

The Game Management Plan (GMP) is a high-level planning document that sets general direction for managing hunted game species and the issues related to game management. Portions of the GMP can be described as policy as they provide direction to the department (ie: provides direction around priorities, identifies strategies, clarifies population targets). The plan also informs the choices brought before the Commission to be implemented through the rule making process (ie: through season setting)

The plan:

- The species included in the Game Management Plan are based upon previous Legislative and Commission decisions regarding species classified as Game and/or Big Game (RCW 77.08.030 and WACs 220-400-020 and 220-400-030) unless a separate Commission action has given a game species a special status designation (WAC 220-610-110)
- Assumes that, given the legal classification of those species, the department should develop management plans that:
  - Engages the public
    - provides the public an opportunity to weigh-in through a formal process on high level game management issues.
  - Improves scientific basis for decision making
    - Identifies data gaps and future research and monitoring needs.
    - Identifies existing and potential limiting factors affecting game populations.
    - Gives broad direction on addressing known limiting factors.
    - Provides general direction on sustainable hunting management.
  - Provides a basis for work planning and funding.

The plan does not:

- Establish rules or laws. Many of the actions recommended within the plan require additional process to achieve.
- Provide detailed methods for management.
- Provide specific hunting seasons and methods, which require formal rulemaking.

Current timeline for the existing GMP revision:

- In 2020 we extended SEPA timeline of the existing plan in order to align the GMP process with the 3-year season setting process. This was discussed with the Commission in 2020. The current GMP, with the extension, is in effect until June 30, 2023.
- We initiated the plan revision process in the fall of 2021.
- Our original intent was to complete the process by December 2022.
  - However, current and future discussions may alter that timeline.
- Next Steps:
- We will bring the Wildlife committee information and discuss how the commission would like to be engaged in plan development in April.
- We will bring the Wildlife committee options for paths forward to consider in May.
- We hope to finalize the path forward with a presentation to the entire Commission in June.
- In the meantime, staff will be working on editing the chapters that the Commission and the public will review. The timeline of this review will be determined by the discussions we are currently having.