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WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE STRATEGIC PLAN DRAFT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As of 4/28/20

The purpose of this plan is to outline strategic actions that will make WDFW more responsive to key changes occurring that affect fish, shellfish, and wildlife conservation and management. The Department must demonstrate bold leadership in fish, shellfish, and wildlife conservation, recovery, and management in order to better achieve its mission.

We recognize that population growth, development pressure, and the impacts from a changing climate are contributing to declines in the health of species and habitats, and that business as usual will not be enough to ensure healthy habitats for fish and wildlife for current and future generations. We also recognize that to be more effective, the Department can improve how it communicates, engages with communities and youth, and provides sustainable opportunities for recreation and natural resource-based industries.

This plan has a 25-year timeframe which is grounded in biologic timeframe as it represents many generations of certain species. This timeframe allows us to identify key steppingstones towards achieving our future vision and more realistically track and report on the performance of these strategies and the existing Department work that is critical to achieving WDFW's mandate.

Five strategies to turn us toward better outcomes for fish and wildlife and the public

This plan identifies a select number of strategic actions, born out of numerous stakeholder interviews and staff meetings, that are necessary to build upon and advance Department efforts to turn us toward better outcomes for fish and wildlife and the public. The strategies we outline are identified shifts in how we do things now; shifts which we see as pivotal to modernizing the agency and positioning us for success. The plan doesn't discuss all the Department's work, all of which remains critical to achieving our mission.

Each of the strategies outlined in the plan include near term and longer-term actions, preliminary performance indicators and 25-year desired outcomes. In brief, the strategies are as follows:

- **Be proactive about addressing state conservation challenges.**
The plan identifies actions needed to help WDFW:
 - Become a stronger collaborator and more effectively connect with decision makers.
 - Assist decision makers in understanding the full benefits and impacts of their decisions.
 - Provide enhanced support to decision-makers and work towards a future of net ecological gains.
- **Build passionate constituencies through community engagement.**
The plan identifies actions needed to help WDFW:
 - Ensure that residents are well informed on habitat status and trends and opportunities to engage with the Department on stewardship and management actions.

DRAFT

- Invest in building staff capacity to more effectively engage with partners.
- Pursue a more intentional and strategic approach to prioritizing communication efforts.

- **Connect people to nature and conservation through enhancing outdoor recreation experiences and stewardship actions.**
The plan identifies actions needed to help WDFW:
 - Seek stronger partnerships to promote recreational and stewardship opportunities on all lands.
 - Better engage the public – in conservation, recreation and stewardship.
 - Ensure that WDFW serves all people and provides diverse outdoor opportunities.

- **Deliver a science agenda that addresses policy and management priorities.**
The plan identifies actions needed to help WDFW:
 - Prioritize and fund science aligned with the highest needs for the Department.
 - Shift towards more collaborative partnerships and cross agency approaches.
 - Invest in effective communication of the science.

- **Move towards better internal operations and a Sustainable DFW.**
The plan identifies actions needed to help WDFW:
 - Live our agency values through education, training and accountability.
 - Modernize our work through better use of technology and actions to reduce carbon emissions.
 - Work to establish a culture in WDFW that embraces diversity.

25-year desired outcomes

The plan identifies a set of desired future outcomes for each of the five strategies – if we are successful at achieving the actions outlined in the strategy, what might be possible? Our desired future includes a Washington where we see:

- Healthy and sustainable fish and wildlife populations
- A restored network of resilient habitats which connects ecosystems across the landscape.
- Abundant recreation, stewardship and educational opportunities available to diverse populations;
- Citizens with a deep appreciation for the benefits of fish, wildlife and nature to people and a strong sense of stewardship and responsibility for conservation actions
- A Department that reflects and connects with the diverse public we serve, and that is a model of great governance through highly efficient, effective, humble and empathetic operations.

It's going to take all of us working together. The Department, state, federal, local, tribal governments, NGOs, farmers, businesses, individual property owners, residents, and youth must come together and work towards a more resilient future for fish, wildlife and people