

Performance Evaluation Elements

for Kelly Susewind, Director, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife

Based mostly on Strategies (Goals) and selected Near-Term (4 years) Actions (Performance Elements below) in the 25-year Strategic Plan (2020). Specific 2023 Performance Elements are objectives agreed upon by the Director and Commission.

GOAL 1. Proactively address conservation challenges

WDFW has a critical and central role to play in ensuring that Washington residents enjoy connected, healthy, and resilient habitats that support robust fish and wildlife, and our own human health and wellbeing. By providing more leadership, investment, and commitment, WDFW can become a stronger collaborator and more effectively connect with decision makers to provide actionable information and solutions for net ecological gains (i.e., more eco-friendly construction/ use than damage to the ecosystem), while achieving benefits for local communities.

Performance Elements

1. Conservation: Lead the development of a statewide fish and wildlife conservation road map with stakeholders and partners to develop collaborative approaches to landscape-scale ecosystem recovery and fish and wildlife conservation.
2. Conservation: Develop and implement a WDFW Climate Resilience Plan.
3. Biodiversity: Expand current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish and wildlife species.
4. Conservation: Shape Washington's 2025 State Wildlife Action Plan to reflect this strategic plan's priorities
5. Fisheries: Implement a co-manager habitat workplan to improve salmon and steelhead populations that are limiting fishing opportunities.
6. Fisheries: Develop a Statewide Hatchery Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to adaptively manage programs to minimize risk to wild stocks.
7. Habitat: Ensure that land-use planning and decisions are contributing to the conservation and recovery of fish and wildlife.

2023 Specific Performance Elements (by agreement between Commission and Director)

1. Shape the 2025 State Wildlife Action Plan to reflect the Strategic Plan priorities. Set priorities for SGCN management based on risk of loss, cost of management, social priorities, and likelihood of success. (Commission/Director)
2. Continue to build co-manager and other relationships with tribes. (Commission/Director)

3. Accomplish milestones for revision of the Game Management Plan. Ensure that species' plans are based on reliable population estimates, sound harvest strategies, and ecological considerations. (Commission/Director)
4. As a precursor to developing the Statewide Hatchery Management Plan, manage staff to achieve the directives in Policy 3624 , with particular emphasis on policy directive #9 (identification of the best wild salmon populations so as maintain successes) and the component of policy directive #4 dealing with completing the risk and benefit assessment framework/tool. (Commission).
6. Communicate to the public the grave risks to fish and wildlife from climate change. (Commission)
7. Engage with local governments to ensure that land-use planning and decisions are contributing to the conservation and recovery of fish and wildlife. (Commission)
8. Expand current efforts to manage and recover at-risk fish and wildlife species. Begin securing Legislative interest and investment in the 2023 session with intent of facilitating additional involvement in future sessions. (Director)

Goal 2. Engage communities through recreation and stewardship

WDFW has a long history of providing angling, hunting, and wildlife viewing opportunities to the public. Such outdoor recreation adds to the public's quality of life. Land stewardship and recreation need each other. We wish to provide access to public and private lands and waters to connect people to memorable experiences, and motivate continued care. We can make choices and opportunities, together with partners, that support ecologic integrity and preserve natural and cultural resources.

Performance Elements

1. Hunting & Fishing: Complete a plan to better recruit, retain, and reactivate anglers, hunters, and nature appreciators.
2. Hunting & Fishing: Better understand and deliver on hunting and fishing customer service, including needs for predictability.
3. Recreation: Develop and implement recreation plans for wildlife areas that improve public access opportunities for all and engage under-served communities.
4. Stewardship: Ensure that decision-making processes are transparent and easy to participate in.
5. Stewardship: Invest in and implement social science to understand how to effectively serve our public and tailor our services and outreach appropriately.
6. Stewardship: Expand WDFW's volunteer program, in concert with our partners.
7. Stewardship: Reevaluate how we engage with advisory committees to more effectively implement our mission.
8. Education: Create and promote educational and wildlife management opportunities in WDFW wildlife areas, in urban centers, and on school grounds for young adults, wildlife enthusiasts, and community scientists.

2023 Specific Performance Elements (by agreement between Commission and Director)

1. Build trust through outreach and dialogue among all interest groups (e.g. hunters, fishers, non-consumptive users) to break down communication barriers and find common purpose in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of fish and wildlife. (Commission/Director)
2. Create and promote educational and wildlife management opportunities in WDFW wildlife areas, in urban centers, and on school grounds for young adults, wildlife enthusiasts, minorities, and community scientists. (Commission)
3. Reevaluate how we engage with regional, wildlife area, and topical (e.g. game, biodiversity) advisory committees to more effectively implement our mission. (Commission)
4. Better understand and deliver on hunting and fishing customer service, including needs for predictability. (Commission/Director)
6. Use best available science to minimize adverse impacts of recreation on wildlife. (Commission)

- 7. Minimize adverse effects of recreation on wildlife by keeping nonmotorized trails free of motorized vehicles. (Commission)
- 8. Ensure that decision-making processes are transparent and easy to participate in. (Director)

GOAL 3. Deliver science that informs Washington’s most pressing fish & wildlife questions

WDFW is a science-based agency; unbiased, trusted, and actionable science is critical to our decision-making processes. As a state agency with limited resources, we must prioritize and fund science aligned with Washington’s highest needs. There is tremendous opportunity to be more efficient and effective in how we collect, manage, and share our data by modernizing our data systems. Many of our science endeavors are integrated across various agencies, tribal governments, academic institutions, and non-profits - pointing to continued opportunity for collaboration.

Performance Elements

1. Develop, prioritize, and deliver a science-management policy that engages all levels of the Department.
2. Create a learning culture of adaptive management within the Department at all levels.
3. Implement effective science communication training/strategies with the public to engender trust in Department science.
4. Develop an agency-level data management system to provide better science for agency decision-making and constituent outreach.
5. Pursue opportunities to increase community science in conservation efforts.

2023 Specific Performance Elements (by agreement between Commission and Director)

1. Develop, prioritize, and deliver a science policy that engages the Commission and all levels of the Department to define standards for “best available science” and how to effectively communicate that science to the public and to the Commission for policy making. (Commission/Director)
2. Create a learning culture of adaptive management within the Department at all levels. (Commission)

GOAL 4. Model operational and environmental excellence

Our internal processes, tools, resources, and culture loom large in terms of how much we can accomplish as an organization. Strategically investing in improving our internal operations could have huge payoffs. Living our agency values – through safety, education, training, accountability to actions, and transparency – will result in greater trust internally and externally.

Performance Elements

1. Increase decision transparency to both internal and external audiences.
2. Adapt decision making based on publicly shared performance goals and indicators.
3. Support the recommendations of employee resource groups and the Department's internal Diversity Advisory Committee.
4. Track workforce diversity, equity, and inclusion measures.
5. Assess the need and identify actions to improve cross-program/region collaboration.
6. Develop measures for strengthening employee satisfaction and adopting best practices for staff retention and advancement.
7. Develop and implement a WDFW sustainability plan that includes actions to minimize our carbon footprint, maximize carbon sequestration, and achieve more net ecological gain.

2023 Specific Performance Elements_(by agreement between Commission and Director)

1. Increase decision transparency to both internal and external audiences. (Commission/Director)
2. Assess the need and identify actions to improve cross-program, regional, and Commission/Agency collaboration. (Commission/Director)
3. Build support in the Legislature and among the public to finance and build capacity, especially for biodiversity conservation. (Commission/Director)
4. Conduct best practices workshops for the Commission on the process for making decisions that relate to traditional hunting and fishing seasons. Include something about complying with statutory responsibilities, current policies, the Strategic Plan, changing policies, etc. (Commission).
5. Develop measures for strengthening employee satisfaction and adopting best practices for staff retention and advancement, including assuring that women employees are free from all forms of sexual harassment. (Commission)
6. Track workforce diversity, equity, and inclusion measures. (Commission)
5. Complete North of Falcon negotiations to obtain fair and responsible seasons with increased public understanding of the process (Director).

Kelly Susewind, Director

Barbara Baker, Commission Chair

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