
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$130</b>	<b>\$130</b>	<b>\$260</b>	<b>\$130</b>	<b>\$130</b>	<b>\$260</b>
<b>Revenue</b>						
001 - 0315	\$9	\$9	\$18	\$9	\$9	\$18
001 - 0549	(\$5)	(\$5)	(\$10)	(\$5)	(\$5)	(\$10)
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$4</b>	<b>\$4</b>	<b>\$8</b>	<b>\$4</b>	<b>\$4</b>	<b>\$8</b>

### Decision Package Description

#### Detailed Package Description

Washington's facilities and hatcheries are essential to WDFW's mission to maintain fish and wildlife populations and a significant contributor to the Washington state economy. Utilities (electricity, natural gas, sewer, garbage, and heating oil) have a crucial role in the production of salmon, trout, and game fish at WDFW's 80 hatchery facilities. In addition, fish production supports tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries in Washington and recovery and conservation programs for ESA-listed fish populations.

The Department’s hatcheries and fisheries are an essential part of maintaining fish and wildlife populations in the state. One of the largest needed expenditure classes for these locations is their utilities. In Fiscal Year 2023, WDFW had \$2.89 million in utility expenditures, a 3.61% increase over the previous fiscal year’s utility expenditure. With this biennium's projected utility spending based on historical billings and no inflationary increase adjustment, the result is a projected shortfall of \$130,000 for the Fiscal Year 2024 and 2025. This funding request will allow WDFW to continue critical activities of managing habitats, maintaining current hatchery production levels, and supporting increased hatchery production requested by the Legislature.

#### Describe the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing

Without additional funding, WDFW will have to move funds from other areas to cover the essential utility costs needed to run our facilities and hatcheries. This could potentially have a negative impact on the Department's ability to maintain current production levels at hatcheries, which will adversely affect fisheries jobs and the ability to meet federal treaty obligations and damage local economic development via tourism, lodging, and recreational equipment sales tied to fishing. These impacts are far reaching; in 2020 WDFW served 772,000 recreational fishing customers, and commercial fishing is a leading contributor to the Washington seafood economy. A loss to hatchery production may impact these areas. For example, income from commercial harvesters in 2016 totaled \$243 million, while the Washington state seafood industry, including imports, generated \$2 billion in 2016 (NOAA, 2016). National Marine Fisheries Service. 2018. Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2016. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA Tech, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/fisherieseconomicsunitedstatesreport2016>

#### Describe your proposed solution. How will this purchase solve the problem?

Utility costs are not optional and needed for the proper operation of hatcheries and other WDFW facilities. WDFW facilities are often industrial complexes and incur significant utility usage and fees. Alternatives explored to lessen reliance on utilities have included hatcheries using energy-efficient lights, limiting heating during non-essential times, and recycling. While long-term options such as wind, solar, or hydropower development would lessen utility reliance and usage, these alternatives would require substantially higher capital budget funding requests.

**Describe the alternatives explored and why this option was chosen**

Not funding this request could lead to reduced fish production levels which would negatively impact the ability of WDFW to meet salmon production goals. In addition, a hatchery production decrease may lead to a loss in fishing opportunities resulting in the potential reduction of fishing license sales. This would negatively impact local economic activity in rural communities statewide that depend on fishing opportunities within their communities to generate revenue.

## Assumptions and Calculations

***Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:***

N/A

***Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:***

The attached funding model illustrates the difference between appropriated authority and current costs. In Fiscal Year 2023, WDFW utility expenditures totaled \$2.89 million, a 3.61% increase over the previous fiscal year. The model estimates the average fund split based on the last four fiscal years. The exceptions would be funds 24N and 104 as two-year averages were used due to the creation of 24N in FY22. Although utilities are assumed to remain at fiscal year 2023 levels of \$2,893,505; for fiscal year 2024 and 2025, utility expenditure authority is currently \$2,764,160 resulting in a shortfall of \$128,767 for FY24 and FY25.

See attached table (attachment 1 – 8U Utility Rate Adjustment Model) detailing past and projected expenditures, current spending authority, and calculated appropriation needs.

***Workforce Assumptions:***

N/A



## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### Strategic Framework:

#### Governor’s Results Washington Goals

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: 1) Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment; and 2) Prosperous Economy.

Producing hatchery salmon and trout helps protect marine ecosystems and support the survival of Southern Resident orcas and ESA-listed Chinook. In addition, Hatchery salmon and trout contribute to commercial and recreational fishing opportunities across the state, supporting jobs and communities that rely on the economic benefits of fishing.

#### WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan

This decision package supports the Department Strategic Plan strategy of "Proactively address conservation challenges," expanding current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish and wildlife species. In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the performance outcome:

- 25% increase in wild salmon

#### WDFW Activity Inventory

Utility costs are allocated to WDFW based on activities (See Table 1. Budget request by activity). Multiple funding sources pay for WDFW utilities. WDFW requires administrative infrastructure that successfully supports the needs of staff who perform work directly in service to the mission. The Department's business management work comprehensively supports the entire agency and meets obligations by providing agency leadership and strategy, managing finance and contracts, managing human resources, and maintaining office facilities.

In addition, WDFW hatcheries produce healthy fish to benefit the citizens of Washington State while providing conservation to natural-origin salmonids, and hatchery production is critical for fishing opportunities throughout the state. The Department operates 80 hatcheries for fish production that benefit commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfill obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights and co-manager management plans. The utilities rate adjustment and maintenance activities are necessary to keep facilities and hatcheries in good working order and meet different functions, including the entire fish production cycle.

Table 1. Budget request by activity.

Activity	Budget Request
	Fiscal Year 2023
Preserve & Restore Aquatic Habitat & Species.	\$3,000
Acquire & Manage Lands	\$49,000
Preserve & Restore Terrestrial Habitat and Species	\$0
Manage Fishing Opportunities.	\$1,000
Produce Hatchery Fish	\$36,000
Manage Hunting Opportunities	\$0
Provide & Facilitate Recreational Opportunities	\$0
Business Management & Obligations	\$41,000
Preserve & Restore Aquatic Habitat & Species	\$3,000
Acquire & Manage Lands	\$49,000
Preserve & Restore Terrestrial Habitat and Species.	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>

### Performance Outcomes:

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Indicators:

- Threatened and endangered species population improvements
- Value of commercial fishing in Washington State
- Total license sales achieved
- Number of angler days
- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA

## Equity Impacts

### ***Community outreach and engagement:***

WDFW conducts community engagement and public outreach through public engagement. The Communication divisions are committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that WDFW can maintain these functions to prevent degrading services for the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying non-discretionary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the business operations of WDFW and restrict mission-critical work.

### ***Disproportional Impact Considerations:***

This funding request is responding to the utility cost increase and budget shortfall due to this increase faced by WDFW. Without additional funding to cover these increased costs, other areas of the budget could be cut, which will cause reductions in other programs and projects currently funded. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities. However, cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equity lens as WDFW will be forced to shift resources.

### ***Target Populations or Communities:***

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support target populations such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted communities. WDFW is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems so these resources are sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities, and many others, are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents. Washington's hatcheries support recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state and contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses. This package supports the operation of Washington's hatcheries, which allows them to continue:

- Supporting local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers, and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses),
- Providing family recreational opportunities, and
- Protecting Washington's fishing cultural heritage.
- Commercial and recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods by ensuring WDFW's continued hatchery production of salmon and game fish across the state despite increased utility costs, to increase populations consistent with recovery efforts. Through these efforts this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

WDFW hatchery production is a crucial element of fisheries co-management with tribes, collaborating and working with community partners to reach WDFW conservation principles.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

WDFW hatcheries and facilities operate across the state, and WDFW anticipates support from stakeholders, which include tribes, recreational and commercial fisheries, conservation groups, and the public.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

N/A

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[Attachment 1 - 8U Utility Rate Adjustment Model.pdf](#)

### IT Addendum

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

No

### Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$130	\$130	\$260	\$130	\$130	\$260

### Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
(360) 561-5079  
jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



### Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) utilizes Department of Ecology’s (Ecology) Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) crew for monitoring of forage fish, and Ecology has notified the WDFW of a cost increase effective October 1, 2023. Forage fish are a foundation of marine food webs and several critical species spawn in nearshore habitat, increasingly at risk from shoreline development, armoring, toxic runoff, and chemical spills. WDFW is a leader in protecting forage fish species, which include herring, sand lance, smelt, and anchovy, and their habitat by documenting the location, condition, and seasonal use of spawning habitat. Funding this cost increase ensures that WDFW can maintain critical monitoring and research. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$34	\$46	\$80	\$46	\$46	\$92
Total Expenditures	\$34	\$46	\$80	\$46	\$46	\$92

### Decision Package Description

WDFW contracts with the Department of Ecology to provide Washington Conservation Corps crews to provide ongoing forage fish survey work. Forage fish are prey for salmon, seabirds, marine mammals, and other economically and culturally important species. They act as a buffer between young salmon and their predators; and they directly and indirectly support commercial and recreational fisheries in Washington State. Several species of forage fish require healthy nearshore habitat to spawn and thrive, and these habitats are often the first to be impacted by human disturbances and further perpetuated by climate change.



*Above: Researchers conducting a beach survey*



*Above: Staff conduct tagging and beach seining for smelt.*

Currently, a six-person WCC crew performs activities such as habitat surveys, sample collection and processing, lab analysis, data entry, scientific monitoring, outreach, and other related tasks. The agreement with Ecology aligns with the WCC service year, commencing on October 1 of each year, and will have a cost increase in 2023. This proposal requests ongoing funding for the WCC crew to maintain the current level of 164 days of service.

The WCC crew represents more than half of the staff currently dedicated to researching and monitoring forage fish in the Puget Sound at WDFW. They provide much-needed capacity to work on the growing list of forage fish related questions, concerns, and management demands that have outpaced the resources provided to address them.

Contracting a WCC crew costs tens of thousands of dollars less than the alternative of hiring an equivalent number of technicians and provides professional training and experience to young adults and veterans from diverse backgrounds. Many of these crew members have leveraged this experience and training into careers at WDFW and other state agencies.

## Assumptions and Calculations

### ***Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:***

From 2014 through 2021, the forage fish WCC crew had been funded through DNR's capital budget.

The legislature provided \$721,000 (FY 2022 \$313K/FY 2023 \$408K) ongoing state general funds to WDFW in the 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget in budget item "Forage Fish Spawning Monitoring, item "FF." An adjustment was made to the base budget for the 2023-25 biennium, and the total increased in year one by \$95,000, for a new ongoing total of \$816,000 (\$408K/FY). The legislative budget note stated, "Ongoing funding is provided for Washington Conservation Corps crews to continue forage fish survey work previously funded by the Department of Natural Resources."

Of this amount, \$237,000 was identified to support the WCC crew each fiscal year. Ecology agreed to provide the 6 person WCC crew for 164 days (approximately 41 weeks) to perform activities such as habitat surveys, sample collection and processing, lab analysis, data entry, scientific monitoring, outreach, and other related tasks. The agreement with Ecology aligns with the WCC service year, commencing on October 1st of each year.

### ***Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:***

The Department of Ecology notified the WDFW that the WCC crew cost will increase from \$1,240/day to \$1,520/day. For the same 164 days per year, this is an increase of \$280 per day, for a total annual increase of \$45,920. The fiscal year (FY) 2024 cost increase will be for nine months at \$34,000 and FY 2025 and ongoing will be \$46,000 in Goods and Services Contractual Services Object E, so will not be subject to WDFW agency indirect.

### ***Workforce Assumptions:***

N/A

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: 1) Prosperous Economy; and 2) Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. Forage fish are critical to support commercial and recreational fisheries in Washington State. Moreover, forage fish are essential for salmon, seabirds, marine mammals, and other economically and culturally important species.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This decision package supports the following three Department Strategic Plan priorities:

- Proactively address conservation challenges strategy while contributing data for ecoregional assessments; expanding efforts to manage at-risk fish species; providing data for the PHS portal increases ability to deliver high-level technical expertise on species and habitats; And identifying species and habitats at risk of climate disruption.
- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship strategy: Connecting with youth and young adults and the next generation to provide for emerging professional work experiences through internships and young adult employment programs; Driving community science that creates stronger awareness and stewardship of fish and wildlife while advancing agency goals; And expanding WDFW's volunteer program to advance a broader range of Department goals in concert with our partners.
- Deliver science to inform Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions strategy while pursuing opportunities to increase community science in conservation efforts.

In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance outcomes:

- 10 percent net gain in the quality and quantity of fish and wildlife habitat
- 25 percent increase in wild salmon

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Manage Fishing Opportunities: \$17,000 FY 2024, and \$23,000 FY 2025 and ongoing, General Fund State.

Preserve and Protect Aquatic Habitat and Species: \$17,000 FY 2024, and \$23,000 FY 2025 and ongoing, General Fund State.

This package supports the activities and the following supporting strategy: monitor and manage fin fish populations. Fish resources are assessed, monitored, and evaluated to ensure harvest and resource management actions are sustainable and based on sound science. The department develops and uses fish management harvest models that consider the annual variability of fish abundance to maximize recreational and commercial opportunities while minimizing risks to wild fish populations.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal will contribute to the following performance indicators:

- Priority research needs being met.
- Acres of fish and wildlife habitat being protected.

State, local, and federal agencies use the forage fish habitat map to inform habitat protection. The Forage Fish Spawning Map is provided here:

<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=19b8f74e2d41470cbd80b1af8dedd6b3>

## Equity Impacts

### ***Community outreach and engagement:***

This funding request is responding to the contract increase from the Department of Ecology. Without additional funding to cover these increased costs, other areas of the budget could be cut, which will cause reductions in other programs and projects. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities, however cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as WDFW will be forced to shift resources.

### ***Disproportional Impact Considerations:***

Monitoring and sustaining forage fish is an integral part of preserving economic and cultural opportunities for Washington residents and tribal governments. WDFW is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems so these resources are sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities, and many others, are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

### ***Target Populations or Communities:***

Forage fish sustain economically and culturally important species such as salmon, seabirds, and marine mammals, for all Washingtonians. Monitoring forage fish directly supports the availability of salmon to commercial and recreational fisheries and tribal communities in Washington. This proposal is a result of identifying non-discretionary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the business operations of WDFW and restrict mission-critical work.



## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and Monitoring and Strategy 15 Salmon Recovery and Strategy 3 Healthy shorelines by supporting WDFW and the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) to continue critical forage fish monitoring and research and collect baseline data about shoreline food webs. Through these efforts this decision package is directly aligned with Action 122, coordinate efforts to assess and report on ecosystem conditions and the effectiveness of ecosystem recovery strategies and actions by implementing key opportunity, follow, assess, and report on Puget Sound indicators, and is directly aligned with Strategy 15 Salmon Recovery climate change response key opportunity, ensure sustainable support for monitoring efforts, by providing habitat surveys, forage fish monitoring, and other tasks that directly support the forage fish vital sign and related indicators, and supporting sustainable harvest decisions and data on prey abundance for Chinook salmon.

This decision package implements the priority action, build upon recommendations of the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project to further define bottom-up and top-down food web effects on juvenile salmonid mortality in Puget Sound from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, and directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Task Force Recommendation 15, monitor forage fish populations to inform decisions on harvest and management, by assessing forage fish habitat location, condition, and seasonal use of spawning habitat.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

Ecology support's the Department's request for additional funding to pay for the WCC cost increase. We expect continued support from tribal, regional, county or city governments that use information about shoreline habitat for planning and permitting.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

We expect that stakeholders from both fishing groups and conservation organizations would support this proposal.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

This proposal helps to address Recommendation 15 from the Governor's Southern Resident Orca Task Force: "Monitor forage fish populations to inform decisions on harvest and management actions that provide for sufficient feedstocks to support increased abundance of Chinook." The Task Force identified Puget Sound-wide surveys of herring, smelt, and sand lance to map spawning habitat and determine abundance of these food sources for Chinook, and surveys conducted in conjunction with restoration and protection of forage fish spawning habitat as priorities within the recommendation.

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## IT Addendum

### ***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

No

**Objects of Expenditure**

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. E	\$34	\$46	\$80	\$46	\$46	\$92

**Agency Contact Information**

Jon Neville  
 (360) 870-4691  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



## Agency Recommendation Summary

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) needs more federal expenditure authority to carry out the Transformational Chinook Recovery in Whidbey Basin Watersheds federal grant which will result in pass through dollars to Snohomish County, Tulalip Tribes, The Nature Conservancy, and American Rivers. We are also contracting with the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) for them to manage agreements with Skagit River Systems Co-op and Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, so that they may complete habitat restoration. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

## Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 2	\$0	\$13,140	\$13,140	\$10,642	\$0	\$10,642
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$13,140	\$13,140	\$10,642	\$0	\$10,642
<b>Revenue</b>						
001 - 0315	\$0	\$13,140	\$13,140	\$10,642	\$0	\$10,642
Total Revenue	\$0	\$13,140	\$13,140	\$10,642	\$0	\$10,642

## Decision Package Description

WDFW received a federal grant for Transformational Chinook Recovery in Whidbey Basin Watersheds for \$23,782,300 from NOAA. The Department needs more federal expenditure authority to be able to carry out work towards the contract and provide pass through dollars to organizations to help with the work. This work will restore habitat for salmon and create rivers and estuaries that are more resilient to floods in a changing climate. Nature-based solutions like the ones in outlined in our plans will support our local communities for generations. If this request isn't funded, we will miss the opportunity to use federal dollars awarded to us and must resort to using state funds for the protection of endangered species; in return having to make cuts in other areas of WDFW's budget which will cause reductions in other programs and projects currently funded.

### Grant details:

#### Transformational Chinook Recovery in South Whidbey Basin Watersheds

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will restore habitat on a landscape scale within the South Whidbey Basin of Puget Sound. The Whidbey Basin contains Puget Sound's three biggest salmon producing rivers and nearly 70 percent of its remaining tidal wetlands, which salmon and steelhead rely on for spawning and rearing habitat. This work will significantly contribute to eliminating estuary habitat as a limiting factor in the recovery of threatened Puget Sound Chinook salmon and steelhead. The work will also benefit endangered Southern Resident killer whales, a NOAA Species in the Spotlight. (\$12.1 million)

#### North Whidbey Basin Chinook and Ecosystem Recovery: Skagit River Estuary

Please note: *This project was combined with the "Transformational Chinook Recovery in South Whidbey Basin Watersheds" during grant execution but is listed as separate items on NOAAs website.*

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will conduct large-scale marsh restoration in the Skagit River estuary of the North Whidbey basin in Puget Sound, building on more than two decades of NOAA-supported restoration work in the watershed. The effort is expected to significantly contribute to recovery of threatened Puget Sound Chinook and steelhead, and endangered Southern Resident killer whales, a NOAA Species in the Spotlight. (\$11.6 million)

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

N/A

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

WDFW is requesting the authority to spend funds received from this grant.

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

N/A

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### Governor's Results Washington

This request provides important support to the Governor's Results Washington Goal, Efficient Effective and Accountable Government, by increasing transparency of the department's operating budget.

#### WDFW 25-year Strategic Plan

This request is essential in implementing WDFW's Strategy: Move WDFW towards operational and environmental excellence, by increasing transparency. The appropriation authority provided by the Legislature has been determined to be too low, therefore this package asks that it be realigned to better reflect expected spending needs for the 2023-25 biennium.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

N/A

## Equity Impacts

### **Community outreach and engagement:**

WDFW completes community engagement and public outreach through public engagement. The Communication and Public Engagement divisions are committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that WDFW can maintain these functions to prevent degrading services for the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying non-discretionary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the business operations of WDFW and restrict mission-critical work.

### **Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

This funding request is responding to receiving a federal grant and without additional federal authority to cover the increased costs that come with the grant from NOAA, other areas of the budget could be cut, which will cause reductions in other programs and projects currently funded. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities. However, cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as WDFW will be forced to shift resources.

### **Target Populations or Communities:**

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support target populations such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted communities. WDFW is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems so these resources are sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities, and many others, are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Salmon Recovery by enabling WDFW to successfully implement the Federal grant, “Transformational Chinook Recovery in Whidbey Basin Watersheds.” This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy Action ID#205 Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Implement habitat restoration efforts that expand available habitat and reduce competition by restoring and expanding salmon habitat in the Whidbey Basin. This decision package is necessary to meet the Puget Sound Nearshore Restoration Program target “Secure the full funding needed to start the process-based restoration of 2,414 or more cumulative acres of PSNERP-identified nearshore habitat in Puget Sound by 2025” in the 2022-2026 Action Agenda by providing funding to advance the final restoration design and implementation of the Spencer Island Estuary Restoration project. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 1 Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas, by providing WDFW with the resources needed to manage a federal grant that will restore critical salmon habitat in Puget Sound’s three biggest salmon producing rivers.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

WDFW anticipates Tribes, local governments, and others will support the conservation and protection of endangered species and associated habitat.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

N/A

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

N/A

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

- [1 Transformational CCRWB North South project narrative.pdf](#)
- [2 Transformational CCRWB North South budget narrative.pdf](#)
- [CD450.pdf](#)

### IT Addendum

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

No

### Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$691	<b>\$691</b>	\$407	\$0	<b>\$407</b>
Obj. B	\$0	\$352	<b>\$352</b>	\$207	\$0	<b>\$207</b>
Obj. C	\$0	\$280	<b>\$280</b>	\$4,274	\$0	<b>\$4,274</b>
Obj. E	\$0	\$2	<b>\$2</b>	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Obj. G	\$0	\$20	<b>\$20</b>	\$10	\$0	<b>\$10</b>
Obj. N	\$0	\$11,411	<b>\$11,411</b>	\$5,521	\$0	<b>\$5,521</b>
Obj. T	\$0	\$384	<b>\$384</b>	\$223	\$0	<b>\$223</b>

### Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
 (360) 870-4691  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov

# Policy Level Decision Packages



Bull elk in the Kittitas Valey. Photo credit: Gentry Scott.



## Agency Recommendation Summary

The enacted 2023-25 budget reduced forest health and fuel reduction funding from \$6 million to \$4 million and moved the funding from the capital budget to the Forest Resiliency Account. This reduction presents a threat to the sustainability and momentum of the Department’s forest health program. Restoring adequate funding is critical to WDFW’s implementation of forest health and resilience, as outlined in the “All Hands, All Lands” strategy. Funding reductions jeopardize the 20-year treatment goals that keep communities safe, enhance biodiversity, maintain public working lands’ contributions to local economies, and improve public lands’ resiliency to climate change. This \$2 million request will help implement forest health treatments on more acres, cover increased fuel and infrastructure costs, cover the costs of more complex projects, and help ensure equipment safety.

## Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 25F - 1	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Total Expenditures	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000

## Decision Package Description

In the 2023-25 enacted budget (ESSB 5187.PL, Section 308, Sub-section 31) for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Legislature identified:

“\$4,000,000 of the forest resiliency account – state appropriation is provided solely to reduce wildfire risk and increase forest resiliency through fuels reduction, thinning, fuel break creation, and prescribed burning on agency lands.” The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is proposing to restore the previous funding level of \$6 million for Forest Health and Fuel Reduction activities through this supplemental request of \$2 million. This funding is critical to maintain the required pace to meet the target for treating 100,000 acres as outlined in both the 2014 Management Strategy for WDFW’s Forests, and 2020 Forest Health Strategic Plan – Eastern Washington. The current 33% funding reduction from the previous biennial budget will create outsized negative impacts on the sustainability of our forest health program due to losses in economies of scale and economic inflation.

Forest Health and Fuel Reduction funding supports forest health activities in the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. In previous budget cycles, this funding was enacted under the Capital Budget. Although capital dollars are typically provided on a one-time basis, the intent was to provide these funds ongoing in support of implementation of the 2020 Forest Health Strategic Plan – Eastern Washington, and the 2014 Management Strategy for WDFW’s Forests. The Department has successfully invested this funding each biennium since 2017-19, resulting in more than 20,000 acres of treatments that improve forest health, restore habitat, and enhance climate resiliency.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) serves residents and visitors by protecting, restoring, and enhancing the ecosystems that support fish and wildlife. WDFW manages about one million acres of land in wildlife areas across the state. Acquisition, operation, and stewardship of these lands includes forested and non-forested lands. WDFW manages about 200,000 acres of forested ecosystems, about 100,000 of which are feasible for forest health treatments. Due to the mid-elevation placement of these lands, they are critical in the overall landscape resiliency of Washington’s forests and community safety.

Forest health has been in decline for decades, both in Washington state and the western United States. Past management practices, including active fire suppression, intensive harvest in tree plantations, insect infestations and disease have resulted in significant losses in ecosystem function, health, and resiliency. While many of the lands WDFW has acquired and managed are critical ecosystems and for species of concern, they are often acquired at lower levels of ecological health and are shifting from a forest production management goal to ecosystem health goals. These forests have:

- Increased the number and severity of wildfires across the state, particularly in eastern Washington;
- Increased risk to the health and safety of communities, including life, property, and infrastructure damage or loss, and health-related effects of smoke;
- Significantly increased the risk of catastrophic fire in forest ecosystems, including species and habitats at risk of loss or extinction;



- Resulted in loss of biodiversity in forest ecosystems;
- Increased risk of water quantity and water quality impacts where areas have burned;
- Reduced resilience of forests to the impacts of climate change;
- Increased risk of forest carbon storage losses, increased greenhouse gas emissions from forest fires; and
- Increased risk to local, rural economies, which often rely on the forest and tourism sector economies for local employment and income.

With partnering federal and state agencies (including WDFW), tribes, communities, and private landowners and industry, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) responded with the 2020 Forest Health Strategic Plan – Eastern Washington, which set an ambitious goal to conduct 1.25 million acres of scientifically-sound, landscape-scale, cross-boundary management and restoration treatments in priority watersheds to increase forest and watershed resilience by 2037. This goal set forth an “All Lands, All Hands” approach to work across government agencies, tribes, and private parties to restore the health and resilience of eastern Washington forests. This decision package focuses on continuation of this strategy and the 2014 Management Strategy for WDFW’s Forests, implementing over 100,000 acres of treatments on WDFW-managed wildlife areas in eastern Washington.

WDFW-managed lands play a unique role in these strategies for resilience. These 33 wildlife areas are often at mid-elevation areas that are located between federal (e.g., U.S. Forest Service) and other state (DNR) lands, and local communities. Wildlife areas are at the urban-forest interface, which is a crucial area to manage to reduce wildfire risk to local communities. Wildlife areas are also crucial to critical species and habitat recovery, providing baseline ecological health conditions upon which investments in biodiversity and species recovery build. Although statewide in focus, a 2019 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee report by outlined:

- More than 67% of wildlife area acres are ecological systems of concern;
- Almost 75% of wildlife area acres are ecological systems especially important to Species of Greatest Conservation Need;
- More than 81 non-fish Species of Greatest Conservation Need are known to occur, or have occurred on WDFW wildlife areas;
- State and federal listing status applies to 53, and 16 species, respectively;
- Federally-listed fish species have been documented on 19 wildlife areas; and
- Federal critical habitat has been designated on 20 wildlife areas.

WDFW’s forest health and fuel reduction activities support recovery of these key species and habitats, as well as reducing the risks and building resilience. Since 2014, WDFW has completed forest health activities on about 30% of those forests identified as in need of treatment, including:

- Treating 23,218 acres;
- Thinning 8.5% of WDFW-managed forests;
- Thinning and treating 2.9% of WDFW-managed forests with prescribed fire; and
- Adding 6% to WDFW’s forested lands portfolio (often heavily harvested prior to acquisition), which sometimes require treatments.

WDFW proposes restoring the \$2 million reduction in funding in the 2023-25 enacted budget to the previous biennium funding level of \$6 million, based on the following rationale:

- Maintain existing, successful momentum toward cross-agency, landscape-level goals as outlined in plans;
- Respond to the climate and biodiversity crises, which calls for increased rather than decreased activity;
- Provide a solid foundation on which investments in climate, biodiversity, and species/habitat recovery actions are based;
- Adapt to significantly increased costs for fuel, thinning contracts and a soft timber market; and
- Align with tribal interests for water quality and quantity, salmon recovery, and harvest opportunities.

Current WDFW forest health management activities reduce fuel hazards, restore forest health, and improve ecosystems degraded by prolonged fire exclusion. As shown in the attached supporting documentation, treatments have reduced fuel loading and increased vegetative diversity.

Continued increased investment will allow the Department to maintain the following actions:

- Reduce elevated risks of insect and disease problems, especially on wildlife areas within high priority watersheds identified in the DNR 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan where landowners are strongly encouraged to actively restore forests in association with strategic, landscape-scale restoration strategies.
- Reduce elevated risks to life and property both on wildlife areas and in nearby communities where wildfire behavior would likely be severe.
- Improve habitat quality for wildlife dependent on healthy dry forests.
- Improve watershed conditions for listed salmon habitat, such as supporting a healthier hydrologic cycle, which results in improved

instream flows, as well as provide large wood for salmon recovery projects where possible.

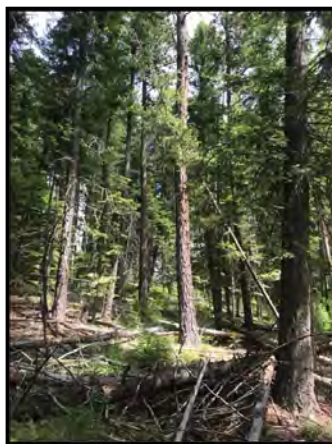
- Improve soil health with prescribed burning, which adds valuable nutrients.
- Enhance the health of fire-dependent plant species.
- Improve recreational opportunities by improving game habitat quality and reducing the likelihood of wildfire-related closures that restrict public access.

The Department developed and evaluated alternatives during the planning process for both the 2014 Management Strategy for WDFW's Forests, as well as the 2020 Forest Health Strategic Plan. The targets and timeline were negotiated results of those plans to achieve necessary protections for communities and forest health. Not acting will significantly increase wildfire risk, harming ecosystem functions, species, habitats, recreational opportunities, human health, community safety, tourism, and local, rural economies. Lack of reliable funding also puts the long-term viability of the forest health program within WDFW at risk. Qualified staff in this field are a limited pool and the Department must be able to offer long-term job security to maintain a viable team.

Several alternatives were considered to deal with the existing budget reduction, including: reduce the number of projects for this biennium; reduce the overall pace of the work; and identify or use other sources of funding, including those supported by the Legislature in the 2023-25 biennium. The Department did not select these alternatives for the following key reasons:

- In light of climate and species recovery needs, all indicators point to the strong need to increase the pace of actions, not maintain status quo, or slow the pace.
- This forest health work provides the foundational ecosystem health on which biodiversity and species or habitat recovery efforts build, and is therefore essential to ensuring the highest performance for those investments.
- WDFW has demonstrated a very strong track record of spending all funds allocated for this work in the previous biennium.
- As in other supplemental requests from this and other departments, costs have been increasing significantly for fuel, equipment, contracting, and other costs also utilized the complete forest health projects. Forecasted increases in costs of over 40% in addition to a reduction in funding provided will slow the pace of needed actions by more than 40%.
- The loss of momentum may result in loss of staff and associated institutional knowledge, as they seek work in other organizations where more active, on-the-ground work is happening.
- A reduction in active, on-the-ground forest health work impacts local, rural economies, which depend on natural resource jobs. With a slower forest economy overall, reduction in work on public lands exacerbates this slowdown.
- With a slowdown in the forest sector economy, restoration, such as forest health activities, provides for natural resource jobs. Reductions in funding for forest health activities removes this economy and job cushion, provided by the restoration economy.

Before pre-commercial thinning



Before pre-commercial thinning



After pre-commercial thinning



After pre-commercial thinning



Below photos are from Scatter Creek Wildlife Area prescribed burn that occurred in 2018.

Before: 2017



During 2018



6 months after 2019 (Camas-Purple Flowers regeneration is culturally important to Salish Tribes)



18 months after



Four years after



## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

N/A

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

Beginning in the 2021-23 biennium, WDFW received biennial appropriations of \$6 million in fund 25F Forest Resiliency Account for this work and to date the Department has spent the full appropriation. In 2023-25, funding was reduced by \$2 million, leaving a \$2 million gap.

<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Previous funding levels	\$6 million
Reduction (in 2023-25 biennium)	-\$2 million
<b>Sub-total (Funding in 2023-25 biennium)</b>	<b>\$4 million</b>
Funding gap	\$2 million

Requested funding is for contracted forest thinning and prescribed burns in object C, Personal Services Contracts. An infrastructure support rate of 36.03% is included in object T as calculated on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

This proposal doesn't including funding for additional staff. The Forest Health and Fuel Reduction program currently employs 23 FTEs. Most of the forest thinning uses contracts for field work, while the prescribed burning uses about two-thirds funding for crews, with about one-third going to contracts. Restoring the \$2 million in funding, as outlined in this supplemental request, will not impact the number of FTEs. The funding will be used for contracts that support on-the-ground activities that improve the health and resilience of forests on WDFW-managed lands. As mentioned, however, the lack of capacity for the contracts will challenge the Department's ability to retain quality staff and the institutional knowledge and momentum that they represent.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

The Forest Health and Fuel Reduction work meets the following Governor's Results Washington Goal Areas in the following ways.

- A prosperous economy: Forest health and fuel reduction work supports living-wage jobs in rural communities, from timber jobs in thinning, mills, to tourism and recreation associated with healthier wildlife areas.
- Sustainable energy and a clean environment: Projects in the Forest Health and Fuel Reduction program steward forested areas for future generations, a heritage provided to us from previous generations and thousands of years of tribal management.
- Health and safe communities: Activities in this program reduce risk to community life, property, and public infrastructure. Reduction in catastrophic fires can improve health through reduced exposure to wildfire smoke and stresses from personal loss.
- Efficient, effective, and accountable government: The Forest Health and Fuel Reduction program has effectively stewarded the funding provided across four biennia of investment – spending all of the funds made available. Further, the program seeks to implement work across the forest landscape by working with sister agencies, private landowners, and federal and tribal lands. Further, the program seeks ongoing process improvements that reduce overall costs, such as combining Executive Order 21-02 cultural resources reviews for a variety of treatments into a single, phased request for review, saving time and further demonstrating accountability of our cumulative actions on the landscape.

#### **WDFW Strategic Plan**

WDFW's strategies outlined in the 25-year Strategic Plan are outlined below, with anecdotal information about how the Forest Health and Fuel Reduction program meets the intent of those strategies.

- Proactively address conservation challenges: activities increase resilience; improve biodiversity; and work across agency lines to proactively deal with the forest health challenges. Further, work sustains local economies, which rely on timber and tourism/recreation.
- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship: Forest health work is stewardship and seeks to maintain and improve the health of WDFW-managed forested lands for future generations. WDFW uses local contractors whenever possible, contributing to a sustainable restoration economy. Activities also provide for student internships that build skills for future management and stewardship of WDFW-managed lands.
- Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions: the Forest Health and Fuel Reduction program has been at the forefront of land stewardship in the state. For example, the prescribed burn team was the first of its kind in the state to use prescribed burn techniques to improve the ecological health of forests.
- Model operational and environmental excellence: the program meets diversity and inclusion goals and requirements, including mapping out alignment of forest health activities with cultural resource needs and goals, as well as demonstrates transparency in reporting activities.

#### **Agency Activity Funding by Amount and Fund Source**

- This funding request restores \$2 million to the previous biennium funding level of \$6 million in Fund 25F – Forest Resiliency Account supporting the agency activities of Acquiring and Managing Lands and Preserve and Restore Terrestrial Habitats and Species.

**Performance Outcomes:**

Restoring the \$2 million reduction in funding in the enacted budget to the originally proposed \$6 million for the biennium, will

- Treat over 7,000 acres of high-priority forested areas through 29 forest thinning and prescribed burn projects.
- Prevent treated acres from falling below 4,000 acres and restore full thinning and prescribed burning treatments.
- Maintain activity and staff focus on on-the-ground results toward healthier forests and resilience, rather than pulling staff off to plan for future projects.
- Procure local contracts for on-the-ground activities, supporting the local restoration economy, including minority-owned businesses.

Treated forest areas demonstrate:

- Higher habitat and wildlife diversity;
- Lower risk to ecological health, and to community life, property, and infrastructure;
- Higher resilience to the effects of climate change, including impacts of wildfires; and
- Indirectly support and maintain local, rural economies, tourism, and recreation opportunities.

**Equity Impacts**

**Community outreach and engagement:**

WDFW completes community engagement and public outreach through public engagement. The Communication and Public Engagement divisions are committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that WDFW can maintain these functions to prevent degrading services for the communities we serve. This proposal is a result of identifying non-discretionary cost increases that will have a negative impact on the business operations of WDFW and restrict mission-critical work.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

If this request is not funded, other areas of the budget could be cut, which will cause reductions in other programs and projects currently funded. These reductions are not easily connected to specific communities. However, cutting services will hinder the ability to apply an equitable lens as WDFW will be forced to shift resources.

**Target Populations or Communities:**

Funding maintenance level decision packages allows WDFW to support target populations such as systemically marginalized, historically excluded, and disproportionately impacted communities. WDFW is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems so these resources are sustainable and accessible for all communities. These diverse communities, and many others, are finding that environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development can be an effective combination for promoting a healthy and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents.

**Other Collateral Connections**

**Puget Sound Recovery:**

N/A

**State Workforce Impacts:**

Restoration of the full \$6 million by funding this \$2 million supplemental budget request will not have any state workforce impacts. Current WDFW staffing costs for our forest health work is right-sized to the WDFW land base in terms of thinning and undersized in terms of the prescribed burning.

At present, 23 FTEs of state staff are supported by the Forest Health and Fuel Reduction funding. This one-time reduction in funding (at the enacted \$4 million) would not result in job losses but would reduce on-the-ground activities in favor of planning the next set of forest health treatments. Such a scope reduction could result in loss of staff and associated institutional knowledge and costs to rehire and train, as staff move to other jobs with more active work (rather than planning).

**Intergovernmental:**

This project is consistent with the integrated approach laid out in the DNR 20-year Forest Health Strategic Plan. Alternative included weighing pros and cons of prescribed burning, mechanical thinning, and general fuel load reduction strategies are identified in the DNR Strategic plan. The Department has consistently received support from tribes, conservation districts and local governments for its forest health efforts. The alternative of not acting has been deemed socially unacceptable.

Projects complete cultural resources review, prior to starting. In addition, several projects have directly benefitted tribes, such as through improving conditions for medicinal and food plants, or providing large wood for instream or beaver dam analogue projects. Overall, tribal support for projects is good, but more indirect that such as for co-management of salmon.

Projects also coordinate actions with other state agencies, where possible, taking a landscape-scale approach to the work, as outlined in the DNR 20-year Forest Health Strategic Plan. In addition, projects may share resources among agencies to achieve the best results. For example, prescribed burning may utilize a natural break on neighboring state-managed lands, which is both more effective and ecologically sensitive.

Where necessary, projects are coordinated with regional, county, or city governments, whether for permitting, awareness, or reporting. For example, we are currently participating in the Yakima Community Wildfire Protection Plan, which will coordinate activities of multiple government entities in reducing wildfire risk to the community.

### **Stakeholder Response:**

The impacts of uncharacteristic, catastrophic wildfires that this project helps prevent accumulate to all Washingtonians. A disproportionate percentage of the impacts fall to rural communities where the fires occur and disrupt ecosystem services associated with reduced ecological function (habitat, water, air) as well as economic generation from activities such as reduced recreation and tourism. The health impacts both near and far from the wildfires themselves affect low-income, underserved populations more due to lower overall health and access to quality health care. WDFW-managed lands are positioned at mid-elevation zones, closer to communities, increasing the magnitude of the positive impacts due to the lands' spatial location. Location of these lands and the restoration activities this proposal implements result in highly effective risk reduction from catastrophic wildfires' impacts to local communities, their associated economies (e.g., tourism), and impacts to human health (e.g., smoke-related respiratory problems, or mental health due to loss of home or job).

Broadly speaking, the Forest Health and Fuel Reduction program impacts, or is impacted by, a variety of stakeholder groups as below.

- Community – Local communities benefit from reduced wildfire risk, local jobs, as well as the many environmental and ecosystem benefits.
- NGOs – Several nonprofits support the work, recognizing the overall benefits of the program. However, there are some groups that are opposed to the treatments, where they view any management activities as harmful and driven by economic profits. To this point, the Department has been able to demonstrate benefits and at least gain a passive allowance for the project to proceed.
- Recreation organizations – recreation groups are supportive of management that enhances forest health and resilience, ultimately reducing the incidence of uncharacteristic large wildfires and associated smoke and disruptions to recreating opportunities.
- Other government agencies – Agency support is in favor. Using the Department's "restoration pathway", projects have considerable review among the many programs and divisions within WDFW. Externally, the projects have maintained a high level of support, and mitigation of impacts allows projects to advance toward successful completion.

Overall, the Department has consistently received appreciation and support from non-governmental organizations for our forest health program.

### **State Facilities Impacts:**

N/A

### **Changes from Current Law:**

No changes to current law are necessary to implement this work.

### **Legal or Administrative Mandates:**

RCW 77.12.880 – Wildlife Program Management: "The Department shall manage wildlife programs in a manner that provides public opportunities to view wildlife and supports nature-based and wildlife viewing tourism without impairing the state's wildlife resources." The Forest Health and Fuel Reduction program restores forest habitats that support wildlife species for viewing or other nature-based activities. Further, the restoration activities can result in safer access, where roads and trails are improved, and where risk of catastrophic wildfires is reduced.



RCW 84.34.010 – Open Space, Agricultural, Timber Lands – Current Use, Conservation Futures: “The Legislature hereby declares that it is in the best interest of the state to maintain, preserve, conserve, and otherwise continue in existence adequate open space lands for production of food, fiber, and forest crops, and to assure the use and enjoyment of natural resources and scenic beauty for the economic and social well-being of the state and its citizens [emphasis added – ed.]. The legislature further declares that assessment practices must be so designed as to permit the continued availability of open space lands for these purposes, and it is the intent of this chapter so to provide...” Funding for Forest Health and Fuel Reduction activities preserves the perpetuation of forest ecosystems, supports local nature-based economies, and provides for mental health and well-being, as demonstrated in the marked increase in use of wildlife areas during and following the pandemic.

Forest restoration, wildfire protection, and wildfire prevention require an all-lands, all hands approach. Successful delivery of the 20-year Forest Health Strategic Plan and related plans (the Wildland Fire Protection 10-Year Strategic Plan and the Washington State Forest Action Plan, as referenced in 2SHB 1168, Section 2) requires a cohesive and synergistic approach that spans state agencies and non-state partners. Extensive, long-term funding is required to meet the full breadth and depth of need and legislative intent of 2SHB 1168 and we continue to support the integrated partnership of our state agencies and strongly encourage full and robust support of associated budget requests from the Wildfire Protection, Forest Restoration, and Community Resilience Account (the Account) and other General Fund and Capital Fund sources by DNR, Washington State Parks (Parks), and Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC).

**HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions**

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

**Reference Documents**

[OtherSupportingMaterials\\_ForestHealth&FuelReduction\\_PL2024.docx](#)

**IT Addendum**

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

No

**Objects of Expenditure**

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. C	\$735	\$735	\$1,470	\$735	\$735	\$1,470
Obj. T	\$265	\$265	\$530	\$265	\$265	\$530

**Agency Contact Information**

Jon Neville  
 (360) 561-5079  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



## Agency Recommendation Summary

Salmon and steelhead have declined across most of their range, including the Olympic Peninsula, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and southwest Washington rivers. Given the cultural, economic, and ecological significance of salmon and steelhead populations, declines of these species and associated declines in angling opportunities have highlighted the need to design and fund recreational fisheries management strategies that balance angling opportunities with conservation objectives. Lack of vital information in planning and implementation of these fisheries is identified as a critical gap by numerous management partners. We propose filling this gap by adding to existing monitoring programs and expanding evaluation and management capacity. This information will inform fisheries and policy decisions focused on the conservation and management of these resources. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

## Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	18.6	9.3	18.6	18.6	18.6
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$3,231	\$3,231	\$3,072	\$3,092	\$6,164
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$3,231	\$3,231	\$3,072	\$3,092	\$6,164

## Decision Package Description

### Coastal Fishery Monitoring

River fisheries can provide important recreation opportunities for the residents of Washington. These fisheries have grown due to the reduction of marine fisheries to protect ESA-listed salmon and rockfish and an increasing population in Washington State demanding access. The increased participation in coastal river fisheries alongside growing conservation concerns has resulted in additional scrutiny of the impacts of these fisheries on salmon and steelhead populations. If not managed effectively, the fisheries could negatively impact the recovery of both salmon and steelhead. The number of salmon and steelhead that are harvested or caught, released, and subsequently die is not well assessed in Washington’s coastal rivers. Furthermore, salmon and steelhead may be affected by fisheries targeting other species or hatchery-origin fish, or as part of a catch-and-release fishery. Anytime a fish is caught and handled by an angler, even if it is released, it may later die because of that encounter.

Similar challenges were encountered in the management of Puget Sound marine fisheries with ESA listed Puget Sound Chinook salmon. In recognition of the value of the fishery and the need to meet conservation objectives, the Legislature provided funding to monitor the fishery with creel surveys, a method of contacting anglers at docks to assess the number of fish caught or released. This work allowed for fisheries to take place despite their listing and conservation status. A similar advancement in fishery management is needed for these recreational fisheries.

Monitoring of freshwater fisheries has been recognized by stakeholders as fundamentally important to maintaining or increasing fishing opportunities. WDFW has engaged numerous advisory groups, comprised of diverse representatives from conservation and recreation organizations, to provide recommendations to advance the recovery of steelhead populations and fisheries. Those recommendations include:

- Improve spawning, escapement, and productivity estimates both annually and in-season.
- Improve forecasts of future salmon and steelhead returns.
- Monitor directed fisheries on salmon and steelhead.
- Assess impacts on non-targeted species in salmon and steelhead fisheries.

We propose addressing the fundamental need to improve the management of coastal river fisheries by initiating creel surveys of anglers and estimating when, where, and how many species are encountered in those fisheries. We will also sample the catch to identify the origin (hatchery or natural), age release location based on genetics, coded-wire-tags or other marks, and the status relative to spawning. Creel results will be compared to estimates of fish detected at select sonar sites in coastal watersheds.

### Spawning Ground/Productivity

Monitoring the abundance, productivity, and life-history diversity of wild salmon and steelhead populations is an essential component of effective

fisheries management. These data are critical for forecasting future adult returns in harvest management and evaluating recovery actions. Spawning ground surveys (SGS) are an important tool WDFW needs to strengthen its understanding of the productive capacity our freshwater and marine environments provide, both in their current state and with the growing effects of climate change. The overall objective of spawning ground surveys is to help monitor status and trends of Coastal, Puget Sound, and Columbia Basin salmonid stocks. SGS are built from a series of seasonal, systematic surveys of both index and “random” stream sections for evidence of adult salmonid spawning activity. Counts of adult fish and redds (nests) are recorded, providing some of the raw material for generating spawning escapement estimates by species and stock. Escapement estimates are a major component of assessing the status (health) of each stock both annually and in-season. Spawning ground surveys will be coupled with increased use of sonar supported through this proposal.

### **Assessment and Implementation**

There are key challenges that are envisioned to be addressed with the assessment and implementation portion of the funding request. The first is to fund two Research Scientist positions that will be devoted to working with Tribal Co-managers, WDFW scientists and biologists to provide scientific rigor and analysis to the monitoring and evaluation pieces outlined previously. One of these positions will support analytical work using Sonar as a tool to evaluate fish migration and abundance in coastal systems using state of the art automated analysis programs for real-time assessment of fish abundance. The other will provide broad quantitative analysis and support in the evaluation of stocks and ensure that State and Tribal Co-managers have the necessary information to inform conservation and management decisions for salmon and steelhead populations along the coast. This also comes in the form of supporting the work by funding aging and genetic analysis within the department.

The other challenge is the broader leadership needs for the Fish Program to address emerging scrutiny of coastal salmon and steelhead populations and provide policy support to WDFW in addressing management plans with Tribal Co-managers and federal regulators. The additional positions are envisioned to complement the current regional leadership team and meet the increasing needs associated with the conservation and management of these coastal resources.

### **Addressing the Problem**

This proposal directly addresses the need for information related to the effective management of salmon and steelhead in watersheds on Washingtons Coast. Historically, these areas have been under-resourced as other geographic areas with ESA-listed stocks have been prioritized for monitoring resources. It addresses critical monitoring needs that contribute to managers understanding of species productivity, watershed habitat health, and enhances environmental modeling. Indirect monitoring approaches do not provide adequate information to inform scientists and managers on the direct effects of fisheries, climate change, and land use decisions. Implementing and enhancing sampling and monitoring of these fisheries and watersheds will fill knowledge gaps and provide accountability in decision making.

Funding of this proposal will have direct benefits to anglers, as managers are able to increase precision around angler impacts and manage opportunities based on information collected during the fishing season. This could expand fishing opportunities when in-season information suggests higher abundances, or reduce opportunities when stocks are trending lower than pre-season forecasts. The information collected also fills data gaps that have been identified by Tribal Co-managers and federal partners in relation to fisheries impacts on non-target species. The information also helps address questions around how many WDFW clients are served. Currently, fishery managers have few ways of estimating angler effort in coastal freshwater fisheries with harvest being estimated through Catch Record Cards and effort tied to total license sales. Increased freshwater monitoring will also be a vital piece of validating Catch Record Card estimates as the agency migrates to an electronic reporting system in the coming years.

The funds directed at fisheries sampling and monitoring will expand the monitoring teams that were funded in the 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget. This additional funding would add another “team” of freshwater sampling staff, including a Fish and Wildlife Biologist 3 and Fish and Wildlife Biologist 1 to oversee and implement sampling and monitoring activities. In addition, the request also funds 16 additional Scientific Technicians encompassing 64 staff months to deploy in the Hoh, Quillayute, Queets/Clearwater, Quinault, Chehalis, and Willapa river systems on the Washington Coast.

Another area of need that the proposed funding is meant to address is increased monitoring of salmon and steelhead returning to coastal watersheds. The proposal intends to add one additional Fish and Wildlife Biologist position to oversee additional work and 13 additional scientific technicians covering 28 staff months to increase the monitoring of adult returns through spawning ground surveys. This work is meant to

compliment and expand existing agency work and staffing levels already devoted to monitoring adult returns. Under current funding and staffing, numerous stretches of spawning habitat are not surveyed or are surveyed at suboptimal intervals so that the information collected is either not timely or not matched to historical intervals and assessments.

This proposal also funds oversight and leadership within the intersection of science and policy decisions related to salmon and steelhead populations. Funding for a Research Scientist 2 is proposed to work alongside Region 6 Fishery Managers, Biologists, Co-managers, and Tribal Biologists to provide scientific rigor to assessments and implementation of monitoring activities. An additional Research Scientist position is proposed to work alongside other scientists working on Sonar projects in Coastal and Puget Sound watersheds. There is an expanding need to bring expertise to WDFW in evaluating data collected from these projects and implementing their use in management and evaluation of salmon and steelhead. The funding also supports expanding demands for resource management capacity in Region 6 by adding two Fish and Wildlife Biologist 4 positions that will spread the additional workload in a large and diverse geographic region. Also, as staffing and management increase, so does the need for additional leadership and policy-level oversight of fisheries activities in the region. This comes in the form of an additional WMS position. Funding is also identified to support additional data collection with funding an IT position to continue to support increasing Fish Program data management needs. Funding is also identified for scale/aging analysis work and DNA analysis related to run reconstruction and stock composition evaluations.

### **Alternatives explored**

WDFW is currently centralizing freshwater sampling and monitoring programs to generate a consistent, scientifically defensible approach, results, and information, as well as lower costs. Centralized data systems will improve reporting and analysis requirements. Some current funding along with other onetime funding has allowed us to start this centralization process in limited areas. Additional funding would allow for expanded monitoring in more watersheds over time.

The existing resources available for coastal freshwater salmon and steelhead monitoring do not meet agency standards for conservation. As steelhead populations continue to decline, the need for base-level creel monitoring in freshwater fisheries to quantify fishery related mortality is essential for future sustainability.

## **Assumptions and Calculations**

### ***Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:***

N/A

### ***Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:***

#### **Fishery Monitoring**

Salaries and benefits for 7.3 FTE totals \$620,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2025 and ongoing. Goods and Services, object E, totals \$227,000 and includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. Object E also includes \$75,000 for helicopter survey efforts and \$40,960 for communication services (\$40/mo. x 64 staff months for 16 seasonal staff) for a data plan. \$8,000 is needed for seasonal field gear, then replacement costs of \$4,000 per FY ongoing. Seasonal gear includes waders, rain gear and boots at a cost of \$500 per person x 16 seasonal staff. Onetime funding of \$45,000 for coded wire tag wands (10 x \$4,500 each) and \$6,750 (15 x \$450 each) for purchase of iPads for data collection. Travel costs, object G, totals \$22,000. Two staff will share each vehicle, the DES agency vehicle rental of a SUV-MEDIUM-HYBRID-4X4 for a cost of \$16,096 (\$503/mo. x 32 months) and DES mileage cost of \$6,323 (\$0.19 per mile x 1,040 miles x 32 months). The WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of \$36.03% included in object T totals \$314,000.

#### **Spawning Ground**

Salaries and benefits for 5.3 FTE totals \$441,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2025 and ongoing. Goods and Services, object E, totals \$120,000 and includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. Object E also includes \$27,040 for communication services (\$40/mo. x 52 staff months for 13 seasonal staff) for a data plan. \$6,500 is needed for seasonal field gear, then replacement costs of \$3,250 per FY ongoing. Seasonal gear includes waders, rain

gear and boots at a cost of \$500 per person for 13 seasonal staff. Onetime funding of \$45,000 for coded wire tag wands (10 x \$4,500 each) and \$4,500 (10 x \$450 each) for purchase of iPads for data collection. Travel costs, object G, totals \$18,216. Two staff will share each vehicle, the DES agency vehicle rental of a SUV-MEDIUM-HYBRID-4X4 for a cost of \$13,078 (\$503/mo. x 26 months) and DES mileage cost of \$5,138 (\$0.19 per mile x 1,040 miles x 26 months). The WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of \$36.03% included in object T totals \$209,000.

**Assessment & Implementation**

Salaries and benefits for 6.0 FTE totals \$805,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2025 and ongoing. Goods and Services, object E, totals \$122,000 and includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year. Object E also includes \$60,000 for DNA genetic analysis of biological samples collected during monitoring and \$20,000 for DNA fish aging of scales and otoliths collected during monitoring activities (see table below). The WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of \$36.03% included in object T totals \$333,000.

<b>DNA Genetic Sampling and Scale Aging</b>					
<b>Watershed</b>	<b>Fin Clips for DNA Testing</b>	<b>DNA Analysis \$32 per Fin Clip</b>	<b>Scales for Aging Testing</b>	<b>Scale Aging - \$2 per Scale</b>	<b>Total Fiscal Year Cost</b>
Willapa Bay	235	\$7,520	1,250	\$2,500	\$10,020
Chehalis	235	\$7,520	1,250	\$2,500	\$10,020
Humptulips	235	\$7,520	1,250	\$2,500	\$10,020
Quinault	235	\$7,520	1,250	\$2,500	\$10,020
Queets/Clearwater	235	\$7,520	1,250	\$2,500	\$10,020
Hoh	235	\$7,520	1,250	\$2,500	\$10,020
Quillayute	235	\$7,520	1,250	\$2,500	\$10,020
Independent Streams	235	\$7,520	1,250	\$2,500	\$10,020
<b>Total per Fiscal Year</b>	<b>1,880</b>	<b>\$60,160</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$80,160</b>

**Workforce Assumptions:**

Job Classifications and the associated work for the 18.6 FTE are as follows:

Fisheries Monitoring

- 1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 3 (Bio3) – This position functions as implementation and data/estimation coordinator for freshwater fishery monitoring activities directed at salmon and steelhead under the direction of the region and in coordination with the centralized implementation team in Olympia.
- 1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 1 (Bio1) – This position functions as field data collection team lead and data stewards/coordinator. Will serve under Regional creel implementation biologist.
- 5.3 FTE Scientific Technician 2 (ST2) – 16 seasonal positions serve as fishery sampling and monitoring staff. This totals 64 staff months, as each position is four months per fiscal year.

Spawning Ground

- 1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 2 (Bio2) – This position functions as Spawning Ground field team lead and will serve under District 16 Biologist.
- 4.3 FTE Scientific Technician 2 (ST2) – 13 seasonal positions serve as spawning ground survey staff. This totals 52 staff months, as each position is four months per fiscal year.

### Assessment and Implementation

- 1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Research Scientist 1 – This position functions as an agency expert on interpretation of sonar and hydroacoustic information from studies in Coastal Watersheds.
- 1.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Research Scientist 2 – This position provides long term research and biometric support for monitoring and assessment of Salmon and Steelhead populations originating from Coastal watersheds.
- 2.0 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 4 – These positions are meant to add capacity to existing Region 6 biological staff to support increased workloads and oversight of fisheries management in Region 6.
- 1.0 FTE IT Data Management – Journey Level – Position supports Fish Program data systems and management of increased data collected in multiple districts. Field data collection is anticipated to be electronic. Supports electronic sampling coordination and data systems maintenance.
- 1.0 FTE Washington Management Service, Band 2 – Adds leadership capacity and policy oversight for additional work in Region 6.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor’s Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: 1) Prosperous Economy; and 2) Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. This proposal is fundamental to the harvest management and recovery of Salmon and Steelhead on the Washington Coast. In addition, the enumeration of migrating fish and origin identification is crucial for conservation and recovery of populations.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This decision package supports the following Department Strategic Plan priorities:

- Proactively Address Conservation Challenges, implementing a co-manage habitat Workplan to improve salmon and steelhead populations that are limiting fishing opportunities, and monitoring programs to minimize risk to wild stocks.
- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship, delivering hunting and fishing customer service, including needs for predictability, as the Department continues to focus on maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations.
- Deliver science that informs Washington’s most pressing fish and wildlife questions, developing an agency-level data management system to provide better science for agency decision-making and constituent outreach.

In addition, this proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve two 25-year Performance goals:

- 25 percent increase in wild salmon populations
- 90 percent of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Manage Fishing Opportunities: \$3,231,000 and 18.6 FTE in FY 2025 General Fund – State.

This package supports the Manage Fishing Opportunities activity and applicable supporting strategy: monitor and manage finfish populations. The Department assesses, monitors, and evaluates finfish populations to ensure harvest and resource management actions are sustainable and based on sound science. The Department staff conduct field investigations to count the number of juveniles migrating to saltwater and adults returning to freshwater, conducts tests fisheries to verify abundance assumptions, and uses fish management harvest models to maximize recreational and commercial opportunities while minimizing risks to wild fish populations.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following performance indicators:

- Priority research needs being met.
- Threatened and endangered species population recovery.
- Number of angler days.

Additional expected outcomes from increased monitoring are renewed or increased recreational fishing opportunities in the systems that we monitor, a better understanding of fishery impacts on protected resources and hatchery production. The proposal maximizes existing facilities and information technology structures within the agency to reduce the overall costs of implementing a monitoring program.

## Equity Impacts

### **Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions and throughout the agency. The Department committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is not degradation services to the communities we serve. During budget development the Department shared a preliminary briefing on budget proposals with Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

### **Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

The Department is committed to its mission to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems to be sustainable and accessible for all communities.

### **Target Populations or Communities:**

According to the Washington State Department of Health, access to outdoor recreation spaces is important to health equity. In addition, freshwater fisheries provide economic benefits to rural Washington communities where recreational salmon and steelhead fishing often occurs. Freshwater river fisheries also provide valued recreational opportunities for residents throughout the Puget Sound basin and Washington Coast. Monitoring coastal salmon and steelhead directly supports the availability of these fish to recreational fisheries and tribal communities in Washington. Monitoring and sustaining anadromous fish are an integral component of preserving economic and cultural opportunities for Washington residents and native tribes.

## Other Collateral Connections

### **Puget Sound Recovery:**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Salmon Recovery by improving capacity to monitor Chinook salmon and steelhead populations, habitats, and the factors limiting survival of fish at different life-stages in Puget Sound watersheds around the Olympic Peninsula and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. [C(1) [C(2) [NJL(3) [L(4) [C(5) This decision package is directly aligned with Strategy 15 Action 206, ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights, by implementing key opportunity promote and improve accurate and timely data reporting and availability, and improve monitoring for in-season management, by increasing WDFW's capacity to collect, analyze, and communicate information about salmon and steelhead stocks. Through these efforts this decision package additionally implements Action Agenda Strategy C Research and Monitoring and directly implements Puget Sound Salmon Strategy Recommendation to Strengthen Science, Monitoring, and Accountability, by expanding critical research and monitoring programs for salmonid species necessary for management and recovery. This decision package fulfills the Support Continuity criteria from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by continuing critical population monitoring programs.

### **Salmon Recovery Office**

Directly implements a recommended action in the 2021 Governor's salmon strategy update.

This project directly supports salmon recovery and conservation efforts by investing critical monitoring dollars into salmon and steelhead populations that have historically received little investment, but support some of the most renowned fisheries in the world. This investment will

provide rigorous information about the viability of these populations and help facilitate responsible fisheries. Populations on the Washington Coast have been under increasing pressure from climate change, expanding human population, and deleterious ocean conditions. Low abundance of adult salmon and steelhead have led to unprecedented closures of fisheries and petitions to list Chinook salmon and steelhead for protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

**State Workforce Impacts:**

This proposal will add no less than 15 permanent, seasonal, or non-permanent staff to the Association of Fish and Wildlife Professionals and one position to Washington Federation of State Employees.

**Intergovernmental:**

Increased freshwater monitoring of state fisheries is a long-standing desire among Tribal Co-managers. As salmon and steelhead populations continue to decline, having a fuller understanding of the impacts of freshwater fisheries will inform decision making when crafting fishing opportunities for all users. Support for increased monitoring efforts will be strong from Tribal Co-managers and federal partners overseeing implementation of fishery and hatchery management plans for conservation.

**Stakeholder Response:**

This request comes from recommendations of the Ad-Hoc Coastal Steelhead Advisory Group, which included Department staff, sport anglers, business owners, conservationists, research scientists, fishing guides, and others interested in Steelhead recovery. All interested constituents will support monitoring and evaluation programs that enable both conservation of populations and fishing opportunities.

Outreach and involvement of constituents participating in these fisheries is high. Fishing constituents will be supportive of efforts that lead to increased opportunities on gamefish and salmon due to increased monitoring.

**State Facilities Impacts:**

It is anticipated that positions can be absorbed into existing facilities.

**Changes from Current Law:**

N/A

**Legal or Administrative Mandates:**

N/A

**HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions**

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

**IT Addendum**

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

No

**Objects of Expenditure**

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$1,333	<b>\$1,333</b>	\$1,333	\$1,333	<b>\$2,666</b>
Obj. B	\$0	\$533	<b>\$533</b>	\$533	\$533	<b>\$1,066</b>
Obj. E	\$0	\$469	<b>\$469</b>	\$353	\$368	<b>\$721</b>
Obj. G	\$0	\$40	<b>\$40</b>	\$40	\$40	<b>\$80</b>
Obj. T	\$0	\$856	<b>\$856</b>	\$813	\$818	<b>\$1,631</b>





## Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns and/or operates 80 hatcheries statewide, many of which are aging. Years of deferred critical infrastructure maintenance has created unsafe conditions for staff and the public and increases the risk of a catastrophic fish loss due to critical equipment failure. New funding will allow WDFW to begin working toward a more proactive approach to critical infrastructure maintenance, which focuses on preventative maintenance, resulting in WDFW better safeguarding our facilities and fish stocks. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

## Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	7.5	3.75	7.5	7.5	7.5
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$1,869	\$1,869	\$1,869	\$1,869	\$3,738
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$1,869	\$1,869	\$1,869	\$1,869	\$3,738

## Decision Package Description

WDFW Capital and Asset Management Program (CAMP) staff provide engineering, construction, and maintenance services for all WDFW hatchery facilities. Currently, CAMP lacks adequate resources to maintain our hatchery facilities and their aging infrastructure properly and safely. Lack of adequate resources is evident in the 1,323 work orders currently open for hatchery facilities, with some dating back as many as three years. Additionally, we have found our open work orders do not accurately capture all pending projects as hatchery staff often do not enter all requests into the system as they know their non-emergent, but still necessary, tasks cannot be addressed in a timely manner due to resource constraints. Inadequate staffing has forced the Department into a position where work orders are triaged and only emergencies can be addressed, causing the backlog of necessary but non-emergent work. The level of hatchery infrastructure funding has prevented WDFW from properly maintaining our vital hatchery facilities which could ultimately lead to another catastrophic fish loss like the one experienced in 2018 when a back-up generator failed, leading to the loss of over six million hatchery Chinook fry.

It is imperative to have consistent, timely, and proper maintenance and repair of hatchery infrastructure as it enables the continuation of efficient and effective operations and extends the useful life of essential components needed to maintain current production levels. The critical infrastructure components at WDFW hatchery facilities needing the most immediate attention include reliable water supply lines, the ability to quickly repair and replace essential inline equipment and electrical services, repairs to aged rearing ponds to reduce fish loss, and the maintenance and repair of hatchery formalin systems thereby providing a safe and hazard-free chemical storage and dispensing process.

Current staffing, equipment, and material resources are insufficient to sustain an adequate maintenance program for critical hatchery infrastructure. Many of our hatcheries are well over 50 years old and are rapidly degrading and in need of repairs. Current maintenance resources are not enough to keep up with routine, urgent, and now some emergent work. To mitigate the risk of another catastrophic fish loss and potentially unsafe working environments for WDFW staff, additional resources and maintenance staff support are needed. The requested additional funding will enable WDFW to hire additional staff, purchase needed equipment, and secure the material inventory required to begin to alleviate the ever-growing maintenance obligations CAMP is facing at hatchery facilities.

### Critical Infrastructure Preventative Maintenance Team

This package will fund 7.5 FTE per fiscal year (breakdown below), creating a preventative maintenance team capable of travelling statewide to 80 hatchery facilities to identify and fix critical infrastructure issues before they become problematic or potentially catastrophic. A dedicated preventative maintenance team would allow CAMP to get ahead of hatchery infrastructure issues and begin reducing the current backlog of open hatcheries maintenance work orders. Examples of preventative maintenance that would mitigate the need for larger more emergent repairs if delayed, would be a leaking roof that if not repaired leads to larger structural repairs, or old electrical wiring that could short out and cause a fire which could potentially burn down an entire facility or employee residence.

### Water Supply

Water supply is paramount to hatchery production. Reliable, efficient, and well-maintained water supply lines are the foremost infrastructure component CAMP needs to be able to address in a proactive preventative manner. If water supply line maintenance continues to be addressed

only as emergent situations arise, hatchery production could be at risk in the event of total supply line failure. Increased operating funding dedicated to water supply lines will allow CAMP to replace identified failing supply line piping and pumps, as well as preventatively maintain current pumps and piping ensuring the consistently needed water supply is available and dependable at WDFW hatcheries.

### **Inline Equipment Replacement**

Maintaining and retrofitting pumps, emergency generators and water flow alarms is a constant preventative maintenance requirement to avoid production failures.

### **Facility Sustainment**

Routinely scheduled preventative maintenance ensures that infrastructure components are operating properly, and early detection of any issue is critical to avoid urgent and emergency repairs. A preventative maintenance team would assist with this by thoroughly inspecting each facility, identifying components needing attention and making necessary corrections/repairs before they become a major, costly issue. Due to the current lack of funding, small issues that are not promptly identified or addressed become larger, more costly, problems often necessitating a replacement project rather than a simpler and more economic repair project. Often, parts incorporated in these now emergent and time sensitive projects are not the correct parts, but ones that will work for the time being which leads to additional pressure on other areas in the system.

### **Electrical Upgrades**

Operating funding dedicated to electrical upgrades is needed to address immediate concerns at many facilities. Replacing old electrical panels and wiring mitigates the potential for fires, and the currently seen equipment malfunctions, due to improper voltage. Needed electrical upgrades include installing GFCI outlets at many facilities and complete rewiring at several of the oldest hatchery facilities to reduce risk to staff and infrastructure. After all facilities and residences receive the most emergent electrical upgrades (mitigation efforts), funding would then shift to assist in other electrical upgrade effort areas, such as: running electrical to standalone structures, burying lines, assisting with needed network updates, and retrofitting energy-efficient solutions.

### **Formalin System Maintenance**

The formalin distribution systems installed in hatcheries requires consistent, ongoing maintenance to ensure proper functionality and staff safety. Formalin is used to prevent disease and promote fish health. The chemicals used in formalin are considered a hazardous substance and proper maintenance ensures worker safety and overall useful life of the system.

### **Alternatives Explored and Consequences of Not Funding**

The only alternative is for CAMP to continue operations as usual and continue to fall further behind in needed hatchery critical infrastructure maintenance. Last biennium, WDFW received from the legislature \$1 million dollars (onetime funding) from the 2021-23BN Operating Budget for hatchery maintenance. However, with the loss of these funds as of July 2023, the list of needed critical infrastructure maintenance activities will stagnate and a new backlog will grow.

Funding this package will help CAMP begin to develop a dedicated hatchery critical infrastructure maintenance team able to travel the state to identify and correct issues as they arise, thereby minimizing the chance of initially benign maintenance issues escalating into larger scale problems. Without a way to routinely address critical infrastructure maintenance, WDFW greatly increases the chance of another catastrophic fish loss as was seen in 2018 when over 6 million Chinook fry were lost due to a back-up generator failing during a power outage. The cause of the equipment failure may very well have been identified and corrected prior to the power outage if routine testing and preventative maintenance had been able to occur.

### **Connections to Governor's Salmon Recovery**

This decision package supports salmon recovery by ensuring the safe and efficient operation of WDFW hatcheries, including:

- Timely and proactive maintenance of hatcheries will reduce the chance of a catastrophic failure due to aging infrastructure and deferred maintenance. In the past such events have led to water leaks or leakage of other material. The threat of leaking effluent is relevant for the fish in the hatchery and wild fish occupying adjacent rivers and streams.
- Proper maintenance of hatcheries will also maximize the performance of relevant hatchery programs. This may include improved culture of ESA-listed salmon and steelhead in conservation hatchery programs, better fishway and outfall trap performance that will better meet conservation objectives related to hatchery fish on the spawning grounds, and more efficient use of resources which may help reduce

environmental impacts of hatcheries on adjacent waterways.

- Well maintained hatcheries will also be more likely to meet their program goals around fish production and fish quality than facilities that are in disrepair. These outcomes are essential to meeting conservation, harvest, and orca-driven goals related to hatchery production.

## Assumptions and Calculations

### ***Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:***

N/A

### ***Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:***

#### **Water Supply Totals \$317,000**

Ongoing costs beginning in fiscal year 2025 total \$317,000. Included in this total is \$119,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 1.2 FTE while Goods and Services, object E, totals \$28,000 and is comprised of needed items such as steel and PVC pipes, junctions, components for existing pump repair, etc., as well as \$8,400 per fiscal year for standard employee costs. Travel costs, object G, totals \$37,000 (detail below) while Equipment needs, object J, totals \$49,000 per fiscal year and includes items such as new pumps and needed tools. The WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate 36.03% included in object T totals \$84,000.

#### Water Supply Travel Costs - \$37,000

Travel costs for CMPS & MM2 in fiscal year 2025 totals \$37,052.16, then ongoing each subsequent fiscal year. Following the standard CAMP in-state travel schedule of four days per week travel status with three overnights per employee, team is assumed to travel 24 weeks per year for total hotel and per diem costs of \$27,168 and assumed to travel 572 miles roundtrip for a total mileage cost of \$9,884.16.

Total overnight and per diem costs total \$27,168. Three overnight stays per FTE with four days per diem travel status rates total \$1,132 per week [(\$110/night hotel x 3 overnights x 2 FTE = \$660) and (\$59/day per diem x 4 days travel status x 2 FTE = \$472)] x 24 weeks.

Total vehicle costs for shared agency owned F350 using CAMP billable mileage rate for CMPS & MM2 totals \$9,844.16 (\$.72/mile x 572 miles x 24 trips).

#### **Inline Equipment Replacement Totals \$318,000**

Ongoing costs beginning in fiscal year 2025 total \$318,000. Included is \$110,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 1.2 FTE while Goods and Services, object E, totals \$58,000 and is comprised of needed items such as PVC pipes, valves, emitters, containment items, pump parts and diagnostic tools as well as \$8,400 per fiscal year for standard employee costs. Travel costs, object G, totals \$37,000 (detail below) while indirect ineligible Equipment needs, object J, totals \$39,000 per fiscal year. The WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate 36.03% included in object T totals \$74,000.

#### Inline Equipment Replacement Travel Costs - \$37,000

Travel costs for CT and MM2 in fiscal year 2025 totals \$37,052.16, then ongoing each subsequent fiscal year. Following the standard CAMP in-state travel schedule of four days per week travel status with three overnights per employee, team is assumed to travel 24 weeks per year for total hotel and per diem costs of \$27,168 and assumed to travel 572 miles roundtrip for a total mileage cost of \$9,884.16.

Total overnight and per diem costs total \$27,168. Three overnight stays per FTE with four days per diem travel status rates total \$1,132 per week [(\$110/night hotel x 3 overnights x 2 FTE = \$660) and (\$59/day per diem x 4 days travel status x 2 FTE = \$472)] x 24 weeks.

Total vehicle costs for shared agency owned F350 using CAMP billable mileage rate for CT & MM2 totals \$9,844.16 (\$.72/mile x 572 miles x 24 trips).

#### **Facility Sustainment Totals \$598,000**

Ongoing costs beginning in fiscal year 2025 total \$598,000. Included is \$263,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 2.8 FTE while Goods and Services, object E, totals \$100,000 and is comprised of needed tools such as pneumatic compressors, nail guns, saws, socket sets, diagnostic tools, and materials such as siding, windows, concrete, roofing materials, flooring, and caulking. Also included in object E is \$19,600 per fiscal year for standard employee costs. Travel costs, object G, totals \$77,000 (detail below) while indirect the WDFW federally approved

infrastructure and program support rate 36.03% included in object T totals \$158,000.

Facility Sustainment Travel Costs - \$77,000

Travel costs for four FTE team in fiscal year 2025 totals \$76,849.92, then ongoing each subsequent fiscal year. Following the standard CAMP in-state travel schedule of four days per week travel status with three overnights per employee, team is assumed to travel 24 weeks per year for total hotel and per diem costs of \$76,849.92 and assumed to travel 572 miles roundtrip, two vehicles, for a total mileage cost of \$22,513.92. Total overnight and per diem costs total \$54,336. Three overnight stays per FTE with four days per diem travel status rates total \$2,264 per week [(\$110/night hotel x 3 overnights x 4 FTE = \$1,320) and (\$59/day per diem x 4 days travel status x 4 FTE = \$944)] x 24 weeks.

Total vehicle costs for F350 and F550 using CAMP billable mileage rates in fiscal year 2025 totals \$22,513.92 [(F350 - \$.72/mile x 572 miles = 411.84 x 24 trips = \$9,884.16) plus (F550 - \$.92/mile x 572 miles = 526.24 x 24 trips = \$12,629.76)].

**Electrical Systems Totals \$403,000**

Ongoing costs beginning in fiscal year 2025 total \$403,000. Included is \$146,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 1.5 FTE while Goods and Services, object E, totals \$51,000 and is comprised of needed tools such as diagnostic equipment, air powered screwdrivers, and electrical supplies such as conduit, wiring, sockets, fuses, and fixtures. Also included in object E is \$10,500 per fiscal year for standard employee costs. Travel costs, object G, totals \$37,000 (detail below) and capitalized Equipment costs, object J, total \$85,000 and includes major electrical components to include transfer switches and new transformers. The WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate 36.03% included in object T totals \$84,000.

Electrical Systems Travel Costs - \$37,000

Travel costs for two Electricians in fiscal year 2025 totals \$37,052.16, then ongoing each subsequent fiscal year. Following the standard CAMP in-state travel schedule of four days per week travel status with three overnights per employee, team is assumed to travel 24 weeks per year for total hotel and per diem costs of \$27,168 and assumed to travel 572 miles roundtrip for a total mileage cost of \$9,884.16.

Total overnight and per diem costs total \$27,168. Three overnight stays per FTE with four days per diem travel status rates total \$1,132 per week [(\$110/night hotel x 3 overnights x 2 FTE = \$660) and (\$59/day per diem x 4 days travel status x 2 FTE = \$472)] x 24 weeks.

Total vehicle costs for shared agency owned F350 using CAMP billable mileage rate for two Electricians totals \$9,844.16 (\$.72/mile x 572 miles x 24 trips).

**Formalin Systems Totals \$233,000**

Ongoing costs beginning in fiscal year 2025 total \$233,000. Included is \$78,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 0.8 FTE while Goods and Services, object E, totals \$55,000 and is comprised of items to repair formalin system such as pumps, electrical components, pvc piping, valves, emitters, heated blankets, and containment items. Also included in object E is \$5,600 per fiscal year for standard employee costs. Travel costs, object G, totals \$37,000 (detail below) the WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate 36.03% included in object T totals \$62,000.

Formalin Systems Travel Costs - \$37,000

Travel costs for CMPS and MM2 in fiscal year 2025 totals \$37,052.16, then ongoing each subsequent fiscal year. Following the standard CAMP in-state travel schedule of four days per week travel status with three overnights per employee, team is assumed to travel 24 weeks per year for total hotel and per diem costs of \$27,168 and assumed to travel 572 miles roundtrip for a total mileage cost of \$9,884.16.

Total overnight and per diem costs total \$27,168. Three overnight stays per FTE with four days per diem travel status rates total \$1,132 per week [(\$110/night hotel x 3 overnights x 2 FTE = \$660) and (\$59/day per diem x 4 days travel status x 2 FTE = \$472)] x 24 weeks.

Total vehicle costs for shared agency owned F350 using CAMP billable mileage rate for CMPS & MM2 totals \$9,844.16 (\$.72/mile x 572 miles x 24 trips).

**Workforce Assumptions:**

**Water Supply**

0.5 FTE CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE PROJECT SUPERVISOR (CMPS) – One CMPS to plan, organize, and oversee water supply maintenance. Obtain needed permits and safety plans for projects and coordinate with facility staff to ensure they prepare location for work.

0.7 FTE MAINTENANCE MECHANIC 2 (MM2) – One MM2 to assist CMPS with implementation and completion of on location work.

**Inline Equipment Replacement**

0.5 FTE CONTROL TECHNICIAN (CT) – One CT to inspect, test, service, maintain and repair various mechanical, electronic, pneumatic, and electrical control systems on apparatuses such as heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, or refrigeration systems; uninterruptible power systems, fire alarm systems, and water supply systems. Install, maintain, calibrate, and operate equipment to monitor temperatures, water flow usage, and equipment status in various buildings, facilities, or grounds.

0.7 FTE MAINTENANCE MECHANIC 2 (MM2) – One MM2 to assist CT with implementation and completion of on location work.

**Facility Sustainment**

0.3 FTE CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE PROJECT SUPERVISOR (CMPS) – One CMPS to plan, organize, and oversee assessment of and work on needed facility repairs. Obtain needed permits and safety plans for all identified projects and coordinate with facility staff to ensure they prepare location for work.

1.0 FTE CARPENTER LEAD (CL) – One CL to plan for, inspect, and troubleshoot the integrity of our wooden structures focusing on finding evidence of leaks, dry rot, serviceability of support structure and siding. When these conditions are identified this employee will fix or repair these conditions or submit the information for a Statement of work for a contract if it requires a public works contract.

0.5 FTE ELECTRICIAN – One Electrician to analyze, troubleshoot and examine electrical boxes and existing wiring at out fish facilities. When old electrical wiring (knob and tube), non-standard voltage or inadequate breaker boxes or switches are found then they will be replaced.

1.0 FTE MAINTENANCE MECHANIC 2 (MM2) – One MM2 to assist CMPS with implementation and completion of on location work.

**Electrical Systems**

1.5 FTE ELECTRICIAN - One full-time and one part-time Electrician to analyze, troubleshoot and examine electrical boxes and existing wiring at out fish facilities. When old electrical wiring (knob and tube), non-standard voltage or inadequate breaker boxes or switches are found then they will be replaced.

**Formalin Systems**

0.2 FTE CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE PROJECT SUPERVISOR (CMPS) – One CMPS to plan, organize, and oversee assessment of and work on needed facility repairs. Obtain needed permits and safety plans for all identified projects and coordinate with facility staff to ensure they prepare location for work.

0.6 FTE MAINTENANCE MECHANIC 2 (MM2) – One MM2 to assist CMPS with implementation and completion of on location work.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve two Results Washington goals: 1) Prosperous Economy; and 2) Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. This proposal is fundamental for the Department to continue hatchery operations, preventing any possible fish production disruptions, loss of ESA listed stock, Southern Resident Killer Whale prey production, and supporting a vibrant recreational and commercial fishing industry, and it respects our State's government-to-government relationship with Tribes by supporting their harvest opportunities.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This decision package directly supports the Department's 25-Year Strategic Plan strategy to "Proactively address conservation challenges", by maintaining the statewide hatchery production goals and minimizing the risk for infrastructure failure and catastrophic loss of fish. This proposal also aligns with the strategy to "Engage communities through recreation and stewardship", by again maintaining statewide hatchery production goals to sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations, supporting the recreational and commercial fishing industries.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Produce Hatchery Fish 7.5 FTE \$1,869,000 in fiscal year 2025 then ongoing, General Fund State.

This package supports our activity inventory item "Produce Hatchery Fish" and applicable support strategies:

- Produce salmon and steelhead.
- Build and maintain hatcheries.

The Department owns and/or operates 80 hatcheries for fish production that benefit commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfill obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights. Production at hatcheries is conducted consistent with ESA requirements and hatchery reform goals.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve two 25-year performance goals:

25 percent increase in wild salmon populations

90 percent of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.

Maintaining and updating old and deteriorating hatchery facilities is the primary goal of this decision package. This proposal supports the agency's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA
- Salmon hatchery recommendations
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals
- Number of angler days
- Percentage of assets maintained to safety standards

## Equity Impacts

### ***Community outreach and engagement:***

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is not degradation services to the communities we serve. During budget development the Department shared a preliminary briefing on budget proposals with Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

### ***Disproportional Impact Considerations:***

It is expected that there are few, if any, disproportionate impacts from this proposal. However, if this proposal does not receive funding, there could be disproportionate impacts to those who rely on hatchery fish for their subsistence, economic welfare, and recreation if hatchery fish become ill and WDFW does not have enough staff to thoroughly address the issue. When that happens, there are fewer fish available for tribal fishing, along with commercial and recreational fishing. Funding this proposal will help ensure tribal treaty rights, subsistence fishing, and protect treaty resources.

### ***Target Populations or Communities:***

Rural and geographically isolated communities in Washington will significantly benefit from the economic opportunities in commercial fishing. Recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to rural businesses. Tribal fisheries will benefit from the continued production of healthy hatchery fish from well-maintained facilities.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Salmon Recovery by supporting continued maintenance and operation of WDFW's 80 hatcheries statewide and in the Puget Sound region to maintain fish production (including salmon) and limit mortality to support salmon recovery and harvest. Through these efforts this decision package directly supports Action 205, increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, by implementing key opportunity, continue to implement increased state and tribal hatchery production to support prey availability for Southern Resident Orca.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods by ensuring WDFW has capacity to provide hatchery produced fish populations for recreational anglers and other harvest and cultural practices for residents in Puget Sound and is indirectly aligned with the Action 89, restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts, by supporting WDFW's fish hatchery production (including salmon) and preventing loss of fish.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce Recommendation 6, significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans, and the Endangered Species Act, by increasing or maintaining WDFW's hatchery salmon production through increased infrastructure maintenance and safety. Through these efforts this decision package indirectly supports Salmon Strategy Recommendation 5, align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery and the secondary criteria: support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

WDFW hatchery production levels are a crucial element of fisheries co-management with tribes, in addition to collaborating and working with community partners to reach Department conservation principles. We anticipate that our partners will be supportive of this request. Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission is also in support of measures taken to maintain our critical infrastructure to sustain fish health.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

Fishing constituents will be supportive of maintenance efforts to sustain salmon and steelhead production levels. WDFW risks losing the support of the recreational and commercial fishers if Hatcheries operate across the state, providing recreational, and commercial fishing opportunities for residents, tourists, and conservation groups. We anticipate support for this request from our stakeholders.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

The new staff will have an assigned duty station at the Lacey Construction Shop. These positions will be absorbed into existing facilities, particularly with the advancement of agency-wide telework options so there is no increased workplace needs.

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

N/A

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.



### IT Addendum

***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

No

### Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$506	<b>\$506</b>	\$506	\$506	<b>\$1,012</b>
Obj. B	\$0	\$210	<b>\$210</b>	\$210	\$210	<b>\$420</b>
Obj. E	\$0	\$293	<b>\$293</b>	\$293	\$293	<b>\$586</b>
Obj. G	\$0	\$225	<b>\$225</b>	\$225	\$225	<b>\$450</b>
Obj. J	\$0	\$173	<b>\$173</b>	\$173	\$173	<b>\$346</b>
Obj. T	\$0	\$462	<b>\$462</b>	\$462	\$462	<b>\$924</b>

### Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
(360) 561-5079  
jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



## Agency Recommendation Summary

As Washington’s wolf population continues to grow, the potential for human-wolf interactions and conflicts will likely increase. WDFW needs the resources to address emerging human-wolf conflict in areas outside of the 4 northeast counties where conflict reduction funding has been primarily focused. Wolf-livestock conflict is expected to expand over a larger geographic area as wolf populations recover and spread throughout Washington. Historical data in the western states has shown approximately 15-20% of wolf packs may be involved in conflict. For these reasons, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW, the Department) requests that current wolf conflict reduction funding be increased to cover existing costs; be extended to the second fiscal year of the biennium; and be ongoing for outlying years.

## Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$303	\$404	\$707	\$404	\$404	\$808
Total Expenditures	<b>\$303</b>	<b>\$404</b>	<b>\$707</b>	<b>\$404</b>	<b>\$404</b>	<b>\$808</b>

## Decision Package Description

### The Problem

As wolves recover and their population expands over a larger geographic area, conflict with livestock may occur in new and/or unexpected areas of Washington. WDFW has found that early and sufficient implementation of non-lethal deterrence measures helps reduce risks to people and property and can result in fewer wolf removals. Range riding is one of the most critical non-lethal measures used to mitigate wolf-livestock conflict, but also one of the most expensive (see Wolf-Livestock Conflict Deterrence Proposed Rule: Small Business Economic Impact Statement, 2022). As wolves spread across the recovery zones, conflict between humans, domestic animals, and wolves are expected to increase over a wider area. There is also a greater expectation that range riding will be implemented where needed.

The 4 northeast counties of the state have historically had proviso appropriations to cover costs of conflict reduction to support wolf recovery efforts. In fiscal year 2024, the legislature provided \$100,000 for conflict reduction in the other 35 counties, but this funding was not extended to fiscal year 2025 or beyond. WDFW’s historical non-lethal wolf/livestock conflict deterrence expenditures indicate that \$100,000 per fiscal year is insufficient to meet the current needs for livestock producers in those counties, not to mention the expected increase of conflict and related increase in need for non-lethal deterrents over time. WDFW needs increased, ongoing funding for non-lethal wolf conflict resolution across Washington state.

### Our Solution

Increasing funding will allow WDFW to cover the costs of existing expected cooperative deterrence efforts with landowners and livestock producers, fund contracted range riders, and implement other strategies to reduce conflict. Adding funding for the second fiscal year will allow WDFW to meet expectations set in fiscal year 2024 and address the costs of wolf conflict through the entire biennium. Providing this funding as ongoing will ensure a foundation for non-lethal conflict reduction and mitigation response for wolf conservation and producer operations in outlying years.

### Alternatives explored

WDFW considered maintaining the status quo; however, the status quo is unsustainable at current funding levels, fails to maintain current service provision levels, does not cover the expected cost of range riders, and lacks the expanded response WDFW needs for existing and anticipated human-wolf conflict.

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

This supplemental budget package is an expansion of an existing and ongoing initiative to reduce conflict between humans and wolves in areas where wolf populations are recovering and expanding over a larger geographic area. WDFW uses this funding for non-lethal deterrence measures including, but not limited to, Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements with livestock producers and landowners to cost share on non-lethal deterrents. We also provide contracted range riders to maintain human presence with livestock, monitor livestock, and take other steps to lessen the chance for conflict with wolves.

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

The first year of funding will be used to implement cooperative cost-share agreements with landowners and livestock producers and to employ contracted range riders for human presence among livestock and monitoring for indications of and responding to emerging conflict.

For year two and subsequent biennia, the increased funding level will allow for expansion of these efforts and the coverage area as wolves expand across recovery areas.

Personal Services Contracts, object C, includes \$125,000 in FY 2024 and \$150,000 in FY 2025 and ongoing for Contracted Range Riders. Goods and Services, object E, includes \$98,000 in FY 2024 and \$147,000 in FY 2025 and ongoing for Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements with landowners and livestock producers and provides for other non-lethal deterrents.

An infrastructure support rate of 36.03% is included in object T as calculated on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

No additional staff are funded from this proposal. The funding is for direct costs related to reducing human-wolf conflict.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve three of the Results Washington goals: 1) Prosperous Economy, 2) Healthy & Safe Communities, and 3) Effective, Efficient & Accountable Government.

Wolf conflict results in economic loss to livestock producers. Reduced conflict should result in reduced losses. Directly providing services and resources to the public to improve how effectively we manage wolves and reduce conflict targets real problems with tangible solutions.

#### **WDFW 25 Year Strategic Plan**

Additionally, this decision package directly supports all four strategies in the WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan:

- Proactively address conservation challenges
- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship
- Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions
- Model operational and environmental excellence

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Preserve and Restore Terrestrial Habitats and Species: \$303,000 in FY 2024 and \$404,000 FY 2025 and ongoing, General Fund – State.

This decision package directly supports WDFW foundational work to preserve and restore terrestrial habitat and species, which includes responding to and mitigating wolf conflicts. The Department strives to preserve terrestrial habitat health by consulting with businesses, landowners and governments regarding terrestrial species and habitat impacts and legalities, partnering with private landowners to implement conservation strategies, permitting and regulating wildlife-related businesses like taxidermy and rehabilitation centers, and responding to and mitigating wolf conflicts.

**Performance Outcomes:**

This decision package supports WDFW's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Technical assistance interactions
- Endangered species population increases
- Number of confirmed dangerous wildlife incidents mitigated for each year

Increased human-wolf conflict deterrence funding will improve the agency's proactive outreach with livestock producers. This will improve availability and implementation of non-lethal, proactive actions to help reduce livestock-wolf interactions, especially as wolf populations continue to occupy new parts of Washington. Avoiding these interactions is a key component of the agency's recovery strategy for wolves – a state endangered species - and will improve public acceptance while aiding in species recovery.

These resources could potentially decrease 1) frustration for livestock producers due to delayed agency response to wolf conflict complaints, 2) livestock damage claims and the resultant claim expenses, and 3) the numbers of wolves lethally removed for causing damage.

**Equity Impacts****Community outreach and engagement:**

Human-wolf conflict mitigation and incident response is an issue of economic importance and social/environmental interest to many currently underserved groups. Additional funding will provide for expanded response and conflict mitigation across diverse communities in the state.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

It is important for all communities to have access to wildlife conflict resolutions as soon as possible. Rural areas in Washington especially need to have increased access to human-wolf conflict mitigation resources as the areas are remote and have the potential to have increased conflict.

**Target Populations or Communities:**

This proposal increases available agency resources to respond to wildlife conflicts across a broader geographic area (statewide), including urban areas and rural communities experiencing conflict with wolves.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

N/A

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

Agency experience shows that several intergovernmental and external stakeholders should support this decision package. The USDA Forest Service, cities, counties, conservation districts, the Washington Department of Agriculture, and the Washington Department of Natural Resources have shown interest in the wildlife resources managed in response to human-wolf conflict. Support may come from personal, traditional, or cultural values as well as for potential safety and property impacts. Many of these values will overlap among interested parties for different reasons.

Tribes can be impacted by agency actions affecting cooperatively managed wildlife, including wolves, and are generally neutral to supportive of this work. Increasing proactive actions and decreasing the need to lethally remove wolves causing damage can be a positive outcome. The agricultural community is impacted by negative human-wolf interactions (e.g., livestock losses) and increasing proactive deterrence actions can help mitigate those impacts. Other governmental entities like city and county enforcement offices engage with WDFW to prevent or mitigate human-wolf conflicts, and improving the agency's ability to respond can reduce the need for their engagement over time.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

A wide variety of stakeholders are supportive of this work, including environmental groups, animal rights groups, agricultural interests, livestock interests, the timber industry, hunting interests, and outdoor recreation groups.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

N/A

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[Wolf-Livestock Conflict Proposed Rule.pdf](#)

## IT Addendum

### ***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

No

**Objects of Expenditure**

<b>Objects of Expenditure</b> <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2023-25</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2025-27</b>
Obj. C	\$125	\$150	<b>\$275</b>	\$150	\$150	<b>\$300</b>
Obj. E	\$98	\$147	<b>\$245</b>	\$147	\$147	<b>\$294</b>
Obj. T	\$80	\$107	<b>\$187</b>	\$107	\$107	<b>\$214</b>

**Agency Contact Information**

Jon Neville  
 (360) 561-5079  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Policy Level - BI - Salmon ESA Regulatory Compliance

### Agency Recommendation Summary

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) have developed Biological Opinions (BIOPs) on current WDFW hatchery operations and have concluded that additional measures, known as terms and conditions, must be made to hatchery operations and infrastructure to minimize impacts to Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species and critical habitat. Implementation of these terms and conditions also requires additional monitoring, evaluation, and research to determine if these measures are minimizing impacts to species as intended. To continue operating at current levels, WDFW must adhere to these new terms and conditions, many of which include unfunded mandates. Thus, WDFW hatcheries are facing substantial cost increases to meet the new terms and conditions, and if funding is not obtained hatchery programs may be discontinued or significantly reduced to meet ESA requirements. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	4.8	2.4	4.0	4.0	4.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$2,139	\$2,139	\$762	\$762	\$1,524
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$2,139	\$2,139	\$762	\$762	\$1,524

### Decision Package Description

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns and/or operates 80 hatchery facilities that release more than 160 million juvenile anadromous salmon and steelhead and 17.5 million trout annually into the waters of Washington state.

Under section 7 of the ESA, federal agencies must consult with NOAA Fisheries, as NMFS is informally known, to ensure any actions they fund, authorize, permit, or carry out will not jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species or adversely modify designated critical habitats. In the case of our hatcheries, NOAA Fisheries is the permitting agency and thus NOAA consults internally and with USFWS, resulting in a Biological Opinion and subsequent terms and conditions, which are non-discretionary.

As many of these terms and conditions contain unfunded mandates, WDFW needs additional funding to meet the requirements of the BIOPs.

While the BIOPs include a phased approach to the new requirements, WDFW has identified several terms and conditions that must be implemented right away in order minimize impacts to listed species and critical habitat. Activities associated with this request include: 1) Construction, installation, and operation of five additional weirs in the lower Columbia River, 2) Marblemount intake riffle (shallow place in a river) evaluation and analysis at Jordan Creek, 3) Installation of flow measurement equipment at Marblemount’s Jordan Creek, 4) Installation of 60 GPM chiller at Marblemount Hatchery, 5) Marblemount Clarks Creek habitat assessment 6) Implementation of Marblemount Spring Chinook conservation program, 6) Otolith marking and DNA sampling - ongoing collection and analysis (Wallace River Hatchery, Kendall Creek Hatchery, Marblemount Hatchery, Washougal Hatchery, and lower Columbia River). Expenditure detail by fiscal year for each activity is provided in the Detailed Assumptions and Calculations section below.

This funding ensures ongoing measures to support conservation efforts for naturally occurring salmonids, recreational and commercial harvest, tribal harvest, and prey for the endangered Southern Resident killer whales. This funding request will also help ensure we meet our mission statement “To preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.”

The consequences of not funding this proposal could result in hatcheries losing ESA authorization and hatchery production. NMFS funding under the Mitchell Act could also be revoked. A decrease in hatchery production would result in reductions in sport, commercial and tribal fisheries from California to Alaska, including in Puget Sound and the Columbia River. Lost revenue to the state from fishing license sales, tackle dealers and boat sales, in addition to lost revenue to smaller coastal fishing communities. Not funding this proposal would mean that the state could not uphold tribal treaty rights and legal mitigation obligations thereby exposing WDFW to litigation from a multitude of stakeholders which could cost the State millions of dollars. Salmon and steelhead conservation programs could also be decreased or lost and SRKW prey could be reduced.

**Proposed Solution**

This proposal will fund the terms and conditions outlined in the BIOPs thereby keeping us compliant with ESA requirements and will minimize the risk of programs and/or funding being reduced or discontinued.

**Alternatives Explored**

WDFW has tried to identify funding within the existing budget to cover Terms and Conditions related to the BIOPs. Current funding levels are not sufficient to cover the existing needs, nor does it address emerging BIOPs Terms and Conditions that will require facility improvements and increased monitoring and research.

**Connections with Governor's Salmon Recovery**

This decision package helps to align hatcheries with salmon recovery by fulfilling the terms and conditions associated with Biological Opinions on WDFW hatchery programs. These terms and conditions are stipulated by federal agencies because they affect the viability of ESA listed salmon and steelhead populations. The five new weirs in the Lower Columbia salmon recovery region will be used to help keep excess hatchery fish off the spawning grounds, which is a primary concern affecting salmon recovery. The other components of this ask are related to more effective and efficient hatchery operations that directly benefit conservation hatchery programs (e.g., Marblemount spring Chinook Salmon) and genetic analysis to ensure supplementation goals are being met and remain consistent with species recovery.

**Assumptions and Calculations**

***Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:***

This is an expansion of current services. This proposal includes new work identified in the Terms and Conditions of the BIOPs for hatchery production to meet Federal ESA.

***Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:***

**Region Five Weir Installation – Fiscal year 2025 costs total \$1,122,000, fiscal year 2026 costs total \$393,000 ongoing**

<b>Region 5 Weir Installation - One-time and Ongoing Funding FY25</b>				
	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.9</b>
A- Salaries	\$0	\$169,000	\$169,000	\$169,000
B- Benefits	\$0	\$77,000	\$77,000	\$77,000
E - Goods and Services	\$0	\$565,000	\$29,000	\$29,000
G - Travel	\$0	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$14,000
T - Intra Agency Reimbursement	\$0	\$297,000	\$104,000	\$104,000
<b>Total Cost Fiscal Year 2025</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,122,000</b>	<b>\$393,000</b>	<b>\$393,000</b>

Fiscal year 2025 costs total \$1,122,000 and includes \$246,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 2.9 FTE. Goods and Services, object E, totals \$565,000 which includes \$531,961 one-time construction supply costs for five weirs, \$9,000 for field and survey supplies as well as \$20,300 for standard employee costs. Travel, object G, totals \$14,000 (detail below) while the WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% included in object T totals \$297,000.

Fiscal year 2026 and ongoing costs total \$393,000 and includes \$246,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 2.9 FTE. Goods and Services, object E, totals \$29,000 which includes \$9,000 for field and survey supplies and \$20,300 for standard employee costs. Travel, object G, totals \$14,000 (detail below) while the WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% included in object T totals \$104,000.

**Region Five Weir Installation – Travel costs total \$14,000 in fiscal year 2025 ongoing.**

Travel costs in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing for three teams totals \$13,953.84. Assumed to travel 8,832 miles per team over five-month period in one shared vehicle per team. A daily DES long-term vehicle rental for a “Truck-Small-4x4” totals \$6,270 (\$418/month x 5 months x 3 teams) while fuel costs total \$7,683.84 (8,832 miles x .29/mile x 3 teams).



**Marblemount Jordan Creek Riffle Analysis – One-time costs in fiscal year 2025 total \$59,000**

Marblemount Jordan Creek Riffle Analysis - One-time Funding FY25				
	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
A- Salaries	\$0	\$30,000	\$0	\$0
B- Benefits	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$0
E - Goods and Services	\$0	\$2,000	\$0	\$0
G - Travel	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$0
T - Intra Agency Reimbursement	\$0	\$16,000	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost Fiscal Year 2025</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$59,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

One-time fiscal year 2025 costs total \$59,000 and includes \$40,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for .3 FTE. Travel, object G, totals \$1,000 (detail below), while standard employee costs, object E, total \$2,100 and the WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% included in object T totals \$16,000.

**Marblemount Jordan Creek Riffle Analysis – One-time travel costs total \$1,000 in fiscal year 2025.**

Travel costs for EE3 and EE2 in fiscal year 2025 totals \$1,026. Assumed to travel 572 miles for a total vehicle cost of \$280, including vehicle rent and mileage, and three travel days totaling \$746 hotel and per diem.

Vehicle costs for shared vehicle for EE3 and EE2 in fiscal year 2025 totals \$1,026, including vehicle rent and mileage. A daily DES short-term vehicle rental for a “Truck-Small-4x4” totals \$114 (\$38/day x 3 days) while fuel costs total \$166 (572 miles x .29/mile).

Overnight and per diem costs total \$746.00. Two overnight stays per FTE with three days per diem travel status rates total \$746.00 [(\$98/night hotel x 2 overnights x 2 FTE = \$392) and (\$59/day per diem x 3 days travel status x 2 FTE = \$354)].

**Marblemount Hatchery Chiller – One-time costs in fiscal year 2025 total \$407,000, then \$6,000 per fiscal year ongoing**

Marblemount Hatchery Chiller - One-time and Ongoing Funding FY25				
	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
A- Salaries	\$0	\$22,000	\$0	\$0
B- Benefits	\$0	\$9,000	\$0	\$0
E - Goods and Services	\$0	\$97,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
G - Travel	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	\$0
J - Equipment	\$0	\$229,000	\$0	\$0
T - Intra Agency Reimbursement	\$0	\$47,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
<b>Total Cost per Fiscal Year</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$407,000</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>

One-time fiscal year 2025 costs total \$407,000 and includes \$31,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for .3 FTE. Goods and Services, object E, totals \$97,000 which includes \$90,000 one-time installation costs for items and parts and \$5,000 required maintenance as well as \$2,100 for standard employee costs. Travel, object G, totals \$3,000 (detail below), and one-time capitalized equipment, object J, is comprised of \$208,750 for the 60 GPM Chiller and its 9.5% sales tax of \$19,831, while the WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% included in object T totals \$47,000.

Ongoing costs of \$6,000 beginning in fiscal year 2026 include \$5,000 in object E for maintenance and \$1,000 in object T.

**Marblemount Hatchery Chiller – One-time travel cost detail**

Travel costs for WDFW CAMP staff (CMPS, CMPL, and MM2) in fiscal year 2025 total \$2,528. Assumed to travel 572 miles for a total vehicle cost of \$938.08, including CAMP billable mileage rates for agency vehicles, and three overnights with four travel status days totaling \$1,590 hotel and per diem.

Vehicle costs using WDFW CAMP billable mileage rates in fiscal year 2025 totals \$938.08 for two agency vehicles, F350 and F550. Mileage from Lacey Shop to Marblemount Hatchery and back determined to be 322 miles (161 each way) totaling \$231.84 in billable mileage for F350 (322 miles x \$.72/mile) and \$296.24 for F550 (322 miles x \$.092/mile). Travel between hatchery and lodgings in Sedro-Woolley determined to be 42 miles one way, and assumed 6 trips over four days, for a total of 250 miles resulting in \$180 for F350 billable mileage (250 miles x

\$.72/mile) and \$230 for F550 billable mileage (250 miles x \$.92/mile)

Overnight and per diem costs total \$1590. Three overnight stays per FTE with four days per diem travel status rates total \$1590 [(\$98/night hotel x 3 overnights x 3 FTE = \$882) and (\$59/day per diem x 4 days travel status x 3 FTE = \$708)].

**Clark Creek Habitat Assessment – One-time costs in fiscal year 2025 total \$29,000**

<b>Marblemount Hatchery, Clark Creek Habitat Assessment - One-time Funding FY25</b>				
	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
A- Salaries	\$0	\$14,000	\$0	\$0
B- Benefits	\$0	\$6,000	\$0	\$0
E - Goods and Services	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$0
G - Travel	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$0
T - Intra Agency Reimbursement	\$0	\$7,000	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost Fiscal Year 2025</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$29,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

One-time fiscal year 2025 costs total \$29,000 and includes \$20,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for .2 FTE. Travel, object G, totals \$1,000 (detail below), while standard employee costs, object E, total \$1,000 and the WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% included in object T totals \$7,000.

**Clark Creek Habitat Assessment – Travel cost detail**

Travel costs for Bio3 and Bio2 in fiscal year 2025 totals \$1,026. Assumed to travel 572 miles for a total vehicle cost of \$279.88, including vehicle rent and mileage, and three travel days totaling \$746 hotel and per diem.

Vehicle costs for shared vehicle for Bio3 and Bio2 in fiscal year 2025 totals \$1,026, including vehicle rent and mileage. A daily DES short-term vehicle rental for a “Truck-Small-4x4” totals \$114 (\$38/day x 3 days) while fuel costs total \$166 (572 miles x .29/mile).

Overnight and per diem costs total \$746.00. Two overnight stays per FTE with three days per diem travel status rates total \$746.00 [(\$98/night hotel x 2 overnights x 2 FTE = \$392) and (\$59/day per diem x 3 days travel status x 2 FTE = \$354)].

**Marblemount Spring Chinook Conservation Program – Ongoing costs beginning in fiscal year 2025 total \$212,000**

<b>Marblemount Spring Chinook Conservation Program – FY25 funding and ongoing</b>				
	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>FY27</b>
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.1</b>
A- Salaries	\$0	\$59,000	\$59,000	\$59,000
B- Benefits	\$0	\$28,000	\$28,000	\$28,000
E - Goods and Services	\$0	\$71,000	\$71,000	\$71,000
G - Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
J - Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
T - Intra Agency Reimbursement	\$0	\$54,000	\$54,000	\$54,000
<b>Total Cost per Fiscal Year</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$212,000</b>	<b>\$212,000</b>	<b>\$212,000</b>

Ongoing costs beginning in fiscal year 2025 total \$212,000 and includes \$87,000 for Salaries and Benefits, objects A and B, for 1.1 FTE. Goods and Services, object E, totals \$71,000 which includes \$63,215 for ongoing program needs (detail below) and \$7,7000 per fiscal year for standard employee costs. The WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% included in object T totals \$54,000.

**Marblemount Spring Chinook Conservation Program – Goods & Services cost detail**

Marblemount Spring Chinook Conservation Program - Object E Detail				
	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
<b>Standard Employee Costs</b>	\$0	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700
<b>Fish Food</b> •Feed for 50,000 Chinook	\$0	\$9,270	\$9,270	\$9,270
<b>Marking and Tagging</b> •AD+CWT 50,000 yearling Chinook @\$136/1,000	\$0	\$6,800	\$6,800	\$6,800
<b>Genetic Sampling</b> •365 samples @ \$33/sample	\$0	\$12,045	\$12,045	\$12,045
<b>Utilities</b> •Power costs to incubate & rear Marblemount Spring Chinook	\$0	\$21,900	\$21,900	\$21,900
<b>Supplies &amp; Materials</b> •Supplies for operating, maintaining, and rearing Marblemount Spring Chinook	\$0	\$13,200	\$13,200	\$13,200
<b>Total Goods &amp; Services, Object E per FY</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$70,915</b>	<b>\$70,915</b>	<b>\$70,915</b>

**Otolith and DNA Sampling – Fiscal year 2025 costs total \$310,000 and then \$151,000 in fiscal year 2026 and ongoing**

Fiscal year 2025 costs include \$228,000 in object E for Otolith and DNA sampling (detail below) with ongoing object E costs of \$111,000 beginning in fiscal year 2026. The WDFW federally approved infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% included in object T totals \$82,000 in fiscal year 2025 and then \$40,000 in fiscal year 2026 ongoing.

Otolith and DNA Sampling					
	Number of Samples per Fiscal Year	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
<b>Otolith Marking - \$12/Sample</b>					
Wallace River Hatchery	580	\$0	\$6,960	\$6,960	\$6,960
Kendall Creek Hatchery	1835	\$0	\$22,020	\$22,020	\$22,020
<b>DNA Sampling - \$33/sample</b>					
Marblemount Hatchery - Chum	1000	\$0	\$33,000	\$33,000	\$33,000
Washougal Hatchery	1500	\$0	\$49,500	\$49,500	\$49,500
Lower Columbia River*	3530	\$0	\$116,500	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost per Fiscal Year</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$227,980</b>	<b>\$111,480</b>	<b>\$111,480</b>

\*One-time - Chinook baseline genetic development

**Workforce Assumptions:**

**Job Classifications and the associated work for the 4.8 FTE are as follows:**

Region 5 Weirs

Three teams comprised of one Fish & Wildlife Biologist 1 (five months per FY) and two Scientific Technician 2 (three months per fiscal each) needed to install and monitor five weirs. One Fish & Wildlife Biologist 4 needed to oversee project (.5 months per year)

Fiscal Year 2025 ongoing:

1.2 FTE FISH & WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST 1 (Bio1) – One Bio1 for 5 months to build, install, and monitor South Fork Toutle weir.

1.5 FTE SCIENTIFIC TECHNICIAN 2 (SciTech2) – Two SciTech2 for 3 months each to build, install, and monitor South Fork Toutle weir.

0.1 FTE FISH & WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST 4 (Bio4) – One Bio4 for .5 months will provide oversight of building, installation, and monitoring of South Fork Toutle Weir.

0.1 FTE IT DATA MANAGEMENT – JOURNEY - One IT Data Management team member for .5 months per fiscal year will provide data management and modeling work.

Marblemount Hatchery, Jordan Creek Riffle Analysis

0.2 FTE ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER 3 (EE3) – One EE3 to oversee and assist with the data collection and produce final Riffle Analysis report.

0.1 FTE ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER 2 (EE2) - One EE2 to assist with the collection of data for Riffle Analysis report.

#### Marblemount Hatchery, Chiller

0.1 FTE CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE PROJECT SUPERVISOR (CMPS) – One CMPS to plan, organize, and oversee flow meter installation. Obtain needed permits and safety plans for project, and work with facility staff to ensure they prepare location for work.

0.1 FTE CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE PROJECT LEAD (CMPL) - One CMPL to initiate project on ground and carry out all needed site augmentation and work.

0.1 FTE MAINTENANCE MECHANIC 2 (MM2) - One MM2 to assist CMPL with on location work and implementation and completion of work.

#### Clark Creek Habitat Assessment

0.1 FTE FISH & WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST 3 (Bio3) - One Bio3 to travel to Clark Creek to oversee, collect, and analyze data needed to provide required Habitat Assessment.

0.1 FTE FISH & WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST 2 (Bio2) - One Bio2 to travel to Clark Creek to assist with collection and analysis of data needed for required Habitat Assessment.

#### Marblemount Spring Chinook Conservation Program

0.1 FTE FISH HATCHERY SPECIALIST 4 (FHS4) – Supervise and support hatchery staff and manage budgets

0.2 FTE FISH HATCHERY SPECIALIST 3 (FHS3) – Maintenance and operation of facility and fish production

0.3 FTE FISH HATCHERY SPECIALIST 2 (FHS2) - Maintenance and operation of facility and fish production

0.5 FTE FISH HATCHERY TECHNICIAN (FHT) – Non-permanent employees during peak seasons of adult collection and spawning.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor’s Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goal of a Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment. This proposal is fundamental to the harvest management and recovery of ESA-listed Salmon and Steelhead in Puget Sound, the Washington Coast and Columbia River.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This decision package supports the following Department Strategic Plan priorities:

- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship, delivering hunting and fishing customer service, including needs for predictability, as the Department continues to focus on maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations.
- Deliver science that informs Washington’s most pressing fish and wildlife questions, developing an agency-level data management system to provide better science for agency decision-making and constituent outreach.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Produce Hatchery Fish 4.8 FTE \$2,139,000 in Fiscal Year 2025, 4.0 FTE \$762,000 fiscal year 2026 ongoing, General Fund State.

This package supports our activity inventory item “Produce Hatchery Fish” and applicable support strategy:

- Produce salmon and steelhead

The Department owns and/or operates 80 hatcheries for fish production that benefit commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfill obligations to maintain tribal treaty fishing rights (USvWA). Current hatchery production is consistent with ESA requirements and hatchery reform goals.

This activity includes the entire fish production cycle for salmon and steelhead, raising fish from eggs until release age, sometimes transporting them to their release location, and then collecting more eggs upon their return.

**Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve two 25-year Performance goals:

25 percent increase in wild salmon populations

90 percent of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.

In addition, this proposal supports the Department’s ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA
- Salmon hatchery recommendations
- Mass marked hatchery-produced Chinook salmon
- Mark-selective fisheries
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals
- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA
- Threatened and endangered species population increases.

WDFW will be able to meet the terms and conditions outlined in the Biological Opinions.

**Equity Impacts**

**Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department’s hatcheries provide fisheries that people depend upon for jobs (commercial fishing and related industries), meet federal treaty obligations, provide additional forage for Southern Resident Orcas, support local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses), provide family recreational opportunities, and protect Washington’s cultural fishing heritage. Recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses, as well as WDFW, through license sales. Most of the salmon production at WDFW owned hatcheries is linked to conservation, harvest augmentation (tribal and non-tribal) and federal court agreements.

The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is no degradation of services to the communities we serve.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

It is expected that there are few, if any, disproportionate impacts from this proposal. However, if this proposal does not receive funding, there could be disproportionate impacts to those who rely on hatchery fish for their subsistence, economic welfare, and recreation.

**Target Populations or Communities:**

Rural and geographically isolated communities in Washington will significantly benefit from the economic opportunities fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to rural businesses. Tribal fisheries will benefit from the continued production of healthy hatchery fish from well-maintained facilities.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Salmon Recovery by implementing hatchery operations and infrastructure changes required to minimize impacts to ESA listed species and critical habitat. This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15, Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity “Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations” by implementing changes necessary to maintain WDFW’s hatchery salmon production and limit impacts to ESA listed species and critical habitat. This decision package is also indirectly aligned with Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by implementing changes necessary to maintain WDFW’s hatchery salmon production and catalyzing conservation efforts for wild salmonids. This decision package fulfills the Secondary criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by enabling WDFW hatcheries to continue current production levels and maintain ESA authorization. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 5: More effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries and hydropower, by sustaining hatchery salmon production for ceremonial, subsistence, commercial, and recreational fisheries and minimizing impacts to ESA listed species and critical habitat.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

As salmon and steelhead populations continue to decline, having strong fish health policies and procedures are critical. Support for Hatchery Investment Strategy efforts will be strong from tribal co-managers and federal partners overseeing implementation of fishery and hatchery management for conservation. Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission would also be in support of measures taken protect natural populations.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

Fishing constituents will be supportive of efforts that lead to increased opportunities on salmon and steelhead by maintaining current production levels.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

N/A

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## IT Addendum

### ***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

No

## Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$294	<b>\$294</b>	\$228	\$228	<b>\$456</b>
Obj. B	\$0	\$130	<b>\$130</b>	\$105	\$105	<b>\$210</b>
Obj. E	\$0	\$964	<b>\$964</b>	\$216	\$216	<b>\$432</b>
Obj. G	\$0	\$19	<b>\$19</b>	\$14	\$14	<b>\$28</b>
Obj. J	\$0	\$229	<b>\$229</b>	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Obj. T	\$0	\$503	<b>\$503</b>	\$199	\$199	<b>\$398</b>

## Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
 (360) 561-5079  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



## Agency Recommendation Summary

State operated hatchery facilities need additional capacity for current and expanded production, including additional fish health services and mass marking of hatchery salmonids. This proposal will support those needs and if not funded hatchery production goals may not be met, the Fish Health Unit will not be staffed adequately to monitor state and commercial aquaculture, and fish intended for harvest will not be mass marked. This funding ensures ongoing measures to support recreational and commercial harvest, tribal harvest, Southern Resident killer whale prey, and conservation efforts for wild salmonids. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

## Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$2,048	<b>\$2,048</b>	\$2,048	\$2,048	<b>\$4,096</b>
Total Expenditures	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$2,048</b>	<b>\$2,048</b>	<b>\$2,048</b>	<b>\$2,048</b>	<b>\$4,096</b>

## Decision Package Description

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) owns and/or operates 80 hatchery facilities that release more than 160 million juvenile anadromous salmon and steelhead and 17.5 million trout annually, with more than 110 million salmon and steelhead mass marked each year.

The Department currently utilizes a fleet of 14 AutoFish System trailers, 27 manual mass marking trailers, and two manual tagging trailers to facilitate marking and tagging statewide including some tribal and PUD hatcheries. WDFW obtains temporary staff to conduct seasonal mass marking through a private temporary labor firm. If WDFW is not able to fill the trailers with 12-14 workers at each location with contracted labor, the Department loses the capacity to meet state and federal requirements of mass marking 100 percent of hatchery-produced fish. Over the course of the past decade, WDFW has seen a drastic decline in temporary labor available to mark these fish in the timeframe needed. To attempt to mitigate these constraints, WDFW has employed retention and recruitment incentives to include fuel bonuses, attendance bonuses and an increase to the hourly rate. These measures were not as successful as hoped, and the Department still finds it challenging to staff the manual trailers.

Unmarked fish may not be released under the Endangered Species Act, because they would compromise hatchery broodstocks and complicate native fish population monitoring. The Department has utilized many strategies over the years to maintain levels of production including the employment of state inmates under the supervision of the Department of Corrections, maintaining well-trained seasonal staff, utilizing alternate temporary staffing agencies, and actively looking for alternatives in purchasing and efficiencies to maximize the use of state dollars. These efforts are not sufficient to ensure the success of the mass marking program going forward.

### Fish Health Lab

The Fish Health Unit provides fish health services at all WDFW hatchery facilities, contract services at some tribal and PUD hatchery facilities, regulates and inspects commercial finfish aquaculture operations (as of May 2023, 36 facilities and 20 aquatic farmers statewide), issues finfish transport permits (250 – 300 per year), and operates a microbiology laboratory in Olympia. With this level of work responsibility, the unit is chronically understaffed and therefore unable to provide a consistent level of appropriate fish health services throughout the state. Additionally, climate change and other environmental factors have and will continue to increase demands on WDFW aquatic veterinarians, pathologists, and microbiologists due to changes in pathogen distributions, transmissibility, and virulence.

Funding is requested to hire an Aquaculture Coordinator / Supervisory Veterinarian. This position will assume supervisory responsibilities for fish health field operations, lead inspections of commercial aquaculture facilities, and be responsible for ensuring that commercial facilities are appropriately regulated, safeguarding against the importation and movement of pathogens that may affect hatchery and wild fish in Washington. This individual will establish a veterinarian-client-patient-relationship at all facilities statewide, enabling them to provide veterinary services at any facility as needed.

Currently, the work of the proposed Aquaculture Coordinator position is spread among three existing positions. This is not sustainable. These positions are currently juggling this with their regular responsibilities, resulting in inefficiencies, reduced capacities, and work not completed or



completed in a timely fashion. If funding for this Epidemiologist 3 position is not provided, these problems will persist. The Fish Health Unit will be unable to provide comprehensive fish health services for Washington State hatcheries and will struggle to fulfill regulatory obligations associated with commercial finfish aquaculture. Given the projected association between climate change and an increase in aquatic diseases within hatchery and aquaculture settings, and the chronic understaffing of the Fish Health Unit, the absence of funding for this position will hinder the Department's ability to appropriately address the management demands of the near-term and more distant futures.

### **AutoFish System Transition**

WDFW is requesting funding to purchase 11 Autofish systems over the next six biennia and funding to rebuild aging systems to expand and maintain a fleet of 25 Autofish systems and 12 manual marking and tagging trailers going forward, see Attachment A. Over 70% of annual marking and tagging occurs in the months of April, May, and June to ensure legal obligations are met so each new Autofish system WDFW purchases, will replace a manual marking trailer, resulting in reduced dependence on contracted labor which is unreliable, compromises quality, and puts undue stress and harm on the fish due to excessive handling and anesthetic. With 87,184,472 of the total 117,300,371 (2022) fish marked and tagged during a three-month timeframe, it is even more critical WDFW begins moving away from being reliant upon obtaining contracted labor during this key time period which will be accomplished as WDFW is able to grow and maintain a larger Autofish system fleet.

With the expansion of the fleet, ongoing maintenance and replacement of aging systems will need to be addressed. An Autofish system, with proper storage and maintenance, has an assumed useful life of approximately 20 years or more. WDFW has a replacement schedule in place to rebuild Autofish systems once they are past their useful life. Rebuilding these systems costs approximately one half of the price to purchase a new system and extends the useful life an additional 20 years. WDFW is requesting funding to rebuild one Autofish system per Fiscal Year for the next six years and after that will need funding beginning in biennium 39 to rebuild two systems each biennium going forward.

While WDFW will never be able to fully transition away from manual mass marking due to seasonal timing issues and/or fish being out of size to run through the Autofish system, maintaining a fleet of 25 Autofish systems is the only path that ensures salmon and steelhead will be successfully mass marked into the future.

### **Mass Marking Salmon and Steelhead Intended for Harvest**

Funding is requested to purchase two AutoFish systems each biennium to meet mass marking requirements for all hatchery salmonids. Recruiting temporary staff to accomplish federal and state requirements to mass mark Chinook, coho and steelhead has been challenging or impossible to do in many areas of the state. In addition, the Department and Tribal Co-Managers have taken on increased production to provide prey for the endangered Southern Resident Killer Whale (Orca). Switching a large portion of the manual mass marking fleet to AutoFish systems (automated mass marking trailers) is necessary to complete this work. As the Department transitions to an Autofish fleet, a Maintenance Mechanic position is needed to provide ongoing fleet maintenance and management. In future biennia, a Biologist 3 may be needed to assist with managing on-the-ground operations and conduct quality control activities.

From order date to delivery, each AutoFish system takes a minimum of one year to build and deliver. Estimates suggest that approximately 5,700 hours of contracted labor could be reduced with new each system annually. Using this estimate it is assumed that the savings derived from the reduction of contracted labor would fully fund the operator (1.0 FTE Fish & Wildlife Biologist 2) of each new Autofish system and would not require additional funding for these new positions. Additionally, it is assumed that with each Autofish system that comes online one manual trailer could become surplus equipment.

Providing the funding requested is the most cost-effective way to ensure successful mass marking of WDFW's hatchery production of Chinook, coho and steelhead, without a corresponding reduction in production. If the Department is not able to shift most of the mass marking to AutoFish systems, hatchery production would need to be reduced to levels that can be marked manually. The Department would need to explore options of hiring permanent state employees to manually mass mark fish to ensure attendance in the trailers, although that cost would be significant. Any fish production decrease would have a negative economic impact on local economies, impact federal court orders made with treaty tribes and reduce prey availability for Southern Resident Killer Whales.



Figure 1. Trailer containing AutoFish System  
Source: Northwest Marine Technology



Figure 2. Computer controlled AutoFish System inside trailer containing a sorter and six marking and tagging lines. Adipose fins are clipped via black mechanisms and then CWT inserted using blue injectors.  
Source: Northwest Marine Technology

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

The proposal is an alteration of current services provided by the Department's Fish Health Unit and mass-marking for hatcheries statewide.

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for 2.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions totals \$250,000, in fiscal year (FY) 2025 and ongoing. Goods and services, object E, total \$34,000 each fiscal year and include \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year, as well as central agency costs. \$5,000 is needed in FY 2025 and ongoing for the Aquaculture Coordinator's continuing education cost to obtain and maintain all required certifications and licenses for this veterinary position and additional supplies total \$15,200 (staff field gear, microscopes, lab, and field supplies).

Travel costs, object G, totals \$43,000 in FY 2025 and ongoing. \$15,000 associated with vehicle lease and mileage, and \$28,000 associated with hotel and meals (details provided below). Equipment cost, object J, totals \$1,603,000 per fiscal year beginning in FY 2025, includes \$1,463,000 for a Marking Auto Trailer, and \$139,000 in sales tax at 9.5% (will likely have future inflationary costs that are not included here). Finally, an infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% is included in object T, for all but the equipment purchase, and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

*\*An additional Biologist 3 is needed in FY 2028 and ongoing and will be requested in a future budget submittal.*

#### Fish Health Unit Travel Costs

Aquaculture Coordinator – Travel costs total \$18,414, beginning in fiscal year 2025, and ongoing. Assumed to travel 10,000 miles per year for a total vehicle cost of \$6,584, including vehicle rent and mileage, and 70 travel days per year totaling \$11,830 for hotel and per diem costs.

Total vehicle cost per fiscal year totals \$6,584, including vehicle rent and mileage. A DES long-term vehicle rental for a "SUV-Small-4X4" totals \$4,284 (\$357 per month x 12 months) and mileage costs total \$2,300 (10,000 x \$0.23 per mile).

Hotel and per diem costs total \$11,830 per fiscal year based on total overnight trips and corresponding meal per diem rate [(\$110/day hotel x 70 overnights = \$7,700) and (\$59 meal rate per day x 70 travel status days = \$4,130)].

#### AutoFish System Transition Travel Costs

Maintenance Mechanic 3 -Travel costs total \$24,936, beginning in fiscal year 2025, and ongoing. Assumed to travel 12,000 miles per fiscal year for a total vehicle cost of \$7,956, including vehicle rent and fuel, and 120 total travel days per year totaling \$16,980 for hotel and per diem costs.

Total vehicle cost for the Maintenance Mechanic in fiscal years 2025 and 2026 totals \$7,956, including vehicle rent and fuel. A DES long-term vehicle rental for a "Truck-Small-4X4" totals \$4,836 (\$403 per month x 12) and fuel costs total \$3,120 (12,000 x \$0.26 per mile).

Travel costs for the Maintenance Mechanic in fiscal years 2025 and 2026 total \$16,980 per fiscal year. Overnight trips, and corresponding meal per diem, total \$15,210 [(\$110/day hotel x 90 overnights = \$9,900) and (\$59 meal rate per day x 90 travel status days = \$5,310)]. Travel costs

for single day trips, not requiring overnight stays, total \$1,770 (\$59 meal rate per day x 30 travel status days).

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

Job Classifications and the associated work for 2.0 FTE are as follows:

#### Fish Health Unit

1.0 FTE Aquaculture Coordinator / Epidemiologist 3 (Non-Medical) position will be stationed in Olympia or a location central to commercial aquaculture and state hatchery facilities. Duties include supervision of four veterinarians and four pathologists; senior aquatic veterinarian for WDFW responsible for bridging clinical work and fish health related policies and management actions; statewide inspections of commercial aquaculture facilities; review and evaluate all finfish aquaculture permits; review and sign where appropriate finfish transport permits; clinical work at a specific set of hatcheries; provide back-up veterinary services statewide; lead a yet-to-be formed committee that establishes a working list of statewide regulated finfish pathogens; participate local, state, national, and international fish health and aquaculture committees. Travel associated with supervisory responsibilities for fish health field operations and inspections of commercial aquaculture facilities.

#### AutoFish System Transition

1.0 FTE Maintenance Mechanic 3 position will travel statewide to provide maintenance (both scheduled and unscheduled) on the equipment to keep operations running and to ensure that the fleet is well maintained.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve the Results Washington goals of Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment, Prosperous Economy, and Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government. This proposal is fundamental to the harvest management and recovery of ESA-listed Salmon and Steelhead in Puget Sound, the Washington Coast and Columbia River; it supports the commercial and recreational fishing industries; and it respects our state's government-to-government relationship with tribes by supporting their harvest opportunities.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This decision package supports the following Department Strategic Plan priorities:

- Engage communities through recreation and stewardship, delivering hunting and fishing customer service, including needs for predictability, as the Department continues to focus on maintaining healthy fish and wildlife populations.
- Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions, developing an agency-level data management system to provide better science for agency decision-making and constituent outreach.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

Produce Hatchery Fish 2.0 FTE \$2,048,000 in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing, General Fund State.

This package supports our activity inventory item "Produce Hatchery Fish" and applicable support strategy:

- Produce salmon and steelhead.

The Department owns and/or operates 80 hatcheries for fish production that benefit commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfill obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights. Production at hatcheries is conducted consistent with ESA requirements and hatchery reform goals. This activity includes the entire fish production cycle for salmon and steelhead, raising fish from eggs until release age, sometimes transporting them to their release location, and then collecting more eggs upon their return.

Hatchery mass marking is critical to provide prey opportunities for endangered Southern Resident Orcas and recover endangered and threatened species to healthy, self-sustaining levels. Furthermore, hatchery mass marking benefits commercial and recreational fisheries and fulfills obligations to maintain tribal usual and accustomed fishing rights in salmon and steelhead. In addition, mass marking is critical to enforce rules and regulations in fishing activities. Therefore, efficient mass marking is critical for the Department's activities enforcing fishing regulations, monitoring, and managing fish populations to conserve and protect native fish and wildlife.

**Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve two 25-year performance goals:

- 25 percent increase in wild salmon populations.
- 90 percent of the public reports trusting WDFW to do what is right for the fish and wildlife management in our state.

In addition, this proposal supports the Department's ability to achieve the following Performance Outcomes:

- Mass marked hatchery-produced Chinook salmon
- Mass marked hatchery produced coho salmon
- Mark-selective fisheries
- Fisheries in compliance with harvest protection goals
- Hatchery programs in compliance with ESA
- Threatened and endangered species population increases.
- Number of angler days
- Number of online sales transactions
- Total license sales achieved
- Salmon hatchery recommendations

The Fish Health Unit will be able to provide comprehensive fish health services for Washington State Hatcheries and fulfill regulatory obligations for commercial aquaculture. This will also help the Department meet the demands of climate change and other environmental factors with regards to veterinarians and pathologists providing adequate care for fish reared in the hatchery environment.

Funding the purchase of AutoFish systems will allow WDFW to continue to produce and release hatchery fish at current and expanded levels with higher, more consistent quality, significantly less stress to the fish, and a reliable workforce. The AutoFish systems also give WDFW more reliable staffing and the ability to train and invest in staff leading to consistent, higher quality performance. Contracted labor solutions present unreliable staffing which can make it difficult to complete projects on time. Additionally, the high turnover of contracted staff creates training issues which can result in poor clip rates of over 10%, making it difficult to effectively manage the fishery and protect natural populations. Properly trained AutoFish operators can ensure poor clip rates do not exceed 1-2% even when faced with challenging populations of fish. Fish that are manually mass marked also suffer undue stress due to increased handling and the use of anesthesia which leads to higher mortality and fish health issues. Autofish systems minimize fish handling and does not require anesthesia.

AutoFish systems give the agency the ability to modify and improve our monitoring and evaluation efforts to ensure that hatchery fish have the least negative impact to natural populations. The AutoFish systems can simultaneously clip and insert a coded wire tag requiring no additional time whereas when done in a manual trailer the contracted labor would have to split the two functions between staff. Manual operations would therefore require more time and money and places unnecessary stress on the fish while compromising quality.

MS222, an anesthesia, is not required to process the fish in AutoFish systems. This results in cost savings but perhaps more importantly, is safer and healthier for the fish. Fish simply swim through the AutoFish system and robotics hold them in place to be processed. They are then returned to a rearing vessel without requiring any recovery time. Alternatively, processing fish in the manual trailers requires anesthesia and physical handling of the fish, which can result in compromising the immune protection of the fish and comparatively make them more susceptible to health issues and mortality.

The benefits of AutoFish systems are difficult to ignore. Other agencies have made this determination and are processing the majority, if not all, of their production through AutoFish systems.

## Equity Impacts

### ***Community outreach and engagement:***

The Department's hatcheries provide fisheries that people depend upon for jobs (commercial fishing and related industries), meet federal treaty obligations, provide additional forage for southern resident orcas, support local economies (tourism, lodging, restaurants, wholesalers and retailers of recreational equipment, boats, and licenses), provide family recreational opportunities, and protect Washington's fishing cultural heritage. Recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to local and rural businesses, as well as WDFW, through license sales. Most of the salmon production at WDFW owned hatcheries is linked to conservation, harvest augmentation (tribal and non-tribal) and federal court agreements.

WDFW completes community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions and is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with communities historically excluded and marginalized. It is important that WDFW can maintain these functions to prevent a degradation of services to the communities we serve.

### ***Disproportional Impact Considerations:***

It is expected that there are few, if any, disproportionate impacts from this proposal. However, if this proposal does not receive funding, there could be disproportionate impacts to those who rely on hatchery fish for their subsistence, economic welfare, and recreation if hatchery fish become ill and WDFW does not have enough staff to thoroughly address the issue. There is a strong possibility of disproportional impacts if this proposal isn't funded as WDFW has recently been having trouble filling contract positions for fin clipping. When that happens, there are less fish available for tribal fishing, along with commercial and recreational fishing.

### ***Target Populations or Communities:***

This proposal will help maintain and increase fish health and mass fin clipping, leading to more adult fish availability for tribal fishing. Rural and geographically isolated communities in Washington will significantly benefit from the economic opportunities in commercial fishing. Recreational fishing opportunities throughout the state contribute significant revenue to rural businesses.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, by implementing key opportunity, continue to implement increased state and tribal hatchery production to support prey availability for Southern Resident Orca, by increasing WDFW's hatchery capacity to produce recreational and commercial harvest, tribal harvest, Southern Resident orca prey, and catalyze conservation efforts for wild salmonids. These activities are supported through WDFW's activities to increase pathogen monitoring, fish marking to meet regulatory requirements, and facilities operation. The Treaty Tribes and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) co-manage hatchery production and salmon harvest allocations in Washington State. Through these efforts this decision package is also indirectly aligned with Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by increasing WDFW's hatchery salmon production. Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan and directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 6: Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans, and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

Additional staff positions are associated with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Professionals.

### ***Intergovernmental:***

Fish health and mass-marking have been long-standing desires among tribal co-managers. As salmon and steelhead populations continue to decline, having strong fish health policies and procedures are critical. Additionally, mass-marking salmon and steelhead intended for harvest inform decision making when crafting fishing opportunities for all users as well as providing opportunities for sport and tribal anglers. Support for Hatchery Investment Strategy efforts will be strong from tribal co-managers and federal partners overseeing implementation of fishery and hatchery management for conservation. Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission would also be in support of measures taken to sustain fish health, as required by The Salmonid Disease Control Policy of the Fisheries Co-Managers of Washington State.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

Fishing constituents will be supportive of efforts that lead to increased opportunities on salmon and steelhead by maintaining current production levels. WDFW risks losing the support of the recreational fishing community if it reduces fishing opportunities because fish are unable to be mass marked.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

It is anticipated that positions can be absorbed into existing facilities.

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

In addition to RCW 77.95.290 requiring the adipose fin clipping of hatchery released salmonids, the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1544) also requires hatchery raised salmonids (Chinook, coho and steelhead) to be marked prior to their release into the environment allowing for quick visual differentiation from wild populations.

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

Reference Documents

[Attachment A - WDFW HA Fish Health and Marking.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$186	<b>\$186</b>	\$186	\$186	<b>\$372</b>
Obj. B	\$0	\$64	<b>\$64</b>	\$64	\$64	<b>\$128</b>
Obj. E	\$0	\$34	<b>\$34</b>	\$34	\$34	<b>\$68</b>
Obj. G	\$0	\$43	<b>\$43</b>	\$43	\$43	<b>\$86</b>
Obj. J	\$0	\$1,603	<b>\$1,603</b>	\$1,603	\$1,603	<b>\$3,206</b>
Obj. T	\$0	\$118	<b>\$118</b>	\$118	\$118	<b>\$236</b>

Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville

(360) 561-5079

[jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov)



## Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)'s Information Technology (IT) infrastructure currently housed in the state data center. The hardware is reaching the end of its life cycle, must be replaced in fiscal year (FY) 2025, and does not have the capacity to support WDFW's growing business needs. Migrating WDFW's IT infrastructure from the state data center to a cloud-based platform and building a data architecture team will provide a more scalable, cost-effective, and secure data solution. WDFW must take this opportunity to modernize its' infrastructure to support the agency's mission and develop science and policy more effectively. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

## Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	5.0	2.5	5.0	5.0	5.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$4,056	\$4,056	\$2,203	\$1,728	\$3,931
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$4,056	\$4,056	\$2,203	\$1,728	\$3,931

## Decision Package Description

### Problem Statement

For WDFW law enforcement, regulatory, and research staff to work throughout the state and in remote areas to advance the Department's mission, the Department requires a secure, reliable, and robust IT infrastructure system to keep staff safe, connected, and equipped.

This decision package addresses four major, emergent problem statements facing the Department's infrastructure system.

### **Problem Statement 1: WDFW needs to buy new hardware for the current on-premises data center by April 2025.**

WDFW is required to pay for hardware in the state data center to store its data. The hardware must be refreshed or upgraded every 3 years when the hardware reaches the end of its lifecycle. The next major upgrade is required by April 2025. New hardware is expected to cost \$2 million over the next three-year cycle. This is only to replace the existing hardware. This does not include any costs related to increasing the capacity of the state data center to meet the growing needs of the business. Maintaining on-premises infrastructure requires dedicated WDFW IT staff for tasks like hardware maintenance, updates, and security.

In addition to the hardware costs, WDFW will pay \$293,000 in the 2023-25 biennium for the state data center as part of the Office of Financial Management's (OFM) central service model. WDFW is expecting to pay an additional \$120,000 in the same period for additional capacity.

### **Problem Statement 2: WDFW's recent rapid growth, increased demand, and unique needs exceed the scalability of the existing on-premises environment.**

The state data center is not keeping pace with WDFW's rapid growth over the last two biennia. The operating budget grew by 40% and the number of full-time equivalents (FTE) grew by 17%. The Department's digital footprint also grew quickly during that period:

- Since 2021, WDFW's storage at the state data center grew by 26%.
- Since 2019, geographic information system (GIS) service requests increased by 173%.
- The number of mobile devices deployed grew from 1,635 in 2022 to over 3,080 in 2023, an 88% increase. These devices are particularly important to ensure staff safety in the field and achieve digital transformation by changing the way staff input research and conservation-related data.

When WDFW requires additional storage or computing capacity, it must purchase and install additional hardware before staff can utilize the capacity. When IT infrastructure cannot keep pace with demand, delays in implementing new policy initiatives, new legislation, and research occur.

### **Problem statement 3: WDFW's is investing substantial resources to manage three different data centers.**



In addition to the data that is stored at the state data center, WDFW has already purchased space on Amazon Web Services' (AWS) cloud platform and Microsoft Azure's cloud platform to meet current demand. Today, one-third of WDFW's data is located on AWS's platform, and it has built several new modern applications (e.g., FishWA mobile application, Spawning Ground Survey database) in the AWS environment. These tools cannot be built or operated within the state's on-premises data center. Microsoft Azure stores the Department's immutable backups, as required by Washington Technology Solutions (WaTech). IT staff are required to learn and stay current with multiple technologies for each data center. This leads to staff dissatisfaction and turnover.

**Problem statement 4: Significant amounts of WDFW's data is unstructured or semi-structured in isolated environments.**

As WDFW has grown, so have the Department's data and data-repositories. Data has become siloed and there are now dark data repositories.

Data becomes isolated – or “siloed” – when different teams create or manage similar data separately from one another and never merge their data. Data siloing leads to lack of data integrity and sharing, resulting in inefficient and deep data duplication that hinders collaboration. When not addressed, decision-making suffers, and data security or privacy issues arise. Data siloing requires WDFW to maintain storage space for all copies of the data, increasing storage costs within the state data center's on-premises storage model.

WDFW has a significant amount of dark data. Dark data refers to when an entity has vast amounts of unstructured or semi-structured data that is generated but fails to be used efficiently. Dark data leads to missed opportunities to link existing research to new policy questions. Data siloing exasperates the problem of dark data and its associated costs.

**Proposed Solution**

Instead of reinvesting in costly hardware in FY2025, WDFW must take this opportunity to modernize its technological and data infrastructure systems so that staff have the baseline technology necessary to support the agency's mission.

WDFW's proposal includes two components:

- Data Center Migration: Collocate IT infrastructure to a cloud-based platform
- Data Architecture: Properly architect siloed, on-premises data onto a cloud-based platform

**Data Center Migration: Collocate IT infrastructure to a cloud-based platform**

To modernize WDFW's IT infrastructure, the Department first must collocate its data onto one platform. The best way to collocate the data will be to migrate WDFW's data currently located at the state data center to a cloud-based solution (e.g., AWS, Microsoft Azure).

Migrating WDFW's data to a cloud-based platform is cost-efficient – the Department will pay for its data consumption, rather than paying for hardware and storage upfront. Moving to the cloud will also prevent project delays – the Department will be able to rapidly scale up and down its data consumption on demand and will not be delayed by hardware acquisitions.

Due to WDFW's existing investment with AWS, both in terms of staff time and data on the platform, the Department plans to collocate its data on AWS cloud platform. WDFW started moving and building data in AWS's cloud platform 5 years ago. Today, approximately one-third of the Department's data is located in AWS and it has proven to be a reliable solution. AWS will provide WDFW access to modern tools (e.g., artificial intelligence, machine learning) that are unavailable within existing on-premises data centers. These tools will allow WDFW to develop science and policy more effectively.

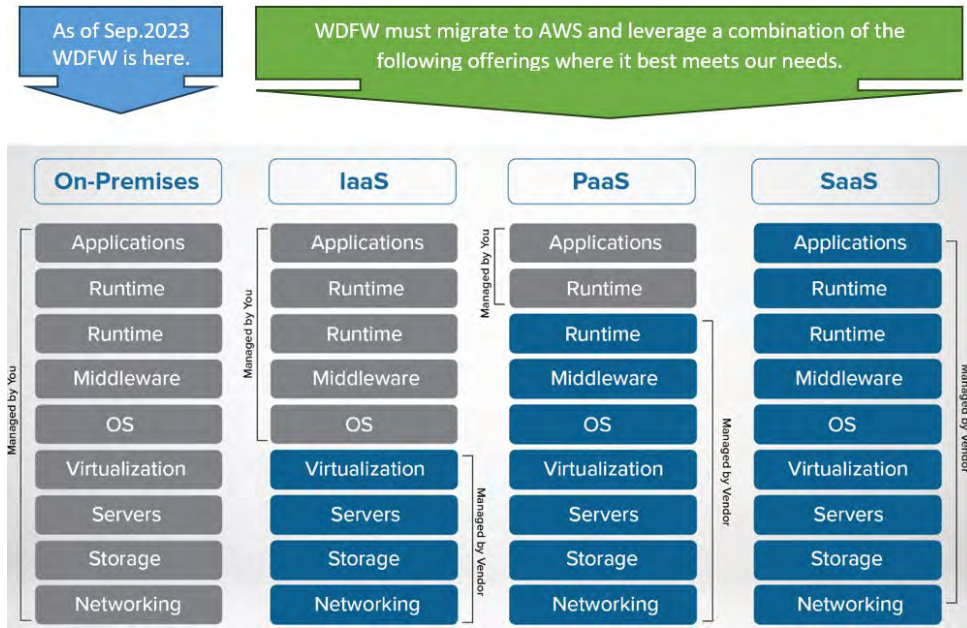
Finally, consolidating WDFW's data onto one platform will reduce the IT staff's workload related to other platforms and allow WDFW's IT team to focus on higher-value tasks.

**Data Architecture: Properly architect siloed, on-premises data onto a cloud-based platform**

To successfully co-locate the data, WDFW requires a data architecture team to transform the existing data located at the state data center. Properly architecting on-premises siloed data on the cloud requires a strategic approach to ensure a smooth and effective migration. Long-term, the data architecture team will build improved data management processes, create better insights, enhance collaboration, and increase agility for WDFW.

With WDFW's recent growth (e.g., biodiversity, salmon recovery provisos) there has been a rapid increase in demand for better utilization of data and analytics to deliver the Department's commitments to the legislature and public. To be successful, it is critical to onboard a data

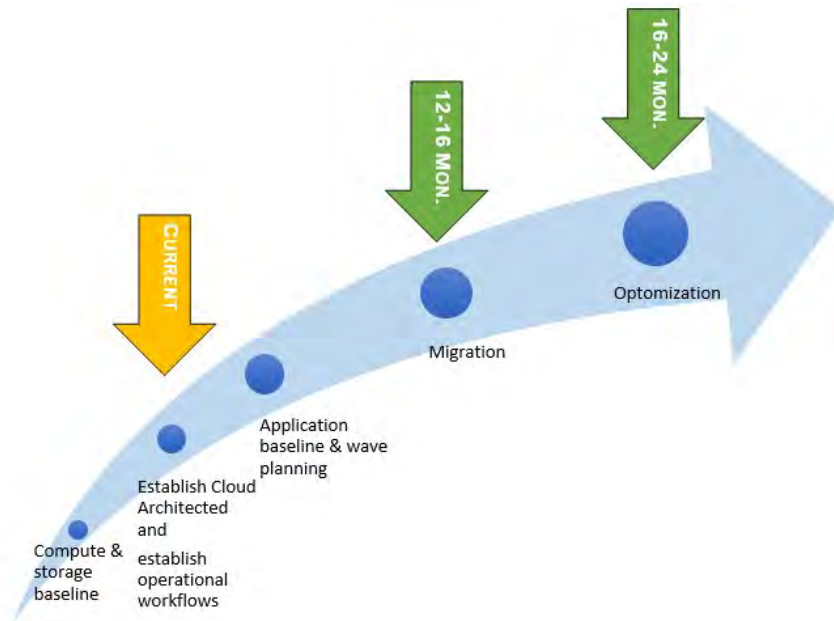
architecture team dedicated to building enterprise solutions to state problem statements and improve data reliability, efficiency, and quality.



**How WDFW plans to implement the solution?**

Following the Office of the Chief Information Officer’s (OCIO) strategic direction, the project will use an agile project management approach to deliver incremental value more quickly. Cloud-based technology will be new for most WDFW IT staff who will need to be trained on how to use and manage data on a cloud-based platform. The department will also hire third-party professional support services to support the migration from the state data center to the cloud platform.

During the migration, there will be an overlapping period where the Department’s data will be hosted on the state data center and the cloud platform. WDFW expects the migration process to be completed in 24 months.



**How does the Solution Address the Problem Statement?**

IT infrastructure migrated to the cloud will address the problem statements in the following ways:

**Problem statement 1: WDFW needs to purchase new hardware for the current on-premises data center by April 2025**

WDFW will have to pay either for hardware for the state data center or to migrate to a cloud-based platform in FY2025. By choosing to

migrate to a cloud-based platform, WDFW will be able to utilize a pay-as-you-go model, eliminate recurring significant hardware acquisition, and reduce ongoing maintenance costs.

**Problem statement 2: WDFW’s recent rapid growth, increased demand, and unique needs exceed the scalability of the existing on-premises environment.**

Migrating to the cloud addresses the growing needs of WDFW scientists and researchers, external stakeholders, and the public. A cloud-based system that can scale rapidly will help meet the computing and storage needs of all parties. Researchers working on new projects will be able to receive more storage or computing power within hours, rather than the months previously required. The below table shows the comparison of the time it takes to set up new resources (compute and storage) for growing business needs.

Action items	On-premises	Cloud-based
Requirement gathering	Same time as it is needed for a cloud-based solution	Same time as it is needed for an on-premises environment
Hardware procurement (i.e., adding compute and storage)	Up to 3 -5 months to procure and install new hardware. Costs are upfront.	Within a few hours, new servers and storage can be allocated by third-party vendor. WDFW only pays for its consumption.
After proof of concept is completed	Unused or underutilized hardware might stay idle and needs to be maintained with security patches and updates.	Unused compute and storage can be retired. WDFW does not need to maintain or pay for it.

With greater federal, state, tribal and public scrutiny of WDFW’s effort, the cloud migration will play a key role in ensuring that WDFW continues to meet its commitments and obligations to the public by making data-driven policy decisions and by making more data available to the public.

**Problem statement 3: WDFW’s is investing substantial resources to manage three different data centers.**

By collocating the Department’s data from multiple data centers onto a single cloud platform, WDFW will reduce the architectural complexity currently required to meet its business needs. IT staff currently trained at a high level to maintain three data centers will be able to upskill and expand the IT team’s capabilities. Collocating also prevents costs and delays in streaming data between data centers.

**Problem statement 4: Significant amounts of WDFW’s data is unstructured or semi-structured in isolated environments.**

Within a cloud platform, WDFW will be able to transform and organize previously siloed or dark data. The IT team will be able to optimize the cloud environment by leveraging modern tools (e.g., artificial intelligence, machine learning). Thus, enabling the WDFW to keep up with the rapid expansion, better data-driven decision making and provide better defensibility for our scientific data.

**Alternative Solutions**

**Alternative Solution 1: Maintain Status Quo**

If WDFW does not migrate to a cloud-based platform, the Department will continue to store its existing data at the state data center. WDFW will need submit a decision package for the 2025 supplemental operating budget to replace most of WDFW’s hardware located at the state data center in FY2025 when it reaches end-of-life. WDFW will need to continue to make additional hardware investments to meet the growing needs of the business.

Without migration:

- WDFW will struggle to keep pace with its rapid growth and increased demands.
- Costs will continue to climb as WDFW adds additional storage.
- New requests for data storage and computing will need to be triaged based on available space.
- WDFW’s access to modern technology (e.g., artificial intelligence, machine learning) will be limited.

OCIO recommends that agencies move towards managing their data on cloud platforms. While not currently required, maintaining the status quo will cause WDFW to fall behind best state practices.

### **Alternative Solution 2: Migrate to the State Cloud Platform**

While finalizing this decision package, WDFW considered alternative cloud solutions, such as WaTech’s cloud platform and other third-party cloud platforms. When comparing these options, WaTech’s cloud platform did not have the same capabilities as other third-party cloud platforms (e.g., artificial intelligence, machine learning).

Additionally, OCIO has indicated that agencies are empowered to choose any cloud platform that best meets its needs. WDFW’s has unique requirements for data creation, utilization, and processing and AWS already has the tools to meet these demands. Additionally, one-third of WDFW’s data is already stored with AWS and the Department will be able to leverage staff’s existing skillset and knowledge.

However, migrating to any cloud platform, including AWS, will make WDFW “cloud agnostic,” meaning that the Department will be able to easily move between different cloud platforms in the future based on the business need, available features, and the service cost.

## **Assumptions and Calculations**

### ***Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:***

WDFW expects to pay \$293,000 in the 2023-25 biennium for the state data center as part of the central service and does not assume cost savings for this expense. WDFW also expects to pay additional \$120,000 for additional capacity at the state data center in the 2023-25 biennium. WDFW will not need this additional capacity after it migrates to the AWS platform. Cost savings are reflected in the assumptions below.

### ***Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:***

#### **Data Center Migration: Collocate IT infrastructure to a cloud-based platform**

- \$324,000 in FY2025 and ongoing for salaries and benefits for 2.0 FTEs, Objects A and B.
- \$1.4 million in FY 2025 and \$350,000 in FY2026 to for professional data migration services, Object C.
- \$539,000 in FY2025 and \$482,000 in FY2026 and ongoing for data storage and platform support for data currently stored in the state data center, Object E. WDFW anticipates higher costs in FY2025 while the Department consolidates data stored across multiple platforms, with a goal of optimizing resources (IT infrastructure and cost) in the following years.
- \$198,000 in FY2025 to train the IT infrastructure team and other IT staff to support and manage data within the new platform, Object E. Trainings include, cloud operations, migrating, security engineering, and advanced architecting.
- Goods and services, Object E, includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.
- An infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% is included in Object T and is calculated based on WDFW’s federally approved indirect rate.

Total costs for data center migration are \$3,367,000 in FY2025, \$1,531,000 in FY2026, and \$1,056,000 in FY2027 and ongoing. This includes cost savings of (\$60,000) per fiscal year for the additional capacity at the state data center that will no longer be needed.

#### **Data Architecture: Properly architect siloed, on-premises data onto a cloud-based platform**

- \$473,000 in FY2025 and ongoing for salaries and benefits for 2.0 FTEs, Objects A and B.
- \$12,000 in FY2025 for advanced training and certifications for the 3.0 new FTEs (\$4,000 per FTE).
- Goods and services, Object E, includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.
- An infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% is included in Object T and is calculated based on WDFW’s federally approved indirect rate.

Total costs for data architecture are \$689,000 in FY2025 and \$672,000 in FY2026 and ongoing.

### ***Workforce Assumptions:***

#### **Data Center Migration: Collocate IT infrastructure to a cloud-based platform**

1.0 FTE IT Architecture – Manager (Cloud Operations)

This position will provide overarching management of the cloud infrastructure; provide operational management and support of cloud environment; optimize the cost and compute allocation; manage the team of system administrators responsible to operate manage and support the cloud-based environment; coordinate training and coaching to upskill IT workforce to maintain the cloud platform; and establish operational workflows and best practices for the cloud environment.

#### 1.0 FTE IT System Administration – Journey

As part of the data center operations team, this position will provide technical support for compute and storage for the platform; configure and maintain the cloud capable solution for operational continuity new initiatives keeping the best practices and security at the core of all initiatives; follow the IT Infrastructure Library standards and systems to manage workload, operational workflows, new initiatives, and projects; and configure and manage cloud-based and on-premises systems, servers, compute, and storage.

#### **Data Architecture: Properly architect siloed, on-premises data onto a cloud-based platform**

#### 1.0 FTE IT Architecture – Manager (Data and analytics)

This position will provide overarching business management to the data and analytics initiatives; facilitate and monitor cross functional data initiatives; establish workflows to identify problem statements and build enterprise-wide solutions; create tactical plans for data governance and oversee compliance; oversee the performance and management of data related initiatives; monitor and guide data governance and management plans; manage the team of system administrators and data engineers to operate, manage and support the data and analytics program; collaborate with data scientists and other stakeholders to optimize machine learning models; and work with data owners, stewards, and stakeholders to establish metadata governance process throughout data lifecycle.

#### 2.0 FTE IT Data Management – Journey

These positions will work with the enterprise architect to identify key business capabilities enabled by data assets and investments; create and maintain documents that rationalize existing and future data assets and investments and define master data processes to match and merge targeted master data to create a single source; assist data architect with design and build of logical data architecture; troubleshoot the data quality issues and processes that inhibit the merger of various data sets; implement data management tools in different phases, manage and automate data workflows and processes; develop and maintain database and large-scale processing systems architecture; develop data set processes for data modeling, mining, and production; and recommend ways to improve data reliability, efficiency, and quality.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor’s Results Washington Goals**

Co-locating WDFW’s data in a cloud platform with the scalability, performance, and reliability of cloud solutions will be crucial in achieving a culture of data-driven decision making and supports the following Governor’s Goals:

- Results WA Goal 3: Sustainable Energy & Clean Environment Metrics
- Results WA Goal 5: Efficient, Effective, & Accountable Government Metrics

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This package supports two strategies in WDFW’s 25-Year plan: 1) Deliver science that informs Washington’s most pressing fish and wildlife questions, and 2) Model operational and environmental excellence by ensuring that the systems and applications that are in place allow the Department to efficiently collect scientific data needed to make informed decisions, manage data in a safe and secure manner, provide better customer experiences.

The data center is the single most crucial piece of infrastructure for sustaining and growing the work efforts of WDFW in the modern internet and data focused world. It is especially important for a data and analytics rich policy making world that the Department resides in.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

This package is 100% in line with the Activity, “Business Management & Obligations.” Total costs are \$4,056,000 in the 2023-25 biennium and \$3,931,000 in the 2025-27 biennium.

**Performance Outcomes:**

WDFW intends to alleviate technical debt and create workforce efficiencies by replacing the Department’s aging hardware in the state data center and migrate to scalable cloud technology. The intended result of this request is to lifecycle WDFW’s current hardware in the data center while modernizing its technical toolsets and upskilling IT staff in an effort to modernize how WDFW conducts its business and further enable the Department’s digital transformation through phased improvements to first generation tech solutions.

The transparency and awareness this tool provides the Department will continue to grow the effectiveness and efficiency of its staff.

**Equity Impacts**

**Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department maintain mission-critical technologies to ensure there is no degradation of services to the communities we serve. This decision package is a result of identifying risks that could result in a negative impact on the Department’s business operations and restrict mission critical work or advances/improvements throughout WDFW.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

Currently, no disproportional impacts are expected.

**Target Populations or Communities:**

This funding request addresses critical concerns with the technologies that support core Department functions. Without funding, the Department’s risk of failure will continue to grow.

This decision package will allow for internal and external stakeholders to collaborate more effectively and use the data stored in the cloud to better track diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives related to underserved communities by allowing data sharing and agility in tracking local, regional, state, and federal trends to move towards a more equitable and inclusive state government.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package enables WDFW to modernize its technological and data infrastructure systems so that staff have the baseline technology necessary to support the agency's mission. These critical updates to technological resources and frameworks will allow WDFW to implement Puget Sound recovery and all the strategies (e.g., 2022-2026 Action Agenda, Science Workplan, Governors Salmon Strategy, and Orca Task Force Recommendations) that they are aligned with.

Thus, this decision package aligns with 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance by ensuring WDFW can work effectively and transparently to achieve its mission. Additionally, this decision package implements the priority action secondary criteria Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring that WDFW's technological infrastructure continues to support Puget Sound recovery efforts. This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation, Strengthen Science, Monitoring, and Accountability, by ensuring that WDFW has the technological resources to be accountable to federal, state, tribal, and public partners and stakeholders.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

WDFW faces growing and constant demand from our intergovernmental partners for more effective, efficient, and transparent data sharing and collaboration on decision making process(es). The quality and dependability of our data center resources is crucial for sustaining and growing trust with our partners and achieving our shared goals and meeting expectations of the public.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

WDFW expects the Governor's Salmon Reporting Office (GSRO) and the OCIO to be supportive of this decision making.

The Department also anticipates that the decision package will have positive impacts for its 29 tribal partners and co-managers, state and federal agencies, private interest groups, non-profit organizations, recreational anglers, volunteers, hunters, and outdoor enthusiasts, and the public.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

The migration to a cloud-based data center from the State data center will support the following legal or administrative mandates:

**Executive Order (EO) 13-04:** The EO mandates that "Each organization shall develop, implement, and sustain a responsive, innovative, and data-driven culture and conduct day-to-day operations, legislative efforts, and regulatory or policy reforms and initiatives in alignment with the five goal areas set forth by Results Washington."

**Applications Hosting Category 4 Data:** WDFW hosts Category 4 data such as Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Confidential Information Requiring Special Handling. WDFW plans to migrate the Category 4 related applications in the final wave and in collaboration with state patrol, ensuring that the information remains in an isolated environment.

**E2SHB 1274 (RCW 43.105.375):** Making an investment in a cloud-based system instead will bring WDFW into compliance with and fulfill requirements in RCW 43.105.375.

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[Draft SCBDM IT addendum.docx](#)

## IT Addendum

***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

Yes

## Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$611	<b>\$611</b>	\$611	\$611	<b>\$1,222</b>
Obj. B	\$0	\$186	<b>\$186</b>	\$186	\$186	<b>\$372</b>
Obj. C	\$0	\$1,400	<b>\$1,400</b>	\$350	\$0	<b>\$350</b>
Obj. E	\$0	\$784	<b>\$784</b>	\$457	\$457	<b>\$914</b>
Obj. T	\$0	\$1,075	<b>\$1,075</b>	\$599	\$474	<b>\$1,073</b>

## Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
(360) 870-4691  
[jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov)





## Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW) public-facing website and data system for salmon and steelhead status and trends information, the Salmon Conservation Reporting Engine (SCoRE), is antiquated and increasing the Department’s cybersecurity risk profile. WDFW needs to build a new salmon data application to meet state open-data strategies, provide accurate and transparent information on salmon management, serve as a dependable data source for our tribal co-managers, and keep pace with increasing reporting demands from the salmon recovery community, including the Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO). [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

## Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	2.5	1.25	1.5	1.5	1.5
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$515	\$515	\$305	\$305	\$610
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$515	\$515	\$305	\$305	\$610

## Decision Package Description

### Problem Statement

SCoRE, WDFW’s public-facing website and data system for salmon and steelhead status and trends information, is antiquated. The system needs to be updated to meet modern standards to serve the public and internal agency users and to lower the cybersecurity risk to the Department. The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) has identified the architecture of this application as a cybersecurity risk.

Launched in 2012, SCoRE used state-of-the-art technology and design to feature one of WDFW’s first public-facing applications offering accountability and transparency into the Department’s salmon management and recovery strategies. SCoRE gave viewers a one-stop spot to find data visualizations and the underlying data used to inform policy decisions for salmon conservation as well as commercial and recreational harvest. However, this technology is now failing to display the growth in salmon management data types because the entire back-end database behind the system needs to be rearchitected and the web application reengineered to incorporate updates to information technology, salmon science, and salmon management over the last decade.

As human population growth, land use, habitat loss, and impacts of climate change have increased, so has scrutiny of WDFW policy and salmon management decisions. The 2020 State of Salmon (SOS) report concluded that wild Puget Sound Chinook salmon are “in crisis” despite being listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for more than two decades. Despite these findings, SCoRE has received little investment over the years and saw its technology surpassed. The inability to showcase the various other data types in SCoRE is damaging to the Department’s brand and reputation with our co-managers, stakeholders, and the public who expect open and transparent government through modern technology solutions.

The GSRO is a key user of SCoRE and uses the application as its primary data source for its biannual SOS report and public facing dashboard. Their reporting and visualization demands have grown beyond SCoRE’s capabilities, leading to inefficient and cumbersome workarounds. This ultimately results in increased use of the Department’s and GSRO’s resources, mainly staff and contracted time. These challenges are only growing year over year.

In addition to the challenges above, several other issues have emerged since the original application launch:

- The current system is in a legacy language (Java) and located on on-premises servers.
- Textual information within the site is out of date and unable to display or share more metrics and indicators.
- Data within the site is displayed poorly by modern standards.
- Navigation within the application is confusing and unclear.
- Due to existing inefficiencies of the application, redundant data is being captured, stored, and displayed in other formats and systems creating opportunity for error.

- The current system is unable to meet public and partners' needs to embed geographic information system (GIS) visualizations geographically to see where the different data is coming from or lacking to make informed decisions. GIS data helps inform decision making in served and underserved areas in salmon management.
- The data and visualization migration from the application to GSRO's SOS dashboard is no longer feasible and requires the GSRO to contract out the work responsible for data/content aggregation. This contractor is also dependent on additional WDFW staff time to create the desired data visualizations outside of the application to be pulled into the SOS.
- Skills to maintain, operate, and improve this system are not readily available since WDFW has transitioned to a more repeatable and reusable code stack, which means working on the system is much more resource intensive.

### Proposed Solution

WDFW proposes building a new salmon data application to provide a modern user experience with dynamic, geospatially represented data displays that are inclusive of all current salmon indicators and salmon management performance metrics. The new application will be a premier web-enabled salmon status and trends dashboard to support salmon recovery science and fish management in the Pacific Northwest. The new application will use modern technology, incorporate greatly expanded WDFW data sources and visualizations, display and provide data sharing in other regional repositories, and provide the public with more accessible data through Washington Technology Solutions' (WaTech) open data platform, drastically reducing the ongoing burden of responding to public data requests.

The new dashboard will also create efficiencies in the GSRO's SOS reporting process. By hosting and maintaining the new dashboard, WDFW data analysts can more easily update or add data visualization requests that can then be exported into the SOS report. Streamlining this process will relieve excess burden on staff and contracted time.

A new salmon data application will display and provide data sharing to other regional repositories such as:

- GSRO's SOS Report.
- Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission's Fish Management Exchange (FMX)
- Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission's Salmonid Coordinated Assessments Exchange (CAX) and others.

The application will include the following features:

- Navigation will be intuitive, map-based and emulate the best parts of the Pacific Salmon Foundation's [Salmon Explorer tool](#).
- Content will incorporate existing WDFW data sources. These data sources are not included within the existing SCoRE application due to its technological limitations.
- Content will be editable by contributing WDFW subject matter experts.
- Public users will be able to access consistent and vetted raw data via WaTech provided state open data platform, [data.wa.gov](https://data.wa.gov).

The new application will represent one part of a much larger Department data governance strategy that creates a repeatable data pipeline process so that a common skillset and training can be applied to frontline users doing the in-field data collection, technical experts for supporting, troubleshooting, and enhancing the applications, and common tools and skills for data analytics and data driven decision making. WDFW has strategically been modernizing its' portfolio of biological data systems with a common technical toolset for ease of ownership and support by Application Developers and Data Managers.

One of the primary goals and benefits of creating a new salmon data application is to ensure that all stakeholders, clients, interested parties, and the public are served equally as intended by open data strategies and state equity efforts for access to information. A modern application will not only make data and analytics more readily available but will also drastically reduce the costs in labor required to support the countless number of Public Records Requests for salmon management data.

The solution will also help WDFW meet growing demand for transparent and accessible data to support salmon recovery from the Governor, the legislature, and the public. When it was built, the current SCoRE application provided sufficient data, but crisis in salmon populations, rising concerns of climate change, population growth, construction, and habitat loss have created exponential growth in interest from the stakeholders and the public for more information. This interest necessitates the creation of a new application, rather than costly band-aid changes to the current application. Further, as the primary data collectors, stewards, and decision makers of salmon management policy, it makes sense for WDFW to own the applications that present that information. Having the technical application development resources in-house as full-time staff will allow for continuous improvement, appropriate lifecycle management, and reduced risk profile of a legacy technology. A custom-built replacement with a full-time, dedicated developer will produce a technology solution that can mature and evolve with climate change and growing public and political interest in salmon management.

### **Alternative Solutions**

The alternative solution is to maintain the status quo. Though the current SCoRE application is outdated, cumbersome, and a poor user experience, it is still a production system that serves as a data repository for many salmon population indicators that internal and external stakeholders value. Further, the data consumed and represented in the Governor's SOS report comes from some of the back-end data sources.

Due to the critical data housed within SCoRE that supports salmon recovery decision making, maintaining the status quo will be a decision to deprecate critical data services. If an investment is not made to modernize the system, data critical to salmon recovery could be compromised and WDFW's credibility with the tribes, the governor's office, and the public would be negatively impacted. Compromised data systems could also lead to uninformed decisions which could result in lost fisheries. Poorly maintained legacy technology systems also add risk to the state enterprise and any one system could be the access point for the next mega cybersecurity incident.

## **Assumptions and Calculations**

### ***Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:***

N/A

### ***Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:***

To update the salmon data tool, WDFW requests:

- \$149,000 in FY2025 for 1.0 FTE IT Project Management Journey to provide overall coordination, requirements gathering, stakeholder management, and organizational change management, Objects A and B.
- \$213,000 in FY2025 and ongoing for 1.5 FTEs IT Application Development Journeys to develop and maintain the data system, GIS workload, web app and hosting, Objects A and B.
- Goods and services, Object E, includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year.
- An infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% is included in Object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

### ***Workforce Assumptions:***

#### **1.0 FTE IT Project Management – Journey**

This position will create project artifacts, maintain a change log, manage the change process for escalated decision making, maintain a risk log, and conduct sprint planning and biweekly customer engagement and technical team demos of the solution. This is in line with both WDFW IT development strategy and recent guidance from the OCIO on state strategy for IT application development and project management.

#### **1.5 FTE IT Application Development – Journey**

These positions will develop and maintain the data system, GIS workload, web app, and hosting. These positions will be critical for application

data migration, data quality assurance, and quality control, extensive system testing and coordination across other technical staff resources that support the collection of in-field data that gets aggregated within the SCoRE system. These positions will also be tasked with supporting growing analytical needs and leveraging their intimate understanding of the data model.

The partnership of these resources, paired with existing technical expertise, executive support, and enterprise IT strategy, WDFW believes that the existing system can be replaced within one year and then enhancement needs, lifecycle management, and operations/maintenance will resume.

Dates of Phased deployments for the SCoRE replacement project.

#### Scoping period

- Three months for requirement gathering and prioritization of needs across various stakeholder groups (Hatchery Division, Science Division, RCO/GRSO, data.wa.gov, and third-party stakeholders)
- Dependent on scheduling with GRSO staff

#### Build period(s)

Two weeks sprints for agile dev intervals for each of the following, 2nd week in cycle is for changes/remediation actions.

- Web front end (month 4)
  - GIS interface would be at beginning for hanging the ornaments of off that GIS front end
  - Wildstock display (SPI system)
  - Connection to/from data.wa.gov
  - Testing and UAT
- Data Back End (month 5)
  - State of the Salmon report
  - Testing and UAT
- Data Back End (month 6)
  - Hatchery Systems and Content
  - Testing and UAT
- Data Back End (month 7)
  - Habitat and Harvest
  - Testing and UAT
- Content Management Tool for implementation of textual information:
  - Ongoing engagement with the content owners for the text/info within the web app

#### UAT, deployment, plus contingency -two months

- Inclusive of external stakeholders GSRO and linkages to external stakeholder groups data repositories

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This package supports the Governor's goal of "Effective, Efficient, and Accountable Government" by ensuring:

- legacy applications are maintained or replaced with effective and efficient ones;
- sound management of people's data; and
- the data contributing to Department decision making is freely available to the public on-demand and that this data is data is secure.

It also supports:

- Governor's Salmon Recovery plan
- Pacific Salmon Treaty reporting
- Open Data Initiative and RCW 43.105.351
- OCIO strategic plan for legacy system replacement
- Best practices for cybersecurity and data governance
- Modern workforce and digital transformation efforts to support a hybrid workforce

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This package supports two strategies in WDFW's 25-Year plan: 1) Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions, and 2) Model operational and environmental excellence by ensuring that the systems and applications that are in place allow the Department to efficiently collect scientific data needed to make informed decisions, manage data in a safe and secure manner, and provide better customer experiences.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

This package supports the following activities:

- Preserve & Restore Aquatic Habitat & Species: 50% or \$258,000 and 1.3 FTEs in FY2025 and \$153,000 and 0.8 FTEs in FY2026 and ongoing.
- Manage Fishing Opportunities: 50% or \$257,000 and 1.2 FTEs in FY2025 and \$152,000 and 0.7 FTEs in FY2026 and ongoing.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

WDFW intends to alleviate technical debt and create workforce efficiencies by replacing the agencies legacy systems. The intended result of this request is to lifecycle WDFW's custom-built solutions in an effort to modernize how the Department conducts its business and further enables the Department's digital transformation through phased improvements to first generation tech solutions. Many legacy systems sacrificed efficiency and enterprise solutioning for ease of organizational change management during the original build process when the scope would rarely exceed digitization of an existing paper process.

## Equity Impacts

### **Community outreach and engagement:**

Populations and communities statewide will benefit from a modern salmon data application because the tool will use maps and other visuals to show where investments in salmon recovery efforts are being made. Increased data transparency will better equip WDFW to make informed decisions on which rivers and waterways are being underserved for salmon recovery and ultimately which areas are getting greater opportunities for recreational fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities.

### **Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

None have been identified at this time.

### **Target Populations or Communities:**

With a new salmon data application, WDFW will have better resources for identifying target populations or communities impacted by salmon recovery efforts. Having the right systems in place allows for data to be compiled and consumed to help inform decisions that impact the equity of various communities. Therefore, an investment in modern technology solutions is an investment in equity by creating transparent access to information and provides useable solutions that meet American Disability Act (ADA) needs.

- A modern system can more quickly adapt to changing ADA needs.
- A modern transparent system can identify where WDFW investments in salmon recovery are benefitting communities and which areas are underserved.
- Utilization of [data.wa.gov](https://data.wa.gov) and conforming to data transparency and accountability mandates will support maximized access of salmon data to Washington state citizens, tribes, and third-party stakeholders.

## Other Collateral Connections

### **Puget Sound Recovery:**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Salmon Recovery and 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and Monitoring because data management underpins the success of WDFW to implement this strategy including using the SCoRE webtool that will be addressed through this decision package. This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action ID 206, ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights, by implementing key opportunity, promote and improve accurate and timely data reporting and availability, by improving the ways WDFW meets growing demand for transparent and accessible data to support salmon and steelhead status and trends information from the public and decision makers. This decision package provides the technological resources and frameworks for WDFW ongoing programs to be able to implement all the Action Agenda strategies that they are aligned with. Thus, it aligns with 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance by ensuring WDFW can work effectively and transparently to achieve our mission.

This package additionally fulfills the secondary criteria Support Continuity by ensuring that WDFW's ongoing programs, such as the Salmonid Life Histories and Survival Research program, have the technological infrastructure to maintain effectiveness and continue to support Puget Sound recovery. This decision package ensures the technological support for WDFW to implement the Salmon Strategy Recommendations 1: protect and restore vital salmon habitat, 5: more effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower, and 8: strengthen science, monitoring, and accountability.

### **State Workforce Impacts:**

N/A

### **Intergovernmental:**

The GSRO uses data from WDFW and SCoRE to populate their third party hosted state of the salmon (SOS) report which is directed by the Governor's office. The data represented in the SOS is critical to inform policy making decisions and is supportive of this decision package to gain better data.

Updating SCoRE to meet current salmon population indicator data needs, security standards, modern user experience to better relate with our public stakeholders, GIS enabled data systems, fully embrace open data standards through [data.wa.gov](https://data.wa.gov) to maximize transparency in government, along with having the ability and funding to maintain them to future security standards, is expected to be supported by OCIO.

The Department expect Washington tribes to be generally supportive of upgraded systems to support salmon recovery efforts.

**Stakeholder Response:**

WDFW anticipates full public and stakeholder support for SCoRE replacement.

Broad public involvement has been a cornerstone of Washington's approach to salmon and steelhead recovery since 1998, when the state Legislature passed the Salmon Recovery Act into law. Rather than “abdicate these responsibilities to the federal government,” the law calls for “integrating local and regional recovery activities into a statewide strategy.”

This inclusive approach has brought watershed coalitions, volunteer organizations, farmers, foresters and other businesses together with state, tribal and local governments in various ways to reverse the long-term decline of the state's wild salmon populations.

**State Facilities Impacts:**

N/A

**Changes from Current Law:**

N/A

**Legal or Administrative Mandates:**

N/A

**HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions**

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

**Reference Documents**

[WDFW IT Addendum SR Salmon Reporting Tool.docx](#)

**IT Addendum**

**Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?**

Yes

**Objects of Expenditure**

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$273	\$273	\$161	\$161	\$322
Obj. B	\$0	\$88	\$88	\$52	\$52	\$104
Obj. E	\$0	\$18	\$18	\$11	\$11	\$22
Obj. T	\$0	\$136	\$136	\$81	\$81	\$162

**Agency Contact Information**

Jon Neville  
 (360) 870-4691  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 2023-25 First Supplemental Budget Session  
 Policy Level - AD - Deer and Elk Ag Damage Compensation

### Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW, Department) requests funding and staff for elk and deer commercial crop damage claims. Since 1996, RCW has limited claim payments at \$150,000 per year, and claims over \$10,000 require an administrative appeal, regardless of the Department’s consensus. In addition to these legal limitations, funding has not kept up with increases in crop damage values and claim volume, resulting in a backlog of appeals processing. Claims to be paid in biennium 2023-25 from biennium 2021-23 exceed current funding levels, and there is no capacity to pay new claims in biennium 2023-25. The Department requires legislative assistance to address the backlog by raising the appeal limit, increasing ongoing General Fund State appropriations to meet demand, and adding staffing resources to support timely claim processing. [Related to Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation.]

### Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.7	1.0	0.85	1.0	1.0	1.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$703	\$473	\$1,176	\$428	\$428	\$856
Total Expenditures	<b>\$703</b>	<b>\$473</b>	<b>\$1,176</b>	<b>\$428</b>	<b>\$428</b>	<b>\$856</b>

### Decision Package Description

The limit on funding for commercial crop damage payments due to deer and elk damage is currently \$150,000 per fiscal year - \$120,000 from the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Fund and \$30,000 from the General Fund (RCW 77.36.070 and RCW 77.36.080). These amounts have not increased since 1996. Inflation and changing environmental factors over the past 27 years has reduced the Department’s ability to meet legislative direction in RCW 77.36.

The increasing values of some human food crops and of exported crops have exceeded the normal inflationary rate, further challenging the Department’s ability to meet legislative direction. Crop adjuster visits have also increased alongside increased claim volume and inflation, and they are often called to testify in appeals. The Department is seeing a trend of increasing deer and elk commercial crop damage claims exceeding \$10,000 and crop adjuster costs have increased accordingly.

Funding for commercial crop damage payments is restricted by statute to crop loss compensation and related assessment costs. However, each claim requires a Department employee to process and evaluate the claim based upon crop adjuster assessments, field staff reports, and additional documentation for compliance with RCW and WAC rules. The increased volume of claims is making it difficult for the Department to meet processing timelines. The required appeal process is also making it challenging for the Department to process this high volume of claims in a timely manner.

Currently, the Department can only dedicate half of one full time employee’s time to processing all commercial crop damage and livestock depredation loss damage claims. Claims subject to the administrative appeal process require a significant amount of additional staff time for preparation and participation. Due to higher claim values, more staff time is spent in the appeal process than ever before and meeting the deadlines for document submission, pre-hearings, and hearings is unrealistic with current staffing resources.

The Department is requesting additional funding to process and pay for commercial crop damage claims. The Department anticipates a large claim volume in fiscal year 2024 due to drought during the corresponding growing season. At existing funding levels, crop growers must wait for an extended time to have their claims processed, and once processed, the laws and rules may require them to file an appeal even if the Department agrees with the amount claimed. Once awarded, rule requirements direct the agency to pay claims in the order which they were received. Further, rules direct the agency to pay claims in subsequent fiscal years on a first-come, first-served basis depending on fund availability. Due to the current backlog, claimants may wait upwards of 3-5 years to receive payment, if their appeal is supported by a judge. Meanwhile, the Department continues to receive new claim submissions; which will not be paid until at least the 2025-27 biennium unless the backlog is addressed.





Workload volume significantly increased in correlation to the increased value of claims received (shown above). Higher claim values lead to increased claim volume, resulting in significant demands on staff time. In addition to the workload associated with claims received and claim volume, there are often numerous intent to file cases which require significant staff time, but do not result in a claim received.

Actual claim payments often differ from claims received value. If the amount claimed is over the current \$10,000 limit, the claimant may choose to participate in the adjudicative proceeding process in effort to receive higher compensation.

### Proposed Solution

Additional General Fund State appropriations are necessary to allow the Department to assist agricultural producers with crop damage for the general welfare of all Washington citizens. One-time funding would address the current backlog of \$325,000. Increasing funding and authority to \$300,000 per fiscal year in General Fund State for ongoing deer and elk crop damage claim payouts would address the increased volume and value of claims being received by the Department. Raising the \$10,000 appeal bar for Department payment authority to \$30,000 would reduce the amount of pro forma appeals where the Department agrees with the value of the crop loss. That will reduce processing time for the Department and the claimant and reduce the administrative costs of unnecessary appeals for the majority of claims. Finally, \$108,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$158,000 from fiscal year 2025 on would allow the Department to handle increased claim volume and reduce the time necessary to process claims by hiring additional staff to assist with the workload.

### Alternatives explored

The Department is working with commercial crop producers with cost-share agreements to reduce wildlife damage to agricultural fields by installing fencing around fields and hazing deer and elk. However, fencing isn't a viable strategy in all cases due to local land use regulations, geographical or physical constraints of the property, size of the property, or other challenges. The Department manages local deer and elk populations through season setting adjustments and can lethally remove animals causing damage. However, not all landowners permit hunting and some private properties become refugia for deer and elk. Hazed animals retreat to these private properties only to return later to the agricultural fields and continue causing damage. Large-scale deer and elk removal is inconsistent with herd management objectives and could have negative impacts on the populations.

Below are examples of Elk Damage:



*This photo was taken near Puyallup, WA in the 2022 growing season showing elk damage to pumpkins.*



*This photo was taken near Walla Walla, WA during the 2022 growing season showing a large herd of elk caught in the act of damaging a wheat field.*



*This photo was taken near Walla Walla, WA during the 2022 growing season showing the damage to a winter wheat field caused by elk.*

## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

Crop damage claims are characterized by fiscal year, but the wildlife damage that occurs is within the previous calendar year. For example, damage caused during the growing season of calendar year 2019 is grouped into fiscal year 2020 in WDFW records. Some claims don't get paid until a new fiscal year starts, so there is a spillover of claims that get paid in subsequent fiscal years (WAC 220-440-150[11]). This is caused either by the date the claim gets finalized or, more commonly, because WDFW runs out of funding to pay damage claims and has to wait for new funds to become available. WDFW pays contracted crop adjusters out of the same fund, so some of the values described below include those payments.

2019-21 Biennium

In fiscal year 2020, crop damage claims and adjuster payments had a total value of \$190,515.77. In fiscal year 2021, total value was \$189,867.37. Both years exceeded appropriated funding. All claims from this biennium have been paid.

#### 2021-23 Biennium

The current value of crop damage claims and adjuster payments for fiscal year 2022 is \$296,264.33. WDFW still needs to pay out \$183,190.03 of that total in the 2024-25 biennium as funding from the 2021-23 biennium was exhausted. WDFW is waiting on a final order from the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) for a claim that has a maximum value of \$179,204. If granted maximum value, the total value of claims paid for fiscal year 2022 would be \$475,468.33.

The current value of crop damage claims and adjuster payments for fiscal year 2023 is \$65,964.86. WDFW is waiting on a final order from the OAH for two claims that have a combined maximum value of \$83,760.76. If granted the maximum value, the total value of claims for fiscal year 2023 would be \$149,725.62. Two claims awaiting orders have the potential to increase the final value by at least \$20,000. All these claims will need to be paid out of appropriations for the 2023-25 biennium, which will restrict WDFW's ability to pay for any new claims during that time. There will be a carry forward of \$25,000 into biennium 2025-27, plus all new claims filed during the 2023-25 biennium.

#### ***Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:***

Salaries and Benefits for a 0.7 full-time equivalent (FTE) position total \$72,000 in fiscal year 2024 and 1 FTE position total \$107,000 in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing. Goods and Services include \$5,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$7,000 in fiscal year 2025 and ongoing. Goods and Services covers an employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs. Travel costs are estimated at \$2,000 per year for meetings and trainings.

One-time funding in fiscal year 2024 to address the deer and elk crop damage claim payout backlog of \$325,000.

One-time funding in fiscal year 2025 to report to legislature a list of recommendations for changes to Washington statutes after reviewing crop and livestock wildlife damage programs in other states as directed in Agency Request Legislation Z-0420.1 of \$25,000.

One-time funding in fiscal year 2025 for rulemaking, estimated at \$4,000 per rule, totaling \$8,000 for Attorney General time and public hearing costs.

Ongoing funding to meet anticipated annual claims for deer and elk crop damage at an increase of \$270,000 per fiscal year.

An infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% for all non-claim payment costs is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate.

#### ***Workforce Assumptions:***

**Fiscal year 2024:** 0.7 FTE Management Analyst 3 to increase claim evaluation and processing capacity in accordance with the current crop damage claims volume

- Object A, Salary: \$52,000
- Object B, Benefits: \$20,000

**Fiscal year 2025 and ongoing:** 1 FTE Management Analyst 3 to increase claim evaluation and processing capacity in accordance with the current crop damage claims volume

- Object A, Salary: \$77,000
- Object B, Benefits: \$30,000

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This decision package supports the state's ability to achieve Results Washington goals of a Prosperous Economy and Effective, Efficient & Accountable Government by increasing capacity to process claim payouts in a timely manner to minimize financial loss for commercial crop owners.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

The Department's Strategic Plan identifies what we want to do differently but does not encompass all of the work of the Department. This package supports our current work highlighted in the WDFW Foundational Map and the Activity Inventory.

#### **WDFW Activity Inventory**

This package supports our activity inventory item "Preserve & Restore Terrestrial Habitat & Species" and applicable support strategy: \$703,000 in fiscal year 2024, \$473,000 in fiscal year 2025, and \$428,000 ongoing, thereafter.

This package supports the following WDFW Foundational Map activities:

- Consult with businesses, landowners and governments regarding terrestrial species and land impacts and legalities - 50%
- Respond to game species wildlife conflicts and dangerous wildlife (non-wolf) - 50%

The Department's foundational work includes responding and mitigating human-wildlife conflict. This includes addressing deer and elk damage to commercial agricultural operations. WDFW providing assistance to crop producers experiencing elk and deer conflict increases overall tolerance for wildlife on agricultural ground among the community of producers. Compensating for commercial losses allows WDFW to proactively address conservation challenges and meet our business and management obligations.

### **Performance Outcomes:**

This proposal will allow us to provide technical assistance and meet our statutory responsibilities to pay commercial crop growers for qualifying damage claims. If requested funding is granted, WDFW anticipates paying the backlog of approved claims (\$325,193.95) in full in FY2024 and increase capacity for claim processing by 100% by hiring additional staff.

## Equity Impacts

### **Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication division.

### **Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities. It is important that the Department can maintain these functions to ensure there is not degradation of services to the communities we serve.

### **Target Populations or Communities:**

This proposal would increase capacity to pay crop damage claims and decrease the processing time for more timely payouts, minimizing delays in financial assistance to landowners experiencing elk- and deer-related crop damage across Washington state.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25 Economic Benefits by increasing WDFW staff capacity and funding for elk and deer crop damage claims, thereby minimizing claim processing times and supporting commercial crop producers. This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 25 Action #164, support natural resource sector jobs and production opportunities by implementing key opportunity “cultivate and support businesses seeking to produce local foods and natural resources focused services, activities, and products,” by providing financial support to commercial crop producers that have faced crop losses from deer and elk.

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

This funding would provide additional customer support to commercial agricultural producers and non-lethal responses to elk damage, which could in turn provide additional hunting opportunities for Tribal co-managers.

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

WDFW anticipates support of the state and county Farm Bureau branches for this proposal.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

The amount in RCW 77.36.080 will need to increase by any new appropriations for this purpose in General Fund.

The claim payment limit of \$10,000 (without administrative appeals) in RCW 77.36.130 and WAC 220-440-150 would increase to \$30,000 to account for inflation and administrative burden.

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

This proposal is not in response to any litigation, audit finding, Executive Order, or task force recommendation.

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[Z-0420.1.pdf](#)

## IT Addendum

***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

No

**Objects of Expenditure**

<b>Objects of Expenditure</b> <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>	<b>Fiscal Years</b>		<b>Biennial</b>
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2023-25</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2025-27</b>
Obj. A	\$52	\$77	<b>\$129</b>	\$77	\$77	<b>\$154</b>
Obj. B	\$20	\$30	<b>\$50</b>	\$30	\$30	<b>\$60</b>
Obj. C	\$0	\$25	<b>\$25</b>	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Obj. E	\$5	\$15	<b>\$20</b>	\$7	\$7	<b>\$14</b>
Obj. G	\$2	\$2	<b>\$4</b>	\$2	\$2	<b>\$4</b>
Obj. N	\$595	\$270	<b>\$865</b>	\$270	\$270	<b>\$540</b>
Obj. T	\$29	\$54	<b>\$83</b>	\$42	\$42	<b>\$84</b>

**Agency Contact Information**

Jon Neville  
 (360) 561-5079  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov



## Agency Recommendation Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has seen a significant increase in large, complex public record requests in recent years. The staff who handle public records requests (PRR) are increasingly challenged to respond in a timely and complete manner, which increases the Department’s legal and financial exposure. Additional staff and software tools to conduct electronic searches and review will significantly increase WDFW’s ability to meet deliverable deadlines with assurance of completeness, which in turn reduces potential litigation and financial exposure. The additional resources will also allow for improved training of agency staff and overall records management.

## Fiscal Summary

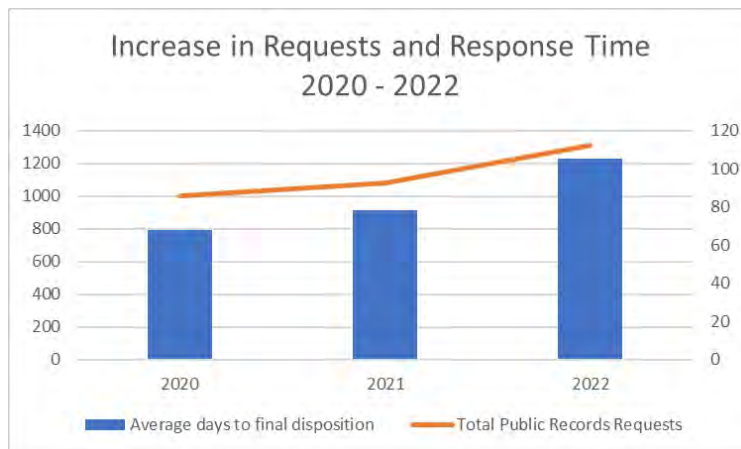
Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.0	4.0	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$827	\$827	\$827	\$827	\$1,654
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$827	\$827	\$827	\$827	\$1,654

## Decision Package Description

WDFW is responsible for ensuring public data are readily accessible and agency records are properly maintained, per Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 42.56 Public Records Act (PRA). WDFW’s Public Records Unit (PRU) provides public records request responses, data classification and risk management services. The PRU ensures transparency of agency records, protection of sensitive information and remediation of risks within the Department while providing oversight and guidance related to statutory requirements, under the Washington State Public Records Act, state and federal laws and policies.

Public records requests must be fulfilled in a reasonable amount of time or fines and judgements may be imposed. The 2022 court of appeals decision, *Cantu v. Yakima School District 17*, significantly increases potential legal risk associated with delayed public records responses. The risk associated with delays in providing public records has increased significantly due to this decision.

The PRU’s workload has continued to increase in recent years in both complexity and volume of requests. From 2020 to 2022, there has been an increase in request volume of 31%, and the Department is on track to meet or exceed that in 2023. There are numerous factors impacting the increased volume. In 2020, the Department made the Microsoft Office 365 (MS 365) environment an integral part of the way we do business. This led to a dramatic increase in the volume of electronic records potentially responsive to public records requests required to be reviewed, marked for redaction, and produced in response to requests.



This, coupled with the increased number of requests and the increased number of staff, means longer review and response times. We are currently processing requests with electronic responses up to 1-2 million records per request. Depending on the size, it can take anywhere from one minute to one hour to review a record. In 2021, WDFW’s MS 365 electronic searches alone produced nearly 4.5 million records. In 2022, electronic searches produced nearly 7 million records, a 45% increase. This excludes all other electronic records and physical records. There are numerous factors impacting the increased volume not limited to MS 365, facilities clean up and the scanning of numerous paper records, use of drones and other video, agency growth, etc.

PRU's primary success is measured via the annual Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) metrics. The 2017 Legislature passed RCW 40.14.026, requiring state, local, and other government agencies subject to the PRA to report information about their public record activities. For the 2021 reporting period, the Department reported an estimated 21,944 staff hours spent on the 614 open and received requests. From January 1, 2022, through November 30, 2022, WDFW received 888 new requests. The average number of days to fulfillment has increased from 78 days in 2021 to 106 days in 2022.

### **Proposed Solution**

This request includes funding for the initial purchase of the software applications as well as sustainable funding to ensure continued use in the future. It includes 4 fulltime positions to support the PRR process, including centralization of the PRU. Finally, it is the Department's goal to continually improve our processes to meet our legal requirements and defensibility with centralization of public records work, improved search and review tools which will improve response and fulfillment times and assist the Department to be increasingly compliant with the RCW, decreasing potential legal exposure and risk of fines.

### **Alternatives Explored**

One alternative explored is to do nothing (status quo). Continued current PRU staffing levels exposes WDFW to elevated risk and liability as the PRU will continue to encounter increasing levels of difficulty and volume of PRR. Additional resources will help mitigate this elevated risk and liability to the Department.

The Department currently has nine budgeted full-time equivalent (FTE) positions that work on Public Records Requests

- One - IT Policy & Planning Manager
- Three – Management Analyst 3
- Four – Forms & Records Analyst 3
- One – IT System Administration - Journey



## Assumptions and Calculations

### **Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:**

N/A

### **Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:**

Salaries and benefits, objects A and B, for additional four FTE positions totals \$472,000 annually ongoing. Goods and services, object E, includes \$7,000 per FTE, per year, for WDFW standard costs, which cover an average employee's space, supplies, communications, training, and subscription costs per year, and \$108,000 for search and review software subscription and licenses annually. An infrastructure and program support rate of 36.03% is included in object T and is calculated based on WDFW's federally approved indirect rate for FY 2024.

### **Workforce Assumptions:**

1.0 FTE Management Analyst 3 - The Management Analyst 3 will collaborate with existing PRU staff to cover managing the public facing portion of request work and program level public records coordinator work. Additionally, the FTE associated with this request allows the PRU's continued goal to centralize as much as possible of the search, collection, and review of records in response to public records.

1.0 FTE Forms and Records Analyst 3 - The Forms and Records Analyst 3 will assist existing PRU staff as well as the FTE listed above and below with the PRR work for the Department's other programs. This position will support records management and public records review and redaction. This position will allow PRU to better distribute the program workloads from existing staff who are task saturated with their current workload, integrate other program public records coordination and meet the ever-growing demands both internally and externally.

1.0 FTE IT System Administration - Entry - The IT System Administration – Entry will assist the existing Electronic Search Specialist (ESS) dedicated to searching all the electronic data stored in MS 365 and does not include data stored in other shared servers, local drives, external storage devices and cloud locations. This request to add another ESS will widen the centralized search support and thus reduce the burden on program staff to conduct searches, reducing risk of human error during the processes. Additionally, the ESS is responsible for completing the search plan and conducts the search using MS 365eDiscovery, but it cannot export every case due to limited capacity. This means the export work is often sent out to the Program Records Coordinators, the Public Records Unit, and the Litigation Holds Coordinator who are also responsible for completing the review, redaction, and release of the records in a timely manner. There is more risk realized in this scenario than if we could centralize it and do all the work in our unit.

1.0 FTE IT Data Management – Journey - The IT Data Management – Journey will help respond to public records requests, discovery, litigation, and other investigative requests effectively and efficiently. This position would be responsible for designing, testing, and implementing data retrieval methods, primarily through the executive of structured query language (SQL) queries, and ensuring the integrity of database system data. This position would be relied upon for subject matter expertise in data management practices and would be skilled in providing technical support and guidance around exporting data from these various databases. This would include but is not limited to SQL queries, data modeling, metadata management and repository usage, extensible data type administration, procedural skills for stored procedure, triggers and user-defined functions and storage management techniques.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### **Strategic Framework:**

#### **Governor's Results Washington Goals**

This package supports the Governor's goal of efficient, effective, and accountable government.

#### **WDFW 25-Year Strategic Plan**

This package supports two of WDFW's 25-Year Strategic Plan: 1) engage communities through recreation and stewardship, and 2) model operational and environmental excellence.

**Performance Outcomes:**

Performance outcomes:

- Increase compliance with Secretary of State schedules for proper retention and destruction of records
- Reduce gaps in the workflow: receive public records, log, track, vet, work with requestor, legal compliant acknowledgement, gather, review, apply redactions to protected information, create legally compliant log of each redaction
- Keep WDFW's staff current with records retention rules, storage, management, and public records obligations
- Maintain and keep current policies and procedures
- Increase level of response which in turn drives down litigation and the risk of financial penalties

**Equity Impacts**

**Community outreach and engagement:**

The Department conducts community engagement and public outreach through the Public Engagement and Communication divisions. The Department is committed to improving and evolving community engagement with historically excluded and marginalized communities.

**Disproportional Impact Considerations:**

No disproportional impacts are expected.

**Target Populations or Communities:**

This proposal addresses the timeliness in responding to public disclosure requests. It is not directly connected to specific communities. However, failure to fund this request could result in costly arbitration. This could hinder the agency's ability to complete its mission, leading to disproportionate impacts on communities.

## Other Collateral Connections

### ***Puget Sound Recovery:***

N/A

### ***State Workforce Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Intergovernmental:***

N/A

### ***Stakeholder Response:***

WDFW anticipates the public would be receptive of this proposal, as it would provide the agency with the resources needed to respond quickly to public records requests.

### ***State Facilities Impacts:***

N/A

### ***Changes from Current Law:***

N/A

### ***Legal or Administrative Mandates:***

- Public Records Act, chapter 42.56 RCW
- Executive Order 1601, Privacy Protection and Transparency in State Government
- Executive Order 1701, Reaffirming Washington’s Commitment to Tolerance, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Washington Secretary of State rules regarding records retention
- Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 40.14.040 Records officers—Designation—Powers and duties
- RCW 40.10.010—Essential records—Designation—List—Security and Protection—Reproduction
- RCW 39.26.340 Data Sharing Agreements – When required - Contractors
- RCW 39.24.240 - Data requests – When written agreement required – From another agency

### ***HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions***

Although WDFW is not covered under the HEAL Act, the agency is strongly supportive of providing meaningful engagement, reducing environmental harms and health disparities, and increasing equitable access to environmental benefits for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

## Reference Documents

[PRR IT addendum.docx](#)

## IT Addendum

### ***Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?***

Yes

## Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$347	<b>\$347</b>	\$347	\$347	<b>\$694</b>
Obj. B	\$0	\$125	<b>\$125</b>	\$125	\$125	<b>\$250</b>
Obj. E	\$0	\$136	<b>\$136</b>	\$136	\$136	<b>\$272</b>
Obj. T	\$0	\$219	<b>\$219</b>	\$219	\$219	<b>\$438</b>

## Agency Contact Information

Jon Neville  
 (360) 870-4691  
 jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov

# Agency Supporting Details



Rough-skinned newt at Newman Creek. Photo credit: Daniel Trollivan, WDFW.



Dollars in Thousands

**ABS031 Agency DP Priority (PL)**  
**(List only the program Policy Level budget decision packages, in priority order)**  
**477 - Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**2024 First Supplemental Budget Session**  
**SUB - WDFW 2024 Supplemental**

---

---

<b>Decision Package Code</b>	<b>Decision Package Title</b>
PL-FH	Forest Health and Fuel Reduction
PL-CS	Coastal Salmonids Management
PL-CM	Critical Infrastructure Maintenance
PL-RR	Non-lethal Wolf Deterrence
PL-BI	Salmon ESA Regulatory Compliance
PL-HA	Fish Health and Marking
PL-DM	Secure Cloud-Based Data Migration
PL-SR	Salmon Reporting Tool Replacement
PL-AD	Deer and Elk Ag Damage Compensation
PL-PR	Additional PRR Capacity

WDFW Puget Sound Action Agenda 2023-25 Biennial Totals (dollars in thousands)				
Request Title	Code	Puget Sound Portion	FTEs	Account
Body Cameras and Public Records	BA	\$ 556	3.0	001-General Fund
Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW	CN	\$ 1,051	2.5	001-General Fund
Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW	BC	\$ 2,636	11.7	001-General Fund
Critical Infrastructure Maintenance	CM	\$ 2,125	8.6	001-General Fund
Emerging Toxics in Chinook and Orca	EM	\$ 2,412	4.5	23P-Model Toxics Control Operating Account
Engaging Volunteers in Conservation	EV	\$ 810	7.0	001-General Fund
Expand Wildlife Conflict Response	WC	\$ 5,940	33.3	001-General Fund
Geoduck Stock Assessment	GS	\$ 1,328	4.0	001-General Fund
Hatchery Investment Strategy	HA	\$ 2,949	5.1	001-General Fund
HPA Permitting System Replacement	HP	\$ 4,403	2.0	001-General Fund
Legacy Systems Replacement	LS	\$ 689	2.5	001-General Fund
Manage Impacts to State Lands	SL	\$ 794	3.6	001-General Fund
Restoring Washington's Biodiversity	RB	\$ 3,193	13.0	001-General Fund
Fish Passage Maintenance Team	MT	\$ 609	5.0	001-General Fund
Wildlife Disease Surveillance	WD	\$ 386	1.4	001-General Fund
Mass Marking Wage Adjustment	WA	\$ 929		24N-Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 224		001-General Fund
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 57		001-General Fund (Federal)
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 22		001-General Fund (Private/Local)
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 28		02R-Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 158		24N-Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 10		104-State Wildlife Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 1		21S-Aquatic Invasive Species Management Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 7		110-Special Wildlife Account (Private/Local)
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 4		071-Warm Water Game Fish Account
Fuel Rate Adjustments	8F	\$ 90		444-Fish and Wildlife Equipment Revolving Account (Non-appropriated)
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 132		001-General Fund
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 81		001-General Fund (Federal)
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ (17)		001-General Fund (Private/Local)
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 73		02R-Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 760		24N-Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ (668)		104-State Wildlife Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ (4)		21S-Aquatic Invasive Species Management Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ (1)		098-Eastern Washington Pheasant Enhancement Account (Federal)
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 1		110-Special Wildlife Account
Utility Rate Adjustments	8U	\$ 7		04M-Recreational Fisheries Enhancement
Equipment Maintenance and Software	9Q	\$ 1,902		001-General Fund
Equipment Replacement Costs	9S	\$ 784		001-General Fund
Wildlife Rehabilitation	WR	\$ 180		14A-Wildlife Rehabilitation Account
Building Salmon Team Capacity	ST	\$ 558	2.7	001-General Fund
County and Other Assessments	CA	\$ 68		001-General Fund
Ongoing Essential Work	EW	\$ 4,878	75.8	001-General Fund
Survey Flight Cost Increases	FC	\$ 169		001-General Fund
Fisheries Enforcement Compliance	FE	\$ 1,981	15.0	001-General Fund
Hatchery Fish Food Cost Increases	HF	\$ 624		001-General Fund
Monitor Shellfish Harvest	SH	\$ 4,077	13.6	001-General Fund
Increased Pamphlet Costs	PA	\$ 176		24N-Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Account
Increased Pamphlet Costs	PA	\$ 22		071-Warm Water Game Fish Account
Pro-Equity, Anti-Racism (PEAR)	PP	\$ 340	2.0	001-General Fund
Zooplankton Monitoring Program	ZM	\$ 1,008	0.5	001-General Fund
Wallace River Hatchery	30000660	\$ 17,228		057-State Building Construction Account
PSNERP Match Duckabush Estuary Habitat Re	30000846	\$ 41,000		057-State Building Construction Account
SRKW - Sol Duc Hatchery Modifications	40000147	\$ 1,186		057-State Building Construction Account
Soos Creek Hatchery Renovation	30000661	\$ 4,100		057-State Building Construction Account
Minter Creek Hatchery - Replace Intake	30000277	\$ 1,441		057-State Building Construction Account
Samish Hatchery - Friday Creek Intake & Fish F	30000276	\$ 1,630		057-State Building Construction Account
Fish and Wildlife Health and Biosecurity Facility	40000090	\$ 7,805		057-State Building Construction Account
SRKW Samish Hatchery Expansion and Adult F	30000679	\$ 1,910		057-State Building Construction Account
Sol Duc Hatchery Intake Barrier and Boat Chute	30000672	\$ 4,730		057-State Building Construction Account
Marblemount Hatchery - Renovation	30000847	\$ 120		057-State Building Construction Account (Federal)
Hood Canal Shellfish Harvest Access Area		\$ 3,000		057-State Building Construction Account
Eells Spring Renovation	30000214	\$ 12,486		057-State Building Construction Account
Deschutes Watershed Center (Prog)	20062008	\$ 12,000		057-State Building Construction Account

All accounts are state authority, unless otherwise designated.

## Policy Level Decision Packages:

### 1. Body Cameras and Public Records

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #163) Increase trust by including and communicating directly and effectively with new and diverse audiences by *building WDFWs capacity to support transparent governing processes through the use of body wearable camera technologies that support public expectations for regarding police interactions and accountability*. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by *supporting WDFW enforcement programs through increased public transparency*.

### 2. Building a Carbon-Neutral WDFW

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 19 Greenhouse Gas Emissions by *decreasing the vulnerability of Puget Sound to climate change by decreasing the magnitude of climate change through large scale institutional reductions in greenhouse gases for WDFW that also advance Puget Sound statutory goals for greenhouse gas reduction*. This decision package is also directly aligned with several actions in Strategy 19. This decision package supports Action (ID 136) Develop and implement plans, regulations, and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all sources, especially primary emitting sources (those that account for more than 16 percent of emissions) including land use and transportation; electricity; residential, commercial, and industrial building; and heating by implementing key opportunity Fully implement the Clean Fuel Standards Act, Clean Energy Transformation Act, and Climate Commitment Act; maintain continued engagement and accountability practices to ensure policies have long term impact by *implementing programs that will allow WDFW to meet its statutory requirements related to the Clean Energy Transformation Act by putting WDFW on track to meet the next RCW 70A.45.050 limit of reducing emissions 45% by 2030*. This decision package also supports Action (ID 136) Develop and implement plans, regulations, and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all sources, especially primary emitting sources (those that account for more than 16 percent of emissions) including land use and transportation; electricity; residential, commercial, and industrial building; and heating by implementing key opportunity Support the electrification of public fleets, including Washington State Ferries; increase use of renewables, decrease use of fossil fuels, and promote the creation of circular economies by *supporting research and planning for WDFW's transition to a low-emissions fleet by addressing current and upcoming technologies that could meet operational demands such as electric trucks, renewable diesel, and hybrid boat motors; infrastructure needs; costs; maintenance; and policy questions such as impacts on employee workflows*. This decision package also supports Action (ID #141), increase and ensure institutional infrastructure and funding for research and monitoring to explore, track, and evaluate the efficacy and feasibility of carbon sequestration and emissions reduction by implementing key opportunity research, fund, and utilize low carbon technologies, including battery technology, energy storage, and distribution, as well as carbon sequestration in forests, soils, and as blue carbon, by *supporting WDFW's capacity for GHG emissions data collection, analysis, and tracking that would support future carbon reduction strategies*.



This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by implementing key opportunity to assess the readiness of Puget Sound hatcheries to provide and adapt their services in the face of climate change *by researching options for WDFW to measure and reduce nitrous oxide emissions from hatchery fish.*

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring capacity to track greenhouse gas emissions data by WDFW programs and operations.* Additionally, this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 43, take aggressive, comprehensive and sustained action to reduce human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, with the goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050 and Salmon Strategy recommendation 4 *by implementing greenhouse gas reduction programs that will allow WDFW to meet its statutory requirements.*

### **3. Building a Climate-Resilient WDFW**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6: fish passage barriers and is directly aligned with Action (#152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds by implementing key opportunities 1) Support Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) compilation and development of statewide strategies, in collaboration with tribal nations, other agencies, and local partners, including prioritization and sequencing of barriers, and 2) Include stormwater and climate change priorities in transportation plans, *by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design should be modified to account for projected climate change.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 14: Invasive species and is directly aligned Action (ID# 203), Create an integrated planning approach to protect and enhance biodiversity in the Puget Sound ecosystem by mitigating the threat of invasive species by implementing key opportunity, collaborate on monitoring and mitigation across state and local agencies and tribal co-managers *by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor trends in non-native predatory fish in critical stream habitat.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor non-native predatory fish relevant to salmon habitat.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Strategy 15 Action #204 Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species *by increasing WDFW's capacity to monitor trends in non-native predatory fish in critical stream habitat that will inform adaptive management.*

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 18: Awareness of Effects of Climate Change and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 131) Expand monitoring, research, and assessment of the individual and cumulative impacts and risks of climate change on Puget Sound *by assessing and building institutional awareness of the vulnerability of WDFW lands and supporting infrastructure to climate change impacts.*

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 20: Climate Adaptation and Resilience *by increasing WDFW ability to better protect and restore ecosystems and benefit human*

*well-being by meeting species conservation and recovery goals by providing harvest and recreation opportunities under a changing climate, providing effective technical assistance, permitting, research, and planning that account for projected changes in climate, and increasing the resilience of WDFW's lands and infrastructure to the observed and projected impacts of climate change.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 137) Implement multi-benefit projects and programs that synergistically advance Puget Sound recovery goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in Puget Sound ecosystems, increase climate adaptation, and promote climate resilience by implementing key opportunity, identify and address climate change risks to ensure resilience and reliability of infrastructure necessary for transportation (including roads, culverts, and bridges), communication, wastewater treatment, stormwater management, and power, *by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design related to fish passage barriers should be modified to account for projected climate change.*

This decision package is directly aligned Action (ID #148) Develop and enhance guidance on best practices to reduce emissions and risks and adapt to the most impactful climate stressors by implementing key opportunity, update local, regional, state, and tribal nations' guidance and planning documents to require the integration of adequate and timely responses to changing climate and ocean conditions *by increasing WDFW staff capacity to ensure that guidance provided to local jurisdictions, pursuant to their Growth Management Act Comprehensive Plan updates, Critical Area Ordinances, Shoreline Management Act applications, and other efforts accounts for the impacts of climate change on fish, wildlife, and habitat affected.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 148) Increase availability of data, tools, and training, and increase the technical capacity of partners in the recovery community, to reduce the magnitude of and vulnerability to climate change, and advance adaptation of the Puget Sound socio-ecological system *by integrating dynamic spatial models like TerrAdapt into adaptive management plans, enabling WDFW managers to better prioritize where conservation actions are implemented to maintain ecologically connected networks of habitat that support a thriving and resilient network of ecosystems across Washington.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C: Research and Monitoring *by increasing recovery research and monitoring related to future climate conditions of critical ecosystems, fisheries, and non-native predatory fish.* This package is directly aligned Action (ID #188) Develop and analyze alternative future scenarios to help leaders make decisions that will lead to system-level change under a range of projections for climate change, population growth, and other uncertainties. *by implementing key opportunity Institute future scenarios approaches as a mindset facilitated through tool kits designed to enable practitioners in the recovery system to consider the many ways the future may unfold and how strategies can be made more robust, responsive, and effective by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design related to fish passage barriers should be modified to account for projected climate change.*

This decision package implements the Priority Action 3 Assess the degree, and how, access to marine and coastal resources (e.g. fisheries, open space, native foods) is changing among different communities in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by supporting implementation of an entanglement risk and bycatch monitoring program to support cross program marine wildlife recovery efforts and marine fisheries planning under changing climate.* This decision packages also fulfills the

Secondary criteria - Adds value by filling gaps from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by addressing the gap of ecological trends in non-native predatory fish in response to climate change.*

This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat, *by improving WDFW's Climate Smart Culvert tool that will be used by engineers and resource managers to assess how culvert design related to fish passage barriers should be modified to account for projected climate change.* This decision package also indirectly implements Salmon strategy 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon, *by supporting monitoring efforts of non-native predatory fish to develop ecological information that would support predatory fish management.*

This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca task force recommendation 14: reduce populations of nonnative predatory fish species that prey upon or compete with Chinook *by supporting monitoring efforts of non-native predatory fish to develop ecological information that would support management.* This decision package also indirectly implements Orca task force recommendation 45: Mitigate the impact of a changing climate by accelerating and increasing action to increase the resiliency and vitality of salmon populations and the ecosystems on which they depend *by increasing WDFW's capacity to support climate resiliency projects, programs, research, monitoring and technical assistance that could support ecosystems that salmon rely on.*

#### **4. Columbia River ESA Permitting**

NA, program activities not in Puget Sound

#### **5. Critical Infrastructure Maintenance**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by supporting continued maintenance and operation of WDFW hatcheries to maintain fish production and limit mortality to support salmon recovery and harvest.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity, continue to implement increased state and tribal hatchery production to support prey availability for Southern Resident Orca, and indirectly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by supporting WDFW's fish hatchery production by ensuring hatchery infrastructure is maintained to ensure day-to-day operations are efficient and cost effective, minimize workplace hazards for staff and the public; and mitigating production disruptions for loss of fish.*

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing or maintaining WDFW's hatchery salmon production through increased infrastructure maintenance and safety.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce Recommendation 6 significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases

need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and Salmon Strategy Recommendation 5 More effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries and hydropower.

This decision package is necessary to support the ongoing Fisheries and Hatcheries Science Management program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 15 Salmon Recovery, 17 Responsible Boating, 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship, 24 – Cultural Practices and Local Foods, 25 Economic Benefits, and 26 Human Health.

## **6. Emerging Fishery Implementation**

N/A, not in Puget Sound

## **7. Emerging Toxics in Chinook and Orca**

*By increasing capacity at WDFW to identify the location and sources of Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CEC) exposure in order to guide conservation measures to reduce toxic chemicals in Puget Sound, this decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 8 Toxic Chemical Pollution and is directly aligned with Action (ID #43) Prioritize, prevent, and manage (regulations, permits, and incentives) chemicals of emerging concern by implementing key opportunity Identify, prioritize, and monitor chemicals of emerging concern (CECs) (including integration of human health risk and thresholds). This package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and Monitoring and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#121) Direct and leverage funding and investments to advance science, monitoring, and adaptive management for Puget Sound recovery. This decision package implements the priority action 8 Assess toxic contaminant sources, (both historic and ongoing) and prioritize their clean-up or replacement based on environmental and human health impacts from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 33, Increase monitoring of toxic substances in marine water and create and deploy adaptive management strategies to reduce threats to orcas and their prey. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon.*

## **8. Engaging Volunteers in Conservation**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: Outdoor Recreation, and Stewardship and Strategy E: Stewardship and Motivating Action, *by encouraging increased access to information and opportunities for public volunteer engagement in outdoor stewardship in Puget Sound.* This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Action Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound (ID #159) *by increasing the number of support staff managing volunteer programs that will accelerate local engagement to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat, and provide sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.* This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy E Action (ID #127) Build social and institutional infrastructure that supports stewardship behaviors and removes barriers by implementing two key opportunities, allocating funding to build the capacity of residents and community-based organizations to engage in stewardship behaviors, and bolstering and expanding voluntary environmental programs for local businesses and

private landowners, particularly those owned by vulnerable populations and underserved communities, *by increasing the capacity of WDFW to support regionally relevant volunteer programs that advance recovery goals and stewardship.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and Monitoring *by increasing WDFW's capacity for monitoring and assessment and through volunteer conservation programs.* This decision package is directly aligned Action (ID # 122) Coordinate efforts to assess and report on ecosystem conditions and the effectiveness of ecosystem recovery strategies and actions by implementing key opportunity, ensure that local, long-term, and inherently efficient volunteer monitoring programs are well funded, maintained, regionally respected, and designed to offer the added benefit of educating and involving the public *by increasing the number of support staff managing volunteer programs that will accelerate local engagement to protect fish, wildlife, and their habitat, and provide sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.*

This decision package fulfills the Secondary Criteria Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 8 to strengthen science, monitoring and accountability, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 35, to conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents, *by implementing community science led efforts to support data collection efforts for Washington's 268 Species of Greatest Conservation Need which includes several regionally relevant salmon species and orcas.*

## **9. Expand Wildlife Conflict Response**

This decision is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 2: Working Lands *by consolidating and improving agency response to wildlife conflicts. Consolidation and improved response will reduce producer frustrations, lower costly claims for damage payments, and allow for a seamless response and follow-through to dangerous wildlife conflicts including conflicts with bears and cougars.* This package also directly aligns Action (ID#4) Support the long-term viability and sustainability of agricultural lands and working forests to reduce pressure for conversion from the current use to a more developed use *through expanding incentives and technical assistance for agricultural lands and owners of working forests.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 21: Place Attachment *by consolidating and expanding its response to wildlife conflicts. Wildlife conflict specialists address crop damage and dangerous wildlife interactions, increasing preventative education and outreach and freeing enforcement officer time for other priority duties.* This decision package also aligns with Action (ID#158) increase access to and visibility of mental health connections to a healthy natural environment *by managing and preserving natural areas for stress reduction, motivation, and long-term attachments.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: Outdoor Recreation & Stewardship *by adding more Conflict Specialists to the agency in order to increase proactive and preemptive measures to potentially decrease human-wildlife conflicts.* Through these efforts, this decision package *indirectly aligns* with Action (ID#160) identify and fund removal of barriers resulting in the exclusion of people from participating in recreation and stewardship activities.

This decision packages fulfills the secondary criteria support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by supporting WDFW Wildlife program's capacity to respond to wildlife conflict.*

#### **10. Geoduck Stock Assessment**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25: Economic Benefits *by increasing capacity to support stock assessment, research, and environment programs that ensure a sustainable geoduck fishery industry in Puget Sound.* This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Food and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 91) Improve appropriate access opportunities for harvesting local foods and other culturally significant materials on public lands and shorelines *by increasing capacity to support stock assessment, research, and environment programs that ensure a safe, local, and sustainable geoduck industry and harvest in Puget Sound.* Through these efforts this decision package also implements the Priority Action 3 Assess the degree, and how, access to marine and coastal resources (e.g., fisheries, open space, native foods) is changing among different communities in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan.

#### **11. Hatchery Investment Strategy**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity, continue to implement increased state and tribal hatchery production to support prey availability for Southern Resident Orca *by increasing WDFW's hatchery capacity to produce recreational and commercial harvest, tribal harvest, Southern Resident Orca (SRO) prey, and catalyze conservation efforts for wild salmonids through increased pathogen monitoring, fish marking to meet regulatory requirements, and facilities operation. The Treaty Tribes and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) co- manage hatchery production and salmon harvest allocations in Washington State.* This decision package is also indirectly aligned Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by increasing WDFW's hatchery salmon production through increased pathogen monitoring, fish marking to meet regulatory requirements, and facilities operation and staff.* Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 6: Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery

This decision package is necessary to support the ongoing Fisheries and Hatcheries Science Management which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies 15 Salmon Recovery, 17 responsible boating, 22 outdoor recreation and stewardship, 24 cultural practices and local foods, 25 economic benefits, and 26 Human Health.

#### **12. HPA Permitting System Replacement**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 3 Healthy Shorelines and is directly aligned with Action (ID #14), increase and improve shoreline regulation implementation, compliance, enforcement, and, communication by implementing key opportunities 1) evaluate and improve implementation of existing shoreline regulations and policies (which could include single-family residences as well as emergency construction permits) and 2) conduct effective and active compliance monitoring and enforcement to support and reinforce permitting decisions by state and local regulatory agencies, *by ensuring that the public facing HPA permitting online system required for shoreline modification is functional, efficient, and aids in future compliance of shoreline regulations that support functioning shoreline habitat, species, and food webs.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance *by increasing transparency of decision-making processes related to shoreline regulations specific to HPA permitting by ensuring a clear and transparent online system for the public, tribes, and other communities.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#163), increase trust by including and communicating directly and effectively with new and diverse audiences *by ensuring that a public facing online permitting system that is the pathway for decision making at the state agency level is clear, transparent, and functional to increase trust and communication with the diverse partners.*

This decision package is necessary to support the ongoing Hydraulic Approval Program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 3-Healthy Shorelines, 4-Riparian Areas, 5-Floodplains and Estuaries, 6-Fish Passage Barriers, 7-Sumerged Aquatic Vegetation, 22-Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria: Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring the integrity of the HPA online permitting system, where data is ultimately collected about HPA permits in Puget Sound, is functional and can be used for future regulatory and compliance reviews across the region.* This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Task Force recommendation 3: Apply and enforce laws that protect habitat, *by enhancing state agencies' capacity for implementation and enforcement of the state Hydraulic Code and fish passage regulations by ensuring a functional HPA online permitting system for staff and partners.* This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 1: Protect and restore vital salmon habitat *by ensuring a functional online permitting system for HPAs that are often required in shoreline construction projects that may support restoration projects for vital salmon habitat.*

### **13. Legacy Systems Replacement**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C Research and monitoring because data management underpins the success of WDFW to implement this strategy including using the SCoRE webtool that will be addressed through this decision package. This decision package provides the technological resources and frameworks for WDFW ongoing programs to be able to implement all the Action Agenda strategies that they are aligned with. Thus, it aligns with 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance by ensuring WDFW can work effectively and transparently to achieve our mission.

This package fulfills the secondary criteria Support continuity by ensuring that WDFW ongoing programs, such as the Salmonid Life Histories and Survival Research program, have the technological infrastructure to maintain effectiveness and continue to support Puget Sound recovery. This decision package ensures the technological support for WDFW to implement the Salmon Strategy Recommendations 1: Protect and restore vital salmon habitat; 5: more effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower; and 8: Strengthen science, monitoring, and accountability.

#### **14. Manage Impacts to State Lands**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship and is directly aligned with Action (ID#159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity, Increase understanding of the connections between outdoor recreation and stewardship activities. Through these efforts this decision package also indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy 1: Protect and restore vital salmon habitat.

This decision package implements the Priority Action 15 Explore and advance the use of methods to integrate human dimensions with biophysical targets and goals by decision makers from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by refining and applying an Ecological Inventory Assessment (EIA) system investigating ecosystem health, recreation, and stewardship uses to adaptively manage WDFW-managed lands in coordination with State Parks, DNR, and with federally recognized tribes to integrate their values into this monitoring and adaptive management approach.*

#### **15. Restoring Washington's Biodiversity**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategies: 1 Smart Growth, 2 Working Lands, 3 Healthy Shorelines, 4 Riparian Areas, 5 Floodplains and Estuaries, 6 Fish Passage Barriers, 7 Freshwater Availability, 12 Working Lands Runoff, 13 Oil Spills, 14 Invasive Species, 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery, 18 Awareness of the effects of climate change, 20 Climate adaptation and resilience, 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship, 23 Cultural Practices and Local Foods, 25 Economic Benefits, A Funding, B Strategic Leadership and Collaboration, C Research and Monitoring, D Education Partnerships, and E Stewardship and Motivating Action *by increasing WDFW's capacity to 1) develop and implement recovery plans, including but not limited to implementing or assisting partners in species and habitat protection and recovery actions and promptly addressing habitat and species recovery planning needs, 2) Stop or slow declines in species and habitat loss, including but not limited to focusing efforts on key at-risk species and habitats, enhancing the level of support for local, state, and federal decision makers and landowners, improving compliance with existing laws and rules, improving landowner participation in biodiversity recovery, addressing future scenarios like climate change, 3) Improve our knowledge of species and habitats status, trends, and needs, including but not limited to increasing science, planning, and action implementation capacity to fill critical knowledge gaps, and 4) Support partnerships, public engagement, and conservation education to restore biodiversity, including but not limited to supporting critical partners biodiversity*



*work, growing community awareness, engagement, and participation in recovering Washington's biodiversity, and supporting future conservation leaders and stewards.*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 1 Action ID #178 Improve the Growth Management Act and local land use planning to effectively channel growth and prevent conversion of ecologically important lands *by increasing WDFW's capacity to provide technical planning assistance and improving compliance with existing laws and rules by assisting landowners in complying with fish protection regulations and supporting local governments' implementation of fish and wildlife protection and planning under the Growth Management Act and Shoreline Management Act, which includes implementing key opportunity Integrate climate change mitigation and resilience and salmon restoration goals and strategies into the GMA and local land use plans.*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 1 Action ID 1 Build Puget Sound-wide support to prevent conversion of forests, farms, and natural areas and increase funding for conservation incentives by implementing key opportunity Improve the education and incentives for public and decision-makers on opportunities to direct growth away from ecologically important areas *by expanding engagement with willing landowners and conservation districts to deliver incentives for habitat restoration and protection, such as outreach and participation in WDFWs "Habitat at Home" program, creating land acquisition or easement opportunities, and supporting social marketing efforts project aimed at identifying barriers and incentives for private landowners to implement habitat protection and restoration on their property.*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 2 Action (ID #4) Support the long-term viability and sustainability of agricultural lands and working forests to reduce pressure for conversion from the current use to a more developed use by implementing key opportunity Expand incentives and technical assistance for agricultural lands and owners of working forests, by improving landowner participation in biodiversity recovery through efforts like increasing outreach and participation in Farm Bill programs designed to support agricultural producers while also benefiting fish and wildlife and private lands access.

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 3 Action (ID #14) Increase and improve shoreline regulation implementation, compliance, enforcement, and communication by implementing key opportunities: Evaluate and improve implementation of existing shoreline regulations and policies (which could include single-family residences as well as emergency construction permits), Conduct effective and active compliance monitoring and enforcement to support and reinforce permitting decisions by state and local regulatory agencies; prevent conversion of nearshore habitats through voluntary acquisition and conservation easements *by expanding engagement with landowners and local government planners to provide technical assistance and to deliver incentives for nearshore habitat protection or create acquisition and easement opportunities, supporting local governments' implementation of fish and wildlife protection and planning under the Growth Management Act and Shoreline Management Act), increasing capacity for WDFWs civil compliance program to help property owners protect fish during construction projects increasing compliance of Hydraulic Project Approvals (HPAs).*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 4 Action ID #201 Provide incentives, financial and technical support to local jurisdictions that have prioritized riparian restoration by implementing key opportunities: Fund and implement technical assistance and outreach programs

with riparian landowners to assist in the implementation of BMPs that will protect, restore, and enhance riparian habitat, Provide technical support and enforcement capacity to local jurisdictions, and Support policies that improve effectiveness and advance the intent of the GMA and SMP *by collaborating with local communities, tribes, and conservation partners to identify and address limiting factors to habitat recovery, providing guidance and best practices on how to manage riparian habitat to support fish and wildlife, and building landowner support and incentives for riparian protection and restoration.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 5 Action (ID #12) Increase the number and accelerate implementation of habitat acquisition and restoration projects as prioritized in salmon and watershed recovery plans *by supporting implementation of salmon recovery plans across WDFW work through planning, management, and providing technical assistance to landowners and planners through engineering capacity for fish passage and water crossings and riverine/floodplain dynamics.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 5 Action (ID #195) Increase and improve floodplain and estuary regulation implementation, compliance, enforcement, incentives, and communication *by assisting landowners in complying with fish protection regulations and supporting local governments' implementation of fish and wildlife protection and planning under the Growth Management Act and Shoreline Management Act, which includes implementing key opportunity Integrate climate change mitigation and resilience and salmon restoration goals and strategies into the GMA and local land use plans.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 6 Action (ID #152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds, *by providing technical engineering assistance to landowners, partners, and tribes to address fish passage, and by implementing salmon recovery plans.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 7 Action (ID #27) Implement and improve technologies, voluntary programs, financial and technical assistance programs, and market-based approaches to reduce water demand and encourage conservation and Action (ID #29) Understand and plan for future water needs and changing climate and ecosystem conditions by engaging all water users in a watershed to identify specific actions around water science, technology, management, and conservation *by providing place-based expertise at the watershed or ecoregion scale and effectively collaborating with local communities, tribes, and conservation partners to identify and address limiting factors to habitat recovery in watersheds, and also providing technical capacity to support an Intensively Managed Watershed long term restoration and monitoring program.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 13 Action (ID #64) Analyze the cumulative risk and consequences of oil spills, assess the effectiveness and feasibility of mitigation measures, and target additional spill prevention efforts, Action (ID #65) Strengthen and integrate spill response readiness of all partners, including federal, state, tribal nations, local government, oil spill response organizations, and transboundary partners, and Action (ID #66) Increase capacity for early local response to spills and seek restoration using the best available science and technology, *by increasing WDFW's capacity to prepare and respond to oil spills strategically and proactively, and to advance orca deterrence actions.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 14 Action (ID #202) Develop, fund, and implement coordinated outreach and incentive programs that educate and raise awareness and motivate action for Puget Sound residents (including boaters) to reduce the spread of invasive species, Action (ID #46) Prevent and rapidly respond to the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, including green crab, predatory fish, and invasive plants Action (ID #203) Create an integrated planning approach to protect and enhance biodiversity in the Puget Sound ecosystem by mitigating the threat of invasive species *by developing species recovery plans for species at risk that address biodiversity and mitigating risks by invasive species, coordinating with landowners to support removal of invasive species, and implement recovery actions to address known threats such as predation from invasive animals or disease.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Actions (ID #204) Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species, (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, ID #206 Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights, *by develop and implementing salmon recovery plans and addressing conservation and restoration actions that increase vital salmon habitat across the state. This work includes but is not limited to developing the Stillaguamish Integrated Conservation and Rebuilding (SICoR) Team, with a mission to conserve and recover habitat for the benefit of coho salmon, steelhead, and Chinook salmon fisheries, and also engaging in cooperative habitat restoration with the Umatilla and Nez Pierce Tribes, federal, state and local government partners, conservation districts, and the local community in the Tucannon and Walla Walla River Basins where actions include in-stream habitat, floodplain function, summer flow restoration, and fish passage work.*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 18 Action (ID #131) Expand monitoring, research, and assessment of the individual and cumulative impacts and risks of climate change on Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity Increase monitoring, research, and systematic assessment of climate stressors such as ocean acidification, sea surface and stream temperature and their compounding impacts *by increasing science, planning, and action implementation capacity to fill critical knowledge gaps about climate change effects on biodiversity, disease, and forest management strategies, which includes answering priority questions about how wildlife communities and food webs would change as a result of climate changes in range, how ecosystems, plant communities, pollinators, mammals, birds, invertebrates, and lizards are responding to changes in wildland fire frequency and intensity related to climate change. This package also supports capacity to incorporate climate change into conservation strategies and recovery plans for Species of Greatest Conservation Need.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 20 Action (ID #137) Implement multi-benefit projects and programs that synergistically advance Puget Sound recovery goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in Puget Sound ecosystems, increase climate adaptation, and promote climate resilience *by supporting statewide biodiversity and ecosystem recovery efforts and addressing critical knowledge gaps that ensure species resilience to current and future climate impacts. This work includes but is not limited to ensure nearshore marine benthic communities are diverse, healthy, and resilient*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 22 Action (ID #72) Engage communities to increase knowledge of responsible use, tribal nations' treaty and sovereign rights, and define responsible recreation opportunities within natural environments. Action (ID #159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound *by supporting WDFW capacity to collaborate with local communities, tribes, and conservation partners to identify and address limiting factors to habitat recovery, increase public awareness and outreach on co-existing with wildlife and engaging in conservation and stewardship, Support WDFW's High Resolution Change Detection (HRCDD) data product which uses aerial imagery to identify land cover and changes throughout Puget Sound and will inform future voluntary programs, develop a regionally based fish and wildlife conservation education program to support the next generation and their families, update technical guidance documents and support social marketing project to identify barriers and incentives for private landowner participation, engage with landowners and local government planners to provide technical assistance and to deliver incentives for habitat protection or create acquisition and easement opportunities, enhance engagement with local communities to promote positive wildlife experiences and encourage people to participate in recovering biodiversity in Washington through WDFW's Habitat at Home program and biodiversity focused communications staff.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 23 Actions (ID #86) Increase number, accessibility, and protections for multi-use and multi-cultural natural spaces (for example, fish and shellfish harvesting, camping, boating, and gardening, etc.), including green spaces and waterways, (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts, (ID #91) Improve appropriate access opportunities for harvesting local foods and other culturally significant materials on public lands and shorelines *by increasing WDFW's capacity to accelerate recovery plans for species of cultural importance. This may include but is not limited to increasing capacity to survey for various freshwater fish and shellfish, particularly those listed as Species of Greatest Conservation Need, to increase baseline biological data to track populations and effectiveness of recovery actions over time, increasing capacity to support data analysis, survey design, and management actions to ensure conservation of critical forage fish species. This package will also support the Puget Sound Restoration Fund for recovery of Olympia Oysters which are historically, culturally, and biologically important shellfish.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 25 Action (ID #96) Conduct and coordinate research to improve the understanding of ecosystem-industry interactions, opportunities, and benefits *by increasing WDFW's capacity to implement species and habitat recovery and management plans, enforce regulations and guidance, and fill critical knowledge gaps that support the natural resource sector and catalyze economic benefits across Puget Sound.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy A Action (ID #173) Secure sustainable, equitable, and dedicated federal, state, local, and tribal nations funding sources to fully fund Puget Sound and salmon recovery and Action (ID #180) Establish and implement a major new source of state funding *by increasing funding necessary to implement WDFW's mandate to conserve fish and wildlife and working with partners to implement the State Wildlife Action Plan and other protection and recovery efforts in Washington's most important habitats.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy B Actions (ID #208) Elevate Puget Sound recovery as a priority for leadership at all levels, (ID #209) Broaden and deepen the coalition demanding a healthy Puget Sound, and (ID #128) Advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice in Puget Sound recovery efforts *by leading a statewide fish and wildlife conservation initiative to expand action and engagement for a “One Washington” approach to landscape-scale ecosystem recovery and fish and wildlife conservation in coordination with Tribes, partner organizations, and the public. This package also increases capacity to strengthen existing and create new relationships with outdoor organizations that have special focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and through WDFWs Fish and Wildlife Conservation Education Program remove barriers for underserved groups to participate in outdoor learning and natural resource activities and support the next generation of WDFW staff, the Department will showcase natural resource careers and provide engagement opportunities for young people to explore career paths.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy C Actions (ID #121) Direct and leverage funding and investments to advance science, monitoring, and adaptive management for Puget Sound recovery, (ID #122) Coordinate efforts to assess and report on ecosystem conditions and the effectiveness of ecosystem recovery strategies and actions, (ID #184) Improve linkages among Indigenous knowledge and research and monitoring, (ID #185) Recognize and embrace human health and wellbeing as a component of ecosystem recovery by identifying and supporting interdisciplinary research that explores and emphasizes the ways in which the health and wellbeing of people and nature are integrated, (ID #186) Build and sustain robust programs and relationships across science-policy interfaces to inform recovery, (ID #187) Communicate science findings clearly and to the appropriate audiences, (ID #188) Develop and analyze alternative future scenarios to help leaders make decisions that will lead to system-level change under a range of projections for climate change, population growth, and other uncertainties *by improving our collective knowledge of species and habitats status, trends, and needs through increased capacity for science, planning, and action implementation to fill critical knowledge gaps. This package supports WDFW conservation biologists to work with research scientists to develop monitoring protocols for population status, distribution, and trends as well as for monitoring effectiveness of recovery actions and to fill gaps in knowledge about climate change effects on biodiversity, disease, and forest management strategies. Research and monitoring would include but not be limited to Cascade red fox, Ferruginous hawk & Golden eagle, Oregon spotted frog, forage fish, Prairie butterflies, ground squirrels, Northern leopard frog, Pinto abalone, and Olympia oysters. This package also includes support for collecting data on Species of Greatest Conservation Needs populations that will inform their status determination (e.g., endangered, threatened, not needing listing), including amphibians and reptiles, birds, forage fish, invertebrates, and mammals. This package also supports the use of innovative new technologies to monitor populations and gather data, including remote cameras with scent dispensers, thermal cameras (e.g., Forward Looking Infrared or “FLIR” cameras), automated radio telemetry (e.g., Motus towers), genetic and histological analysis, hydro-acoustic (sonar) surveys, and environmental DNA (eDNA) technology. This package also provides support for WDFW to continue to effectively collaborate with local communities, tribes, and conservation partners to identify and address limiting factors to habitat recovery and share information. This package also supports numerous recovery efforts support healthy ecosystems for clean water, clean air, natural flood control, noise pollution absorption, reduced heat island effects in urban areas, carbon sequestration, cultural practices, recreation, and physical and mental health benefits.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy D Actions (ID #189) Coordinate planning and implementation across education and restoration partner networks, (ID #191) Expand meaningful education and leadership experiences, internships and mentorships in classroom settings and ‘earn while you learn’ apprenticeships and other paid training opportunities, and (ID #212) Develop clear information on career pathways and the curriculum, training, and program tools needed to grow an equitable green workforce with durable, family wage jobs *by developing a regionally based fish and wildlife conservation education program to support the next generation and their families and foster lifelong stewardship and empathy for the natural world which includes empowering educators and WDFW staff with tools to engage K-12 students in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math and give students access to experiential learning opportunities, helping WDFW build stronger connections with underserved communities in Washington, and supporting young adults to have opportunities to explore careers in natural resources with WDFW. This package also increases WDFW’s capacity to support learner-centered experiences on public lands and includes funding support to defray transportation costs for at least 50 Title I school classrooms to take field trips to WDFW wildlife areas and fish hatcheries each year. This package also includes opportunities to engage zoo and aquaria in habitat recovery planning and coordinated assistance for reintroductions and public awareness and education opportunities. This package also supports a continued partnership with Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to develop Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)-aligned lesson plans focused on fish and wildlife conservation for K-5th grade, working with Washington Educational Service Districts, environmental education organizations, municipalities, and non-profit groups to offer NGSS lesson plan teacher trainings and workshops.*

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy E Actions (ID #125) Cultivate broad-scale stewardship practices and behaviors among Puget Sound residents that benefit Puget Sound, (ID #126) Build issue awareness and understanding to increase public support and engagement in recovery actions, (ID #127) Build social and institutional infrastructure that supports stewardship behaviors and removes barriers, (no ID) Investigate the research questions outlined within Social Science for the Salish Sea, *by supporting WDFW’s efforts to restore biodiversity and increase stewardship by increasing outreach and communications with the public, through WDFW’s Habitat at Home program and increasing WDFW’s biodiversity communication staff capacity. Biodiversity communications staff capacity will support but not be limited to public outreach and efforts to improve sanitation in areas where bears and people co-exist to minimize potential conflict to support grizzly bear recovery, content development focused on SGCN for WDFW’s website and social media platforms to increase public awareness and encourage involvement in species and habitat recovery, and proactive coordination with local media outlets to promote conservation efforts taking place in communities around the state. This package also supports developing a regionally based fish and wildlife conservation education program to support the next generation and their families and foster lifelong stewardship and empathy for the natural world. This package also supports WDFW’s capacity to develop incentives to encourage voluntary actions to conserve biodiversity on private lands. This package also supports a social marketing project aimed at identifying barriers and incentives for private landowners to implement habitat protection and restoration on their property. This package also supports delivering Farm Bill incentives to private landowners on the ground and collaborate directly with NRCS and FSA to ensure smooth transfer of technical assistance.*

This decision package implements the priority action 3 Assess the degree, and how, access to marine and coastal resources (e.g. fisheries, open space, native foods) is changing among different communities in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing WDFW's capacity to improving our collective knowledge of species and habitats status, trends, and needs of coastal and marine resources through increased capacity for science, planning, and action implementation to fill critical knowledge gaps. This may include but is not limited to increasing capacity to survey for various freshwater fish and shellfish, particularly those listed as Species of Greatest Conservation Need, to increase baseline biological data to track populations and effectiveness of recovery actions over time, increasing capacity to support data analysis, survey design, and management actions to ensure conservation of critical forage fish species. This package will also support the Puget Sound Restoration Funds for recovery of Olympia Oysters and Pinto Abalone which are historically, culturally, and biologically important shellfish.*

This decision package implements the priority actions: 5 Determine what incentives, human well-being factors, market drivers, tax systems, and characteristics influence residents', developers', and purchasers' choices that contribute to or prevent habitat conversion, and 6 Assess the effectiveness of incentive approaches in Puget Sound recovery efforts in the Salish Sea from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing WDFW's capacity to understand develop incentives to encourage voluntary actions to conserve biodiversity. This package also supports a social marketing project aimed at identifying barriers and incentives for private landowners to implement habitat protection and restoration on their property. This package also supports delivering Farm Bill incentives to private landowners on the ground and collaborate directly with NRCS and FSA to ensure smooth transfer of technical assistance.*

*This decision package supports the following goals identified in the final report from the Southern Resident Orca Task Force by providing added oil spill response capacity for WDFW, supporting increased access to prey through habitat restoration benefits, and increasing adherence to laws through enhanced public engagement: Increase Chinook salmon abundance, decrease disturbance of and risk to Southern Resident orcas from vessels and noise and increase access to their prey, Reduce the exposure of Southern Resident orcas and their prey to contaminants, and Ensure that funding, information, and accountability mechanisms are in place to support effective implementation. This decision package directly implements the Orca Task force recommendations 1: Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas, 2 Immediately fund acquisition and restoration of nearshore habitat to increase the abundance of forage fish for salmon sustenance, 5 Develop incentives to encourage voluntary actions to protect habitat. 15 Monitor forage fish populations to inform decisions on harvest and management actions that provide for sufficient feedstocks to support increased abundance of Chinook, 14 Reduce the threat of oil spills in Puget Sound to the survival of Southern Residents and 35 Conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents.*

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendations 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat, 2 Invest in clean water infrastructure for salmon and people, 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to historical habitat, 4 Build climate resiliency, 7 Enhance commitments and coordination across agencies and programs, 8 Strengthen science, monitoring, and accountability, *by increasing WDFW's capacity to develop and implement salmon recovery plans among partners, including but not limited to protection and restoration activities related*

*to critical salmon habitat, monitoring salmon species from individual to population levels and environmental trends from local to watershed and regional scales. This package also supports working with local integrating organizations and fish recovery boards to update salmon recovery plans. This package also includes but is not limited to developing the Stillaguamish Integrated Conservation and Rebuilding (SICoR) Team, with a mission to conserve and recover habitat for the benefit of coho salmon, steelhead, and Chinook salmon fisheries, and also engaging in cooperative habitat restoration with the Umatilla and Nez Pierce Tribes, federal, state and local government partners, conservation districts, and the local community in the Tucannon and Walla Walla River Basins where actions include in-stream habitat, floodplain function, summer flow restoration, and fish passage work.*

## **16. Fish Passage Maintenance Team**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by *ensuring that harvest and hatchery adaptive management is successful by providing the capacity to maintain and improve 1768 miles of salmon habitat in fish passage structures so that reared fish are not lost.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, by implementing key opportunity continue to implement best practices for hatchery management, including developing a joint co-manager hatchery policy, by *ensuring that hatchery adaptive management is successful by providing the capacity to maintain and improve fish screens and rearing facilities.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds. *by ensuring that harvest and hatchery adaptive management is successful by providing the capacity to maintain and improve 1768 miles of salmon habitat in fish passage structures, including cases where the fish passage structures themselves are in disrepair and are a barrier themselves so that reared fish are not lost.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6: Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon strategy recommendations 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat, 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat, and 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision packages fulfills the SECONDARY CRITERIA Support Continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by providing technical support to adaptively manage salmon habitat and recovery through fishway maintenance and hatchery rearing capacity.*

This decision package is necessary to support ongoing Fishery and Hatchery Science program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 15: salmon recovery, 17, responsible boating, 22 Outdoor recreation and stewardship, 24 cultural practices and local foods, 25 economic



benefits. This decision package is necessary to support ongoing Fish Passage program which is necessary to effectively implement Action Agenda Strategies: 6-Fish passage barriers, 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery, and 20: climate adaptation resilience.

### **17. Wildlife Disease Surveillance**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 18: Awareness of Effects of Climate Change and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 131) Expand monitoring, research, and assessment of the individual and cumulative impacts and risks of climate change on Puget Sound, *by increasing capacity to understand the climate impacts associated with vector borne diseases among wildlife and humans by supporting disease surveillance and response teams and data management systems.* This decision package fulfills the Secondary Criteria - Adds value by filling gaps from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing capacity to understand the climate impacts associated with vector borne diseases among wildlife and humans by supporting disease surveillance and response teams and data management systems.* This decision package also fulfills the Secondary Criteria Continuing support *by ensuring that wildlife disease surveillance programs continue to be funded to support detection and rapid response of vector borne pathogens that may impact wildlife and human health.* This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca task force recommendation 35 Conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents *by ensuring capacity for disease monitoring programs that provide input for adaptive management and mitigate risk for marine mammals and food webs.*

## Maintenance Level Decision Packages

### **18. Mass Marking Wage Adjustment**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by ensuring WDFWs continued hatchery production of Chinook and coho salmon and associated mass marking of hatchery fish that informs adaptive management, environmental health, and mark-selective fisheries.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID# 205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations *by ensuring adequate WDFW hatchery staffing capacity to maintain hatchery production and support a mark-selective fishery of coho and chinook salmon.* Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, *by ensuring that staffing capacity for WDFW salmon hatcheries is maintained to maximize salmon production in the face of increased labor costs.* This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery by *continued hatchery production of Chinook and coho salmon and associated mass marking of hatchery fish that informs adaptive management, environmental health, and mark-selective fisheries.*

### **19. Fuel Rate Adjustments**

For WDFW and its ongoing programs to succeed in implementing the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategies increased costs of fuel need to be accounted for in a way that does not detract from budgets directed to Puget Sound recovery programs. This decision package to address the inflationary increases in fuel costs is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy A Funding by ensuring fuel costs do not detract from Puget Sound recovery funding.

### **20. Utility Rate Adjustments**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods *by ensuring WDFWs continued hatchery production of salmon and game fish across the state despite increased utility costs, to increase populations consistent with recovery efforts.* Through these efforts this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID# 89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

### **21. Equipment Maintenance and Software**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance *by increasing WDFW administrative infrastructure technological functioning and ensuring a dependable network that will provide greater reliability to the public seeking hunting or fishing information, hydraulic project approval status, and other core service information.* This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring continued administrative infrastructure to support WDFW mission and serve the public related to Puget Sound recovery efforts.*

## **22. Equipment Replacement Costs**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods *by ensuring WDFWs continued hatchery production of salmon and other game fish across the state is efficient and supports a mark-selective fishery to inform adaptive management.* Through these efforts, this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by implementing key opportunity Work to reduce risk to wild populations by balancing the potential risks and benefits of hatchery production, and by conducting research on hatchery infrastructure and management to reduce the fitness differential between hatchery and wild populations. This decision package is also indirectly aligned with Action (ID#89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that fish marking capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon hatchery that supports adaptive management of salmon recovery.* This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, *by ensuring fish marking capacity for WDFW salmonid hatcheries is maintained to adaptively manage a mark-selected fishery.* Through these efforts, this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

## **23. Capital Project Operating Costs**

N/A, not in Puget Sound

## **24. Wildlife Rehabilitation**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 1 Smart Growth *by increasing WDFW wildlife rehabilitation staff and facility capacity which is necessary to address current and predicted increases to wildlife conflict and injury associated with population growth and land development and part of the adaptive management process.* This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship *by increasing WDFW wildlife*

*rehabilitation staff and facility capacity which is necessary to address current and predicted increases to wildlife conflict and injury associated increased outdoor recreation. This decision package is directly aligned with the Action (ID#159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity Increase understanding of the connections between outdoor recreation and stewardship activities, by increasing *capacity for WDFW to engage the public in stewardship practices related to recreation and injured wildlife*. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by *increasing WDFW wildlife rehabilitation staff and facility capacity which is necessary to address current and predicted increases to wildlife conflict and injury associated with population growth and land development and part of the adaptive management process*.*

## **25. Building Salmon Team Capacity**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15: Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by increasing WDFW’s capacity to support salmon recovery *through data-driven management decisions for salmonid populations and increasing capacity to coordinate across key management partners in the state including tribes*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring capacity to support informed decision making related to salmon recovery and harvest with a focus on management models and analyses related to chinook, coho, and other salmonids*. This decision packages fulfills the SECONDARY CRITERIA – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring WDFW program capacity to support salmon recovery through modeling and analysis of salmon populations that inform best management practices*.

This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 35 Conduct research, science and monitoring to inform decision-making, adaptive management and implementation of actions to recover Southern Residents *by ensuring capacity to support informed decision making related to salmon recovery and harvest with a focus on management models and analyses related to chinook, coho, and other salmonids, that will inform management of Southern Residents*. Through these efforts, this decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon strategy recommendation 8 Strengthen science, monitoring and accountability.

## **26. County and Other Assessments**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22: outdoor recreation and stewardship *by ensuring that land acquisition programs continue while benefiting fish and wildlife and providing public recreation such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, wildlife photography, hiking, and equestrian pursuits*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by ensuring that land acquisition programs continue to support critical habitat for salmon recovery and ensure operations of hatcheries*. This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring continued WDFW program capacity to acquire land to support wildlife, conservation, and public recreation needs*. Through these efforts, this package also indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 1 Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit

Southern Resident orcas and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat.

## **27. Fisheries Enforcement Compliance (old title: Additional enforcement officers)**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID 206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by implementing two key opportunities: Improve public education and outreach; increasing funding for enforcement, and Reduce illegal fishing, *by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to salmon harvest and addressing illegal fishing*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 17 Responsible Boating and is directly aligned with Action (ID #68) Promote implementation of and compliance with laws and guidelines for boaters and vessels to protect Southern Resident Orcas by implementing key opportunity, Enforce and adaptively manage rules for boating around orca considering best available science and the results of marine spatial planning efforts; monitor and provide additional protection for vulnerable orca *by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to responsible boating in Puget Sound, and for wildlife including orcas*.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25 Economic Benefits *by ensuring that a thriving natural resource sector continues by increasing capacity for WDFW's capacity to enforce guidance and regulations on commercial and recreational fisheries*. This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural practices and local foods and is indirectly aligned Action (ID #86) Increase number, accessibility, and protections for multi-use and multi-cultural natural spaces (for example, fish and shellfish harvesting, camping, boating, and gardening, etc.), including green spaces and waterways, *by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related marine fisheries and aquaculture*.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring continued WDFW program capacity to enforce existing guidance regulations related to commercial and recreational fisheries and responsible boating*. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce strategy recommendation 3 Apply and enforce laws that protect habitat *by increasing WDFW capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to salmon harvest and other wildlife*. This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon strategy Recommendation 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat *by increasing WDFW's capacity to enforce regulations and guidance related to marine fisheries*.

## **28. Ongoing Essential Work**

This decision package ensures full funding is provided for decision packages that were previously only provide one-time funding. This covers a diverse set of Puget Sound related ongoing programs that are implementing a number of 2022-2026 Action Agenda strategies.

The decision package components Fish Passage Rule Making and Prioritization of Fish Barriers is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers. The decision package directly implements 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers Action (ID#152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage

barrier correction or removal in watersheds *by supporting WDFW is the prioritization and sequencing of barriers.*

The decision package component Riparian Systems Assessment is aligned with 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 4 Riparian Areas. The decision package directly implements 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 4 Riparian Areas Action (ID#11) Establish and implement science-based riparian protection, restoration, and management policies that result in a minimum ‘1 Site Potential Tree Height’ forested riparian area standard *by supporting WDFW in developing the data and analysis on riparian habitat management and policy choices.*

The decision package component Streamflow Policy Support is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 7: Freshwater Availability. This decision package directly implements the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 7: Freshwater Availability Action (ID #29) Understand and plan for future water needs and changing climate and ecosystem conditions by engaging all water users in a watershed to identify specific actions around water science, technology, management, and conservation *by ensuring WDFW policy and technical expertise engages in the proactive planning for how Washington will management and protect instream habitat and water levels under changing climate.*

The decision package components Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys, Increase Fish Populations (Hatchery Maintenance), and Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery. The decision package directly implements 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery. It implements the Action (ID#204) Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species *by conducting marine mammal surveys*; the Action (ID#205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca by supporting hatchery maintenance; and the Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by supporting improved monitoring for in-season management.

This decision packages fulfills the second criteria– support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring key WDFW ongoing programs such as Fishery and Hatchery Science and Management continue to provide relevant science for natural resource management decisions.*

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant OTF Recommendation 8 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent *by ensuring funding for hatchery maintenance.* This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 3 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat *by supporting the WDFW Fish Passage ongoing program in rule making and prioritization.* This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy Recommendation 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon *by funding Salish Sea Marine Mammal Surveys.*

## **29. Survey Flight Cost Increases**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 14: Invasive species and is directly aligned with Action (ID#46) Prevent and rapidly respond to the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, including green crab, predatory fish, and invasive plants by implementing key opportunity Use surveillance to detect invasive species and better understand pathways of introduction *by ensuring WDFWs capacity to monitor and address invasive plants in wildlife areas*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is directly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by implementing key opportunity, improve monitoring for in-season management *by ensuring WDFWs capacity to perform surveys of chinook spawning related to salmon recovery*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts *by ensuring WDFWs capacity to restore or enhance game wildlife through animal capture and population monitoring (e.g., wolf, elk, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, and mule deer)*.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that WDFW can maintain aerial surveys and programs that support fish and wildlife protection*. This decision package indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 1 Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas *by supporting adaptive management of Chinook through spawning surveys*. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant SALMON STRATEGY recommendation 8 Strengthen science, monitoring and accountability *by supporting adaptive management of Chinook through spawning surveys and monitoring*.

### **30. Hatchery Fish Food Cost Increases**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring WDFWs ability to support salmon recovery through hatchery production of salmon and salmonids to meet tribal, commercial, and recreational fishery commitments*. Through these efforts this decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan, directly implements the Puget Sound relevant orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant salmon strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

### **31. Monitor Shellfish Harvest**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 25 Economic Benefits *by ensuring WDFW's Puget Sound Shellfish program capacity to support natural resource-based industries by increasing ability to monitor recreational and commercial shellfish harvests, monitor intertidal and*

*crustacean fisheries, address emerging environmental issues, build data management infrastructure, and develop a disease and pest management program to protect shellfish fisheries. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #96) Conduct and coordinate research to improve the understanding of ecosystem-industry interactions, opportunities, and benefits, by increasing WDFWs staff capacity to monitor, research, and provide science based analysis related to management of shellfish and crustacean fisheries. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #164) Support natural resource sector jobs and production opportunities by increasing WDFWs staff capacity to support natural resource jobs in commercial and recreational fisheries through increased management and safety*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Cultural Practices and Local Foods *by increasing WDFWs staff capacity to increasing access to safe and more abundant local food harvests, such as fish and shellfish, through increased management and monitoring capacity in addition to specific disease and pest response in the shellfish industry. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts by increasing WDFWs capacity to monitor, support, and manage commercial and recreational shellfish and crustacean fisheries.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 14 Invasive Species and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #46) Prevent and rapidly respond to the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, including green crab, predatory fish, and invasive plants, *by increasing WDFWs staff capacity to monitor and respond to emerging diseases and pests in the commercial and recreational shellfish industries.*

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by maintaining WDFWs ability to manage commercial and recreational shellfish and crustacean harvests.*

### **32. Increased Pamphlet Costs**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship and is directly aligned with Action (ID #159) Develop, fund, and promote culturally relevant projects and programs to encourage and incentivize behavior changes that will protect, restore, and enable responsible enjoyment and stewardship of Puget Sound by implementing key opportunity Increase understanding of the connections between outdoor recreation and stewardship activities *by increasing WDFWs capacity to engage communities through recreation and stewardship, promoting and educating the public about fishing and hunting regulations, delivering to hunters and fishers customer service, and providing community awareness and stewardship of agency goals.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23: Good Governance *by maintaining WDFWs ability to provide materials and be transparent about fishing and hunting regulations to the public. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#198) Communications materials should be locally-relevant and clear and concise, avoiding jargon or overly technical language. Incorporate resources in various languages other than English for communications materials by supporting increased trust and transparency with the public through printed materials of fishing and hunting regulations.*



This decision packages fulfills the Secondary Criteria – support continuity, and indirectly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 3 Apply and enforce laws that protect habitat *by maintaining WDFWs ability to provide the public information about fishing and hunting regulations despite increased shipping and printing costs.* This decision package indirectly implements the Salmon Strategy Recommendation 6 More effectively integrate salmon recovery into harvest, hatcheries and hydropower *by maintaining WDFWs ability to provide outreach about fishing and hunting regulations to the public including the Sport Fishing Rules pamphlet.*

### **33. Pro-Equity, Anti-Racism (PEAR)**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship through supporting WDFW in creating more equitable access to recreation and stewardship opportunities *by the implementation of the Washington State Pro-Equity Anti- Racism (PEAR) Plan and Playbook.* This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship Strategy through the Action (#ID160) Identify and fund removal of barriers resulting in the exclusion of people from participating in recreation and stewardship activities *by supporting WDFW in conducting environmental justice assessment tools and support for staff and project implementation to engage with underserved communities.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance *by supporting WDFW in implementing the HEAL Act and increasing the ability of WDFW to implement best practices for including vulnerable populations and underserved communities in decision making.* This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance through the Action (#162) Increase capacity for vulnerable populations and underserved communities to engage in environmental decision-making *by supporting WDFW in implement the key opportunity to implement the HEAL Act by developing the necessary WDFW policies, procedures, and engaging with partners in HEAL Act implementation.* This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 23 Good Governance through the Action (#162) Increase capacity for vulnerable populations and underserved communities to engage in environmental decision-making *by implementing the key opportunity Increase practitioner and decision-maker understanding of vulnerable populations and underserved communities by providing support and data analysis to WDFW staff to improve environmental justice outcomes.*

### **34. Required Facilities GASB information**

N/A

### **35. Reclassified IT positions**

N/A

### **36. Contract and Purchasing Workload**

N/A

### **37. Zooplankton Monitoring Program**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring*

*program that measures prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by supporting a zooplankton monitoring program that will inform adaptive management by assessing environmental changes and prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound, and improving salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management.* Through these efforts, this decision package is directly aligned with Strategy 15 key opportunity to integrate climate change responses by ensuring sustainable support for monitoring efforts, for example, adult and juvenile migrant monitoring, intensively monitored watersheds, effectiveness of recovery actions, and population assessments accounting for different sources of mortality at different life-stages (freshwater to ocean conditions, etc.) that enable management decisions to be grounded in accurate assessments of current and projected future conditions. This includes continuing zooplankton monitoring, research and monitoring to ensure healthy forage fish populations, including herring, and advancing food web models (for example, the Atlantis Model).

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy C research and monitoring *by continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management.* This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID#121) Direct and leverage funding and investments to advance science, monitoring, and adaptive management for Puget Sound recovery, *by supporting a zooplankton monitoring program that will inform adaptive management by assessing environmental changes and prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound, and improving salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management.* Through this work, this decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID#122) Coordinate efforts to assess and report on ecosystem conditions and the effectiveness of ecosystem recovery strategies and actions by implementing key opportunity Develop and apply innovative tools to understand ecosystem conditions as they change over time, and to predict and document those changes, ensure that reporting systems are piloted with partners (for example, LIOs), *by supporting a collaborative zooplankton monitoring program among state, federal, academic, local, and tribal partners.*

This decision package implements the Priority Action 11 build upon recommendations of the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project to further define bottom-up and top-down food web effects on juvenile salmonid mortality in Puget Sound from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by *continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures food web effects through prey availability for juvenile salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management. This monitoring program was initiated by the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project when scientists determined that a leading hypothesis for the decline in Salish Sea-origin juvenile Chinook and coho marine survival is a change in food availability.*

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 16 Support the Puget Sound zooplankton sampling program as a Chinook and forage fish management tool and directly implements the Puget Sound relevant SALMON strategy Recommendations 6, Address predatory and food web issues for salmon and 8 Strengthen science, monitoring and accountability by *continuing to implement a zooplankton monitoring program that measures prey availability for juvenile*

*salmon and forage fishes in Puget Sound and improves salmon return forecasting models for effective resource management.*

## Capital Budget Requests

### **38. Wallace River Hatchery - Redevelopment**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage.* This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

### **39. Toutle River Fish Collection Facility Upgrade**

N/A not in Puget Sound

### **40. Beaver Creek Hatchery - Renovation to transition production from Grays River and decommission Grays River**

N/A not in Puget Sound

### **41. Duckabush Estuary Habitat Restoration (PSNERP)**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 5 Floodplains and Estuaries *by supporting the Duckabush estuary restoration project to address impacts from fill, dikes, and road infrastructure, which block water channels and limit critical habitat for fish and wildlife, including endangered salmon species.* This decision package is directly aligned with the Action (ID #12) Increase the number and accelerate implementation of habitat acquisition and restoration projects as prioritized in salmon and watershed recovery plans, by implementing key opportunity, remove culverts and other barriers to connectivity to improve and maintain streamflow functions within floodplains and their associated estuaries, by elevating highway 101 and addressing or replacing four undersized culverts in

the Duckabush estuary improving streamflow, and habitat connectivity. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #24) Implement habitat protection and restoration projects that restore or maintain natural nutrient attenuation functions and sediment processes in watersheds, estuaries, and tidal wetlands, *by implementing a restoration project in the Duckabush estuary that would improve restores estuarine biophysical and hydrological processes.*

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 6 Action (ID #152) Inventory and assess all fish passage barriers (culverts, dams, etc.). Prioritize, sequence, and implement fish passage barrier correction or removal in watersheds *by addressing fish passage barriers in Duckabush estuary by removing the existing blockages in the estuary (highway, fill, levees, bridges) as well as four undersized culverts and reconnecting historical channels.* This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 10 Stormwater Runoff and Legacy contamination *by supporting a large-scale wetland restoration project that will increase ecosystem services related to flooding, water quality, and contaminant abatement as habitat and associated hydrological processes improve.* This decision package is indirectly aligned Action (ID #3) Conduct watershed-scale planning and land use planning to protect and restore water quality *by supporting the Duckabush estuary restoration which will improve water quality management adding road run-off treatment to over 1600 feet of state highway as well as through improved estuarine ecosystem services such as increased vegetation filtering.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by restoring the Duckabush estuary habitat to increase favorable conditions for juvenile salmon as they pass through the estuary that allow them to feed, rest, and hide from predators, and increase their chances of survival. The Hood Canal summer chum recovery plan specifically notes that Hwy 101 earthen-fill causeways severely constrains the ecological function of the Duckabush estuary.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, by implementing key opportunity, Implement habitat restoration efforts that expand available habitat and reduce competition *by implementing the Duckabush restoration project to expand and restore tidal wetland habitat that particularly supports juvenile salmon and their food webs.* Through these efforts, this package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #204) Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 20 Climate Adaptation and Resilience *by supporting a large-scale estuarine restoration project that will increase carbon sequestration and climate resilience through improved estuarine biophysical processes.* This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID #137) Implement multi-benefit projects and programs that synergistically advance Puget Sound recovery goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration in Puget Sound ecosystems, increase climate adaptation, and promote climate resilience by implementing key opportunity Restore and acquire areas that provide flood conveyance, slow water, and deposit sediment during frequent, “ordinary” flood events *by reconnecting the floodplain by restoring functioning estuarine habitat to provide ecosystem services related to flooding, carbon sequestration, and other recovery goals including salmon.*

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship and Strategy 24 cultural practices and local foods *by improving habitat quality that supports fish and wildlife through restored estuarine habitat that will increase multi-use opportunities for recreation, stewardship, and cultural practices*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts *by expanding and improving habitat quality and biophysical processes in Duckabush estuary to enhance native fish, game, and plant populations*.

This decision package is necessary to meet the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project target Secure funds to start the process-based restoration of 2,414 acres of Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Program identified nearshore habitat projects, in the 2022-2026 Action Agenda *by supporting a multi-agency effort to implement a PSNERP-identified and Congressionally authorized project to restore the diverse estuarine wetland habitat at the mouth of the Duckabush River*. A main component of the project is relocating US 101 onto a 1,600-foot-long estuary spanning bridge so that safe, dependable transportation connectivity to the Olympic Peninsula is maintained and compatible with the project's estuary restoration objectives such that the existing highway and infrastructure can be removed and estuarine processes restored. This step is a necessary precursor to restoring 2,100 acres of estuary over the next two decades.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria-Support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan by ensuring the implementation of the science-based ongoing Puget Sound Nearshore Restoration Project through the Duckabush estuary restoration project to provide increased ecosystem services and habitat for critical fish and wildlife.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce recommendation 1. Significantly increase investment in restoration and acquisition of habitat in areas where Chinook stocks most benefit Southern Resident orcas *by improving spawning and rearing habitat in the Duckabush River and estuary*. This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 1 Protect and restore vital salmon habitat, and 2 Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to their historical habitat *by supporting the Duckabush estuary restoration project to address impacts from fill, dikes, and road infrastructure, which block water channels and limit critical habitat for fish and wildlife, including endangered salmon species*.

Implementation of the federally-authorized Project (3 estuary restoration sites across Puget Sound that includes Duckabush) is funded in a cost-share arrangement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) paying for 65% of the project costs and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife paying 35% of project costs. The state's share of the implementation costs will be a combination of state capital funds, work-in-kind credit, and credit for the value of the lands. *This decision package is necessary to secure new USACE Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration (Construction General) funding for Puget Sound through federal appropriations*. The Duckabush Estuary restoration site is the first of 3 project sites authorized by Congress in 2016 in the amount of \$452M.

#### **42. SRKW - New Cowlitz River Hatchery**

N/A not in Puget Sound

#### **43. SRKW - Sol Duc Hatchery Modifications**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries. This specifically includes increase prey abundance for Southern Resident Killer Whales and to enhance fishing opportunities across tribes, recreational, and commercial fishers.* Through these efforts this decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca, and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

#### **44. Soos Creek Hatchery Renovation**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage.* This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science

Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

#### **45. Spokane Hatchery Renovation**

N/A not in Puget Sound region

#### **46. Forest Health – Hazard Fuel Reduction**

N/A not in Puget Sound region

#### **47. Minter Creek Hatchery - Replace Intake**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage.* This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

#### **48. Samish Hatchery - Friday Creek Intake & Fish Passage**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This

decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage*. This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries*.

#### **49. Naselle Hatchery Renovation**

N/A not in Puget Sound

#### **50. Ringold Hatchery - Replace Ponds**

N/A not in Puget Sound

#### **51. Kalama Falls Hatchery - Replace Raceways & PA System**

N/A not in Puget Sound

#### **52. Fish and Wildlife Health and Biosecurity Facility**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery and is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by increasing WDFWs capacity to assess salmon and forage fish health and pathogen content from hatcheries and the wild to ensure sustainable harvest and recovery*. This decision package is directly aligned with Action (ID #204) Reduce displacement, competition, and predation of imperiled native species caused by native or invasive species, by implementing key opportunity, continue and secure sustainable funding for pinniped population assessments and diet studies *by increasing WDFW's capacity to assess pinniped predation of salmon*.

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 9 Water Pollution Source Identification and Correction and Strategy 12 Working Lands Runoff *by increasing WDFWs capacity to assess pathogens and contaminants related to Puget Sound recovery and management of whales, porpoises, seals, sea lions, sea otters, marine birds, shorebirds, turtles, frogs, bats, and other wildlife, and pathogens and contaminants that impact human health*. Through these efforts this decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #9) Fund, develop, and implement effective local and tribal nations pollution identification and correction (PIC) programs.

This decision package implements the priority action 9. Determine benefits to viability of Southern Resident Killer Whales from improved prey availability, and reduced disturbance and toxic chemical exposure; assess benefits individually and cumulatively through monitoring and modeling. from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by increasing WDFWs capacity to assess contaminants and other diseases within the SRKW food web to support adaptive management*.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce Recommendation 12 Direct the appropriate agencies to work with tribes and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to determine if pinniped (harbor seal and sea lion) predation is a limiting factor for



Chinook in Puget Sound and along Washington’s outer coast and evaluate potential management actions *by increasing WDFW’s capacity to assess pinniped predation of salmon*. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca Taskforce Recommendation 30 Identify, prioritize and take action on chemicals that impact orcas and their prey, and salmon strategy recommendation 6 Address predatory and food web issues for salmon *by increasing WDFW’s capacity to assess contaminants and other diseases within the SRKW food web to support adaptive management*.

### **53. SRKW Palmer Ponds Expansion**

N/A not in Puget Sound

### **54. SRKW Samish Hatchery Expansion and Adult Pond Renovation**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW’s hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality*. Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage*. This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries*.

### **55. Sol Duc Hatchery Intake Barrier and Boat Chute**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery by ensuring that WDFW’s hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptative management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation & Stewardship by providing boat access for recreational opporunities in rural communities in Puget Sound.

This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable

harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures, by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.

This decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.

#### **56. Marblemount Hatchery - Renovation**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 15 Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights *by ensuring that WDFW's hatcheries and associated infrastructure are improved and maintained to support increased culture and production of salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6, Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. This decision package is also directly aligned with Salmon Strategy recommendation 5, Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision package is also aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 6 Fish Passage Barriers *by ensuring that hatchery infrastructure are compliant with regulatory guidance for fish passage.* This decision packages also fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

#### **57. Hood Canal Shellfish Harvest Access Area**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship by restoring estuarine habitat that will increase multi-use opportunities for recreation and

stewardship *by improving habitat quality that supports fish and wildlife*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 cultural practices and local foods *by improving habitat quality that supports fish, wildlife, and vegetation important for food and cultural practices*. This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 9 Water Pollution Source Identification & Correction *through potential actions such as partnering with Department of Health and local health jurisdictions on water quality improvements*.

This decision package is directly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 22 Action (ID #160) Identify and fund removal of barriers resulting in the exclusion of people from participating in recreation and stewardship activities *by assessing equitable distribution of recreational opportunities and creating additional opportunities for shellfish harvest on Hood Canal*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 24 Action (ID #91) Improve appropriate access opportunities for harvesting local foods and other culturally significant materials on public lands and shorelines *by assessing and identifying opportunities for acquisition of tidelines to increase shellfish harvest opportunity and access*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 24 Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts *by assessing and identifying opportunities for acquisition of tidelines to increase shellfish harvest opportunity and access*.

#### **58. Wooten Wildlife Area**

N/A not in Puget Sound

#### **59. Cooperative Elk and Deer Fencing**

N/A not in Puget Sound

#### **60. Eells Spring Renovation**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 22 Outdoor Recreation and Stewardship, and Strategy 24 cultural Practices and Local Foods, and Strategy 25 Economic Benefits, *by supporting rebuilding and restoring WDFW's capacity to produce hatchery raised trout necessary for recreation, fishing, and economic opportunities*. This decision package is indirectly aligned with the 2022-2026 Agenda Strategy 24 Action (ID #89) Restore and enhance native fish, shellfish, game, and plant populations consistent with existing species recovery efforts *by supporting WDFW's capacity to provide gamefish to 100 lakes in Mason, Jefferson, Kitsap, and Thurston counties*. This decision packages fulfills the secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by maintaining game fish production in western Washington*.

#### **61. Region 1 office construct and storage**

N/A, not in Puget Sound

#### **62. Elochoman Hatchery – Facility abandonment**

N/A not in Puget Sound

#### **63. Forks Creek Hatchery - Renovate Intake and Diversion**

N/A not in Puget Sound

#### **64. Mt. St. Helens WLA – Hoffstadt Hills Acquisition**

N/A not in Puget Sound

#### **65. Deschutes Watershed Center (Prog)**

This decision package is aligned with the 2022-2026 Action Agenda Strategy 15 Harvest, Hatchery, and Adaptive Management of Salmon Recovery *by increasing WDFW’s hatcheries capacity by building the Deschutes Watershed center to support increased culture and production of chinook salmon and salmonid species that support adaptive management of co-managed fisheries and provide improved water quality.* Through these efforts this decision package is indirectly aligned with Action (ID #205) Increase salmon abundance while protecting genetic diversity by implementing hatchery and harvest management strategies and expanding available habitat while ensuring abundant salmon for harvest, treaty rights, and other species such as Southern Resident Orca and Action (ID #206) Ensure sustainable harvest of hatchery and natural salmon and support treaty-reserved fishing rights. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Orca taskforce recommendation 6 Significantly increase hatchery production and programs to benefit Southern Resident orcas consistent with sustainable fisheries and stock management, available habitat, recovery plans and the Endangered Species Act. Hatchery increases need to be done in concert with significantly increased habitat protection and restoration measures. This decision package also directly implements the Puget Sound relevant Salmon Strategy recommendation 5 Align harvest, hatcheries and hydropower with salmon recovery.

This decision packages fulfills the Secondary criteria – support continuity from the 2020-2024 Science Work Plan *by ensuring that capacity is maintained for WDFW salmon and salmonid hatcheries to support recovery efforts and sustainable fisheries.*

### **Agency Contact Information**

Jonathan Neville, Budget Officer  
(360) 870-4691  
jonathan.neville@dfw.wa.gov