

Summary Sheet

Meeting dates:	June 14-15, 2019
Agenda item:	Tufted Puffin Periodic Status Review and Recovery Plan
Presenter(s):	Scott Pearson, Senior Research Scientist, Science Division, Wildlife Program

Background summary:

In accordance with WAC 220-610-110, department staff members will brief the Commission on the joint Periodic Status Review (PSR) and recovery plan compiled for the tufted puffin. This PSR outlines the current status of the species and includes information and comments provided by peer scientists and the public. The PSR recommends that the tufted puffin species remain classified as endangered.

The tufted puffin, recognizable by its thick red bill and whitish tufts, spends the winter at sea, and nests during spring and summer in coastal colonies from California north to Alaska. Once common along the Washington coast, puffins have suffered a dramatic population decline in recent years. As discussed in the draft status review, possible reasons for this rapid decline include a reduction in available prey, predation at nesting colonies, and factors related to climate change. The recovery plan sets goals for population recovery in Washington and identifies high priority immediate actions. The department received 22 comments during the public review period. Twenty comments supported the recommendation for the puffin to remain an endangered species and also supported identified recovery actions; two letters specifically urged implementation of high priority actions. Two comments did not support expenditures for puffin recovery.

Staff recommendation: Maintain endangered classification for tufted puffin.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

- Protect and conserve Washington's native wildlife
 - Continue recovery actions for these state-listed species
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Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

No fiscal impacts beyond the status quo.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

In February 2016, the agency sent out a press release and posted a request on our website to solicit information from the public to be included in the PSRs. In accordance with WAC regulations, individuals and organizations had one year to contribute information for the reviews. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) staff included this information as applicable in the status review documents. The documents were then reviewed by WDFW staff and external species experts before 90-day public comment periods on the document and our findings.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Request a decision on the recommended status.

Draft motion language: Briefing only.

Motion: I move to maintain endangered status for tufted puffin as presented by department staff.

Is there a "second"?

If so, then motion maker discusses basis for motion; other Commissioners discuss views on motion; amendments, if any, proposed and addressed.

Post decision communications plan:

News Release
WDFW Website

Form revised 2-15-18