



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

Meeting date:

1/29/2021

Agenda item:

7. Pinniped Conservation and Management--Briefing

Presenter(s):

Nate Pamplin, Director of Budget and Government Affairs; Kessina Lee, Southwest Region Director; Dr. Scott Pearson, Senior Research Scientist, Wildlife Program; and Dr. Joe Anderson, Senior Research Scientist, Fish Program

Background summary:

The F&W Commission adopted a 'blue sheet' in September, 2020 requesting that staff provide an update on pinniped conservation and management activities. Staff will provide an update on pinniped population estimates and orient the F&W Commission to the key elements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act as it relates to non-lethal and lethal management of pinnipeds preying on salmon. Staff will provide an update on the implementation of the new MMPA Section 120(f) permit for the Columbia River issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service in August 2020. Finally, staff will present an update on diet analysis of harbor seal consumption of Chinook and coho in Puget Sound, some non-lethal dissuasion projects underway, and discuss budget requests submitted in the 2021 legislative session.

Staff recommendation:

N/A

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

N/A

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

The Department has submitted a 2021-23 operating budget request for \$2.7M for marine mammal conservation and management, including \$1.1M for Columbia River pinniped management and \$1.3M for Puget Sound surveys and diet studies at estuaries of concern. In addition, the Department has requested \$6.7M for design and construction of a marine mammal investigation lab (and fish pathology lab) to be located in the south-central Puget Sound area. The Governor's office funded the operating requests and increased the SRKW appropriation to cover a gap from the 2019-21 budget. The marine mammal lab was funding at a preliminary level to begin design work.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

N/A

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

N/A

Draft motion language:

N/A

Post decision communications plan:

N/A
