

WASHINGTON FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION RULES OF PROCEDURE

~~Approved August 6, 2024~~ November 27, 2023 DRAFT

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WASHINGTON FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

RULES OF PROCEDURE

~~Approved August 6, 2021~~ Suggested November 2023 edits

I. APPOINTMENTS, TERMS, AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission is comprised of nine members serving six-year terms. Members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Three members must reside east of the summit of the Cascade Mountains, three must reside west of the summit, and three may reside anywhere in the state. No two Commissioners may reside in the same county. (RCW 77.04.030).

Persons eligible for appointment as members of the Commission shall have general knowledge of the habits and distribution of fish and wildlife and shall not hold another state, county, or municipal elective or appointive office. (RCW 77.04.040).

II. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

At a meeting in each odd-numbered year, the Commission shall elect one of its members as chair and another member as vice chair, each of whom shall serve for a term of two years or until a successor is elected and qualified. (RCW 77.04.060). See Parliamentary Procedure below for election process.

III. QUORUM

Five members constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and to adopt permanent rules and amendments to or repeals of existing rules. (RCW 77.04.060 & 77.04.090).

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Fish and Wildlife Commission (RCW 77.04.055)

The Commission is the policy-setting arm of the Department of Fish and Wildlife and is the official access point of constituents for influencing policy. In addition, the Commission shall:

1. Establish policies to achieve the statutory mandate of the Department and the Commission.
2. Determine goals and objectives for the Department that implement the policies.
3. Review the Department's performance in implementing the policies.
4. Have final approval authority for the Department's budget proposals.
5. Establish time, place, manner and methods for fishing, hunting, and trapping of fish and wildlife in Washington.

6. Appoint the Director for the Department and the Commission Executive Assistant.
7. Meet annually with the Governor to review the performance of the Department in its mandate to preserve, protect, and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
8. Determine what fish, shellfish, and wildlife will be classified.
9. Work with the legislature and Governor's Office to influence legislation necessary for Department business, in close coordination with the Department's Legislative Director.
10. Have final approval authority for tribal, international, interstate, and any other Department agreements relating to fish and wildlife.
11. Serve as the forum for public involvement on fish and wildlife issues.
12. Approve land acquisitions and sales of surplus property.
13. Adopt rules to implement the state's fish and wildlife laws.
14. Delegate to the Director any of the powers and duties vested in the Commission as the Commission sees fit.

B. Commission Chair roles

1. Serve as official spokesperson for the Commission.
2. Conduct official meetings and conference calls of the Commission, unless delegated to the Vice Chair or another Commissioner.
3. Determine the placement of items on agendas and approve final agendas.
4. Supervise Commission staff and review performance.
5. Direct the Commission staff in regard to decisions of the Commission.
6. Have approval authority for out-of-state travel of the Director.
7. Be responsible for the general conduct of Commission meetings.
8. Approve news releases regarding Commission meetings.
9. Ensure that the Executive Assistant provides advance public notice of Commission meetings, including distribution of agendas and meeting materials.

C. Commission Vice Chair roles

1. Carry out the responsibilities of the Commission Chair in his/her absence.
2. Function as resident expert in implementing procedures adopted by the Commission (commonly referred to as parliamentarian).

D. Commission Member roles

1. Attend and participate in Commission meetings.
 - a. If a member is unable to attend, the member will inform the Executive Assistant as far in advance as possible, who will in turn inform the Chair.

- b. When the Executive Assistant has been notified that three members will be absent from the same meeting, the Executive Assistant will immediately notify all members of the expected absences.
2. Keep up to date on issues, legislative activities, and statutes affecting the Commission.
3. Be familiar with and operate within governing statutes and state and federal laws.
 - a. Comply with the requirements of the Administrative Procedures Act, Open Public Meeting Act and Public Records Act.
 - b. Observe and comply with records retention requirements, including GS 10004, Rev. 1, Governing/Executive/Policy-Setting Body Records, in the State Government General Records Retention Schedule
 - c. Use agency-provided computers, email systems and phones for all agency business. If there are extenuating circumstances that limit use of agency provided technology, work with the Executive Assistant to mitigate risks to compliance with Public Records Act, Open Public Meeting Act, and Administrative Procedures Act.
4. ~~Observe~~ Comply with state ethics laws and complete ethics training.
5. Select an Acting Commission Chair if Commission Chair and Vice Chair are not available.
6. Inform the Executive Assistant if they will not be attending meetings.
7. Inform the Executive Assistant of any relevant Commissioner activities.
8. Provide Commission members with a summary of any meetings attended as a representative of the Commission.
9. Access their e-mail system regularly and respond to messages expediently. With emails:
 - a. Include the Executive Assistant in the distribution of messages to the Department or to other Commissioners (always avoiding a quorum).
 - b. Forward copies of Commission business related e-mail messages to the Commission office Executive Assistant for recordkeeping purposes.
 - c. Do not send emails, comments regarding policy direction/development to more than three other Commissioners (in keeping with the Open Public Meetings Act).
10. Submit time and expense reimbursement information to the Executive Assistant in a timely manner as required by current administrative protocols (Appendix 1).

V. OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Through principles of operation, the Commission is striving to provide the best possible environment conducive to fulfilling the Department of Fish and Wildlife's mission and goals.

A. Commission members shall

1. Be clear when speaking for the Commission versus as an individual; present only the results of formal decisions (e.g., where five or more Commissioners have agreed) as official Commission positions.
2. Work collaboratively with other Commission members and Department staff on decision-making.
3. Be respectful of other Commission members.
4. Establish sound working relationships with other Commission members.
5. Be a customer using and observing the opportunities the Department affords the public.
6. Be responsible about where work is best done, i.e., issues pertaining to a specific committee shall be given to the committee chair.
7. Maintain confidentiality of sensitive or privileged Commission business. During participation in remote meetings, ensure that there are no other individuals able to hear confidential briefings or conversations.
8. Keep focused on big decisions and issues (big picture) high level policy matters as opposed to minor implementation matters.
9. Represent all citizens of the state (who own the resource), not constituents from a particular area or special interest.
10. Serve actively on Commission committees after accepting an appointment.
11. Keep other Commission members informed on individual activities of Commission business.
12. Not engage in any activity which gives rise to a conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest as a Commission member.
13. Expediently respond to requests and messages from Commission members and the Executive Assistant regarding Commission business.
14. Provide the Executive Assistant with comments and suggestions on results of Department presentations, meetings, etc., in a timely manner.

B. Meeting schedule and agendas

Before January of each year, the Commission must publish its annual meeting schedule for regular meetings with the Washington State Register. (RCW 42.30.075). Changes to the regular meeting schedule must be published in the Register twenty days in advance of the date. The Executive Assistant shall keep a running draft agenda for each of the regularly scheduled meetings (“Year at a Glance” calendar). The Commission shall include a review of the agenda items for their next meeting in the current meeting agenda, as well as a review of future agenda items. The Chair shall endeavor to keep the Commission apprised of changes to an agenda prior to the agenda being published.

C. Consent Agendas

The consent agenda may include land transactions, meeting minutes, and other agreed-upon items. Any Commissioner may request in writing to the Chair and Vice Chair to move a consent agenda item to the regular agenda, but should do so at least 5 days prior to the meeting so the agenda can be adjusted and staff have time to prepare. Removing an item from the consent agenda may be requested by any one Commissioner during the meeting with no advanced notice, which may result in that item being pushed out to the next regular meeting.

C.D. During Commission meetings, Commission members shall agree to:

1. Utilize good meeting management techniques.
2. Refrain from using the meeting to further a personal agenda.
3. Work from existing policy to make decisions and provide direction, until such time that the Commission adopts policy revisions.
4. Submit any requests for a Commission action or agenda item to the Executive Assistant at least one month prior to a scheduled meeting, so that it can be discussed during the future meeting planning agenda item.
5. Utilize breaks for conducting other business.
6. Keep business and conversation to the agenda item at hand, including intervening if process gets off track.
7. Speak in turn when acknowledged by the Chair.
8. Refrain from directing questions to individual staff members unless directed by lead staff person.
9. Keep dialog with Department staff cooperative rather than adversarial.

D.E. When working with Department staff, Commission members shall

1. Respect the Director's authority in matters of authority and matters delegated by the Commission.
2. Make requests for individual staff to attend meetings through the Director.
3. Respect workloads of Department staff when making requests for support or assistance for information.
4. Refrain from intervening in the operations of the Department, administrative issues, or internal Department matters except through official Commission action.
5. Encourage staff members to use existing internal channels for decision-making, not individual Commission members.
6. Commission requests for information from Department staff, other than requests to the Director or Program or Regional Directors.
 - a. Simple questions: easy questions (requiring 15 minutes or less of staff time) can be asked and answered by staff.

- b. Complex questions that require more than 15 minutes of staff time should be requested through a program or regional director.
- c. Any request requiring substantial reallocation of staff time and resources or that entails program changes and project directions should be submitted on a Commission Request to the Department Form (Appendix 2) and be approved by the full Commission. Consider vetting any such requests through the relevant committee and relevant staff.

E.F. When working with constituents and the public, Commission members shall

- 1. Promote relationships with all individuals interested in the conservation and use of Washington’s fish, wildlife and ecosystems.
- 2. Be mindful of the signal sent by your presence at an event.
- 3. Stay connected to community leaders and decision makers.
- 4. Remain responsive to the public; direct citizens to the right contacts within the Department.

F.G. Written correspondence to the Commission

The Commission’s goal is to acknowledge written correspondence received by the Commission. Given the volume of correspondence received, a substantive response to every such contact is rare.

- 1. Correspondence received by individual Commissioners.
 - a. If a Commissioner chooses to respond directly, copy the Executive Assistant.
 - b. If a Commissioner believes a template response or individual response from other department staff is warranted, forward to the Executive Assistant with instructions.
- 2. Correspondence sent to the Commission.
 - a. The Executive Assistant manages correspondence sent to the Commission Inbox. If other Department staff receive correspondence addressed to the full Commission, staff shall forward to the Executive Assistant.
 - b. The Executive Assistant will forward all correspondence addressed to the Commission to each of the Commissioners. If the Executive Assistant already responded with a template response, include the response.
 - c. The Executive Assistant shall use discretion in deciding whether to use an approved template response (Appendix 3), work with department staff for an individualized response, or refer to the Commission Chair for a full commission response. Individualized responses will be copied to the full Commission.

3. A Commissioner who believes a formal Commission response to correspondence is warranted should discuss with the Commission Chair. All formal Commission correspondence will be reviewed and approved by the full Commission.

H. Media Protocols

1. Media requests received by the F&W Commission are typically routed to the Communications Division in the Director's Office to address. The Director's Office will interact with the media and/or coordinate with an agency subject matter expert to provide a timely response.
2. The Chair is the primary spokesperson with the media on behalf of the Commission.
 - a. The Chair will:
 - i. Convey to the media the policy positions approved by the FWC.
 - ii. Explain the process and procedures used by the FWC that led to a decision.
 - b. The Director's Office is available to assist in developing talking points and preparing the Chair for the media interview.
 - c. Editorials or other position statements for use in the media and on agency social media and website are drafted for the Chair and/or co-authored with the Director.
3. Commissioners are encouraged to engage with the Communications Division prior to communication with the media on fish and wildlife management issues in their official capacity.
 - a. Commissioners should convey policy positions adopted by the Commission.
 - b. Commissioners should engage on topics only after Commission decisions to reduce political or legal risk and ensure that public comments are reviewed and synthesized prior to decision.
 - c. Commissioners should practice discretion in providing quotes to the media as it is difficult for the public seeing a commissioner quoted in the media as being separate from their position as a commissioner or speaking on behalf of the Commission.
4. Commissioners writing letters to the editor or other editorials on their own behalf on fish and wildlife related issues should share the text with the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Director for awareness.

VI. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

These procedures apply whenever the Commission, as a body, takes formal action. Where these parliamentary procedures are silent, Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall be used as an additional guide. The Vice Chair is the Commission's parliamentarian.

A. The purpose of parliamentary procedures

1. To enable the Commission to conduct business in an organized, efficient, and timely manner.
2. To protect the rights of each Commissioner.
3. To preserve a spirit of harmony within the Commission.

B. The six basic principles of parliamentary procedure must be considered to achieve these purposes

1. Only one subject may claim the attention of the Commission at one time.
2. Each proposition presented for consideration is entitled to full and free debate.
3. Every Commissioner has rights equal to every other Commissioner.
4. The will of the majority must be carried out, and the rights of the minority must be preserved.
5. The personality and desires of each Commissioner should be merged into the larger unit of the organization.
6. Motions of moderate to high complexity shall be displayed in writing at the time the motion is made and prior to the Chair asking if there is a second to the motion. The wording of any amendments to the motion, or an amendment to a motion, shall be displayed prior to a second of the amendment.

C. All Commissioners are voting members

D. Ethics in voting

A Commissioner shall abstain from any vote or attempt to influence any vote taken by the Commission that would put that Commissioner in violation of the State Ethics Law. The Commissioner shall announce for the record his or her reason for his or her abstention. (WAC 220-101-040).

E. Progress of a motion to be voted on by the body

1. A main motion is made; this must be seconded before discussion occurs.
2. A motion to amend the motion can be made; this must be seconded before discussion occurs. A vote is taken on the motion to amend the motion.
3. A motion to amend the amendment can be made; this must be seconded before discussion occurs. A vote is taken on the motion to amend the amendment.
4. Once any motions to amend are concluded by vote, discussion upon the main motion, as amended if applicable, is open. A vote is taken on the main motion.

F. Discussion of a motion to be voted on by the body

1. A motion is made and seconded.
2. The Chair will ask the maker of the motion if he/she desires to speak in favor of the motion.
3. All members should be given the opportunity to speak once on a motion before any member is granted a second turn to speak.
4. The Commission discussion should articulate the Commission's reasoning in support of the approved motion, which could include express endorsement of a staff report or other document in the Commission materials.

G. Order of Voting

1. When the question (vote) has been called for, the maker of the motion will restate the motion if requested by the Chair.
2. The vote is taken by voice vote (aye/nay/abstain).
3. Roll call voting may be taken at the request of any Commissioner.
4. The Chair will announce the results of the vote.

H. Electing Chair and Vice Chair

1. The new Chair shall be elected first.
2. The current Chair will open the floor. Every candidate who desires to run for Chair shall announce their interest. Commissioners can nominate another Commissioner and that person may accept or decline.
3. Once all candidates have announced, the Chair will invite each to speak to their candidacy.
4. After every candidate has spoken, the Chair will open the floor for additional statements from any Commissioner.
5. Upon conclusion of discussion, the Chair will ask each Commissioner to write on a piece of paper their name, and the name of their preferred candidate. Each Commissioner will show their paper or share verbally. If more than two people are running for Chair and no candidate obtains five votes, then the candidate with the fewest votes is removed and a new vote occurs among the remaining candidates. Candidates can vote for themselves.
6. This process will be repeated to elect the Vice Chair.

VII. PUBLIC INPUT AT COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Commission is the primary link between the citizens of Washington and the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Commission places great value on information received from the public and, therefore, encourages citizens to provide public input. This procedure outlines the process the Commission shall follow in taking public input.

A. General public input

The Commission shall allow open public input at the beginning of each day for full Commission meetings. The open public input agenda item is designed for matters not on the established agenda with specific public comment periods. Those testifying on other agenda items during the open public input agenda item will be requested to hold their testimony until the particular agenda item. Elected public officials will be allowed to speak first, regardless of presence in person. In-person public input will be prioritized.

B. Public input for specific decisions

Prior to a Commission decision, public input will be taken and limited to only the proposed action being considered. In some cases, the Commission may take a final vote in a subsequent meeting without allowing additional public input.

C. Testimony for rulemaking hearings under the Administrative Procedures Act

When the Commission adopts rules under the Administrative Procedures Act, public testimony and written comments are accepted during the periods specified in the rulemaking notices. Communications submitted to the Commission after the close of such deadlines will not be considered.

D. Registering to speak

1. For in-person participation at meetings: Only those people who have completed a Public Testimony Form and turned it in at the registration table prior to the start of discussion of that agenda item will be allowed to testify.
2. For remote participation ~~via webinars~~: Only those people who pre-register are able to testify, and their testimony may be limited to audio only and not video. Pre-registration for all webinar public comment agenda items must be submitted by 8 am to 5 pm the day before the meeting start of the agenda item.

E. Time limits

To maintain the agenda schedule, the Chair may impose limits on the length of time allotted to public speakers. Time limits will be announced at the beginning of the agenda item scheduled for public input. The eChair may also encourage public speakers to not repeat items that were raised by prior speakers. The Chair may end public comment to meet agenda demands and request that commenters provide written comments via the public web portal.

VIII. COMMISSION COMMITTEES

The Commission establishes standing committees from time to time as well as ad hoc or special committees when the need arises. Committees are advisory in nature and do not set policy for the full Commission. Standing committees and assignments are listed in Appendix 4.

A. Committee assignments and meetings

The Commission Chair, subject to Commissioner consensus, appoints members of committees. Appointments should be made in January of odd numbered years and otherwise only as necessary. Standing committees typically will include two (2) to four (4) Commission members. Committee members select the committee chair and vice chair, if necessary. Committees should meet as often as necessary, as determined by the committee chair or a majority of the committee members. The Commission or the Commission Chair can also request a committee to meet. The Director shall designate a Department employee to facilitate the committee's work, including scheduling, keeping the committee apprised of relevant issues, coordinating staff or other presentations at committee meetings, and providing notes or verbal reports to the Committee Chair to present to the full Commission.

Within their purview, committees are to address issues brought by Department staff, referred by the Commission or raised at the committee level. Items originating with the committee shall not involve or result in significant staff or committee time and effort until the committee has received Commission approval to proceed.

B. Purpose of Committees

The purpose of established committees is to allow a more detailed analysis of issues and development of options than can be accomplished during regular Commission meetings. Committees are designed to provide a forum that allows for more informal discussion with staff, and at the discretion of the Committee Chair, interested individuals or groups. Committees may evaluate issues to determine if the full Commission should hear and consider them. Committees should explore potential impacts of suggested policies or direction and when appropriate, explore alternatives and make recommendations. Committees cannot make decisions binding on the Commission. Rather, Committee decisions or agreements are merely recommendations for full Commission consideration or action at a noticed open public meeting.

~~If the committee process is to work effectively, it is absolutely critical that there be a considerable level of trust among and between Commission members.~~ Committee makeup should include, where possible, members with diverse views. Committee members need to be willing to consider various proposed alternatives or directions. The Commission ~~must have faith~~ expects that the committees will examine details, ramifications and alternatives, and present the committee views fairly and completely to the Commission.

The purpose of the Executive Committee is to facilitate Commission administrative matters and functions and to be available to the Director on urgent matters that require immediate attention. The discussions will be summarized in writing, including any actions taken, and an oral report listing the items discussed, including any actions, will be given at the next Commission meeting. The Executive Committee does not have noticed and open meetings.

C. Public attendance at Committees

The vast majority of Committee meetings should be noticed as open to the public and conducted in accord with the Open Public Meetings Act, subject to the discretion of the Committee Chair.

Public testimony at Committee meetings may occur at the discretion of the Committee Chair. Commissioners who are not appointed members of the Committee may attend any open Committee meeting, and may participate in Committee discussions at the discretion of the Committee Chair, but shall not vote on any Committee actions or recommendations.

D. Committee reports

Committee Chairs shall provide regular reports at scheduled Commission meetings regarding the Committees' activities. Such reports should include the attendance record of Committee members and other key individuals, topics addressed, staff work assigned, policy direction considered, alternatives explored, and committee recommendations. The Commission Chair shall ensure that the full Commission has the opportunity to discuss the progress and content of Committee work and approve or disapprove further Committee work on the issue at hand.

IX. ADA ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RCW 77.04.150)

The Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Committee (ADA Committee) is advisory to the Commission on matters of access and other issues challenging people with disabilities for consideration in policy decisions and other actions. The Commission selects and appoints the ADA Committee members recruited by the Human Resources Department. One member of the Commission serves as liaison to the ADA Committee and works with the ADA Committee chair and assigned Department staff to ensure that matters before the Committee are brought to the full Commission.

X. COMMISSION STAFF REVIEW

- A. The Commission will conduct a formal performance evaluation of the Director at least biennially, with annual check-ins.
- B. To enhance performance of the Commission Executive Assistant:
 - 1. The Chair or designee will conduct one performance review each year of the Executive Assistant.
 - 2. The Chair shall contact all Commissioners for input prior to conducting the performance evaluation.
 - 3. The Chair and the Executive Assistant will develop a narrative based on the following criteria:
 - a. Accomplishments/contributions made by the employee
 - b. Things employee does especially well
 - c. Improvements needed by the employee and the Commission
 - d. New skills/training desired by the employee

- e. Actions the Commission/Department can take to ensure the employee receives desired skills/training.
- C. The Chair shall ensure that the final performance evaluation is agreed to by the entire Commission.

Appendices:

1. Reimbursement Procedures
2. Commission Request to the Department Form
3. Correspondence Response Template
4. Standing Committee Roster

Compensation

RCW 77.04.060 states that members of the commission, as a class 4 group, shall be compensated in accordance with RCW 43.03.250(2) in an amount not to exceed one hundred dollars for each day during which the member attends an official meeting of the group or performs statutorily prescribed duties approved by the chairperson of the group.

OFM's State Administrative and Accounting Manual, Section 25.30.30.d(3) Class 2, 3, 4, or 5 group members qualify for compensation for each calendar day they attend official group meetings and/or perform statutory duties approved by their chairperson. Maximum daily rates are defined in RCW 43.03.230 through 43.03.265. A calendar day of compensation includes all meetings or work performed on that day, **regardless of how many hours worked or meetings attended**. Compensation may only be paid to a member if it is authorized under the law dealing with the specific group to which a member belongs or dealing in particular with members of the specific group.

"Timesheets" are submitted twice per month, at the middle of the month (i.e., close to the 15th as possible) and at the end of the month. Commissioners may enter their time directly in Total Time; or provide the executive assistant with days worked.

Qualifying duties are listed under the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission Rules of Procedure, IV. Responsibilities, Section D. Commission member roles.

Eligible Meetings:

- Special and regular Commission meetings and Commission committee meetings.
- Legislative meetings when representing the Department or when requested by a legislator.
- Commissioner confirmation hearings before the Senate, Commission annual meetings with the Governor, periodic selection and appointment of Director, and
- Reviewing applicants for Commission appointed Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities (RCW 77.04.150).

Meetings for Approval:

- Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) and AFWA conferences and meetings. The Chair pre-approves compensation and travel for up to 2 Commissioners per event, not to exceed 20 total days per year.
- Meetings with other government entities, advisory groups, constituents; trainings; field trips and site visits; special official Department events; and meeting preparation time. Up to three compensable days per calendar quarter are automatically approved; additional days require pre-approval by the Chair. This category is left to individual Commissioner discretion; compensation requests should be viewed as being able to pass scrutiny of an outside audit.
- Official duties of the Chair when managing Commission business. Up to five compensable days per month are automatically approved by the Commission.

Reimbursements

Travel

Section 10.70.30.a of the State Administrative and Accounting Manual states that Commissioners are to be reimbursed allowable meal and lodging expenses on the same basis, and under the same regulations, as regular state employees.

Please indicate the following information when you provide your report.

Date & Time: Indicate the dates you were in travel status (include the date and time you left home and the date and time you returned home).

Meeting* & Location: Indicate the type and purpose of meeting you attended and the location (city).

Mileage: Indicate total number of miles driven.

Other Expense Considerations:

- Ask for the "state rate" when booking your own lodging/car rental reservations.
- Receipts for ferry, parking, hotel, taxi, registration, and any other expenses are required when submitting your expenses. Receipts for meals are not required.

*NOTE: Meetings with legislators and/or other elected officials, include participant names, topic(s), and who requested the meeting. This is required for compliance with public disclosure lobbying rules.

Commissioners provide their time and any reimbursable costs, twice a month.

COMMISSION REQUESTS TO THE DEPARTMENT or Blue Sheet

Guidelines for when the Commission makes requests to the Department for work products or information.

Commission Requests that Require a Significant Staff Workload:

Requests include, but are not limited to, information that benefits the Commission's decision-making process, requests for evaluation of information by Department staff, review of concepts to be included in the Department's public involvement process, and requests for information related to past or future actions of the Department. Committee requests that require a significant staff workload shall also go through this process.

- A. Requests are initiated by the Commission during a Commission meeting or work session and are reviewed by a quorum of the Commission to determine desirability of the request. A Commissioner may also initiate requests for those times when a Commission meeting or work session is not scheduled and an expeditious response is required, but the request must be presented for consideration to the full Commission during the next meeting.
- B. Commissioners shall work with appropriate staff to develop and refine the request in an iterative manner prior to submission to the Commission for approval.
- B. Commission staff forwards requests to the Director's Office for review, assignment and scheduling.
- C. The Director or designee discusses the request to staff at the debrief session, and the Commission Office forwards a copy to the appropriate program.
- D. Management Team members are responsible for ensuring Commission requests are completed in a timely manner.
- E. The Commission is responsible for reviewing the finalized assignment for completeness and may return the assignment for additional clarification and/or information as necessary.

Correspondence Response Template - Appendices 3

Dear _____,

Thank you for providing input on XX , your input been forwarded to the Commission (and program staff). This letter serves as the Commission's formal response, and we appreciate your input.

The topic that you raise will be discussed at the XX Committee or in front of the whole Commission on XXX date. We encourage you to sign up for public comment for that agenda item. You can sign up here XX.

OR

You may have additional questions about the XX topic discussed on XX. Extensive questions about staff presentations and the underlying materials will not be answered by the Commission, but you may reach out to the staff member who provided the presentation or material. It may be that the nature or size of your request will result in staff recommending the submission of a Public Disclosure Request through the Information Governance Unit.

OR

Your letter is requesting clarification on the XX decision, or you are seeking justification for that decision. You can find the presentations from staff here XXX. We recommend listening to the recording of the Commission meeting where the vote occurred which can be found [HERE](#) or reading approved minutes [HERE](#). Individual Commissioners cannot speak for the Commission as a whole and the formal vote, minutes or Concise Explanatory Statement, which is part of SEPA decisions, are the best way to understand the Commission decision.

OR

Optional: The issue you have raised will be addressed formally through rule making. We recommend providing comments on upcoming rulemaking or SEPA changes, you can submit your input to Commission@dfw.wa.gov or the following web sites:

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) comments can be provided at [SEPA documents available for public comment | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)

Rulemaking comments can be provided at [Rule making | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)

Thank you for engaging with the Fish and Wildlife Commission. We make every effort to provide opportunities for the public to provide us their input. We look forward to seeing you at a future meeting.

Chair NAME

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission
2023 STANDING COMMITTEES
11.30.23

COMMITTEE	MEMBERSHIP	
<p>Executive Review Commission operation, effectiveness, and rules affecting Commission function; lead the development of Director performance measures, and review budget, licensing issues and related matters including emergency actions by Dept.</p>	<p>Commissioners Barbara Baker (Chair) Molly Linville Lorna Smith Jim Anderson</p>	<p>Staff Amy Windrope cc: Tami Lininger</p>
<p>Habitat Review regulatory and voluntary aspects of the Habitat Program and the intersection with Wildlife Program around technical support for property owners to increase conservation benefits, landscape level planning, forest health, fish passage, HPA, and science related to habitat and landscape level issues. Review land acquisition, habitat management & enhancement activities, potential income generation, relations/agreements with other landowners, easements, land exchanges & related matters.</p>	<p>Commissioners Molly Linville (Chair) John Lehmkuhl Lorna Smith Tim Ragen</p>	<p>Staff Margen Carlson- Habitat Cynthia Wilkerson - Wildlife cc: Jenna Rosenfeld</p>
<p>Fish Review all marine and migratory species related fish conservation and management issues. Review all lake and resident stream fish conservation and management issues.</p>	<p>Commissioners Jim Anderson (Chair) Molly Linville Tim Ragen Steve Parker</p>	<p>Staff Kelly Cunningham cc: Cathy Davidson</p>
<p>Wildlife Review all wildlife, hunting, recreation, damage, conflict, and related issues.</p>	<p>Commissioners Lorna Smith (Chair) Jim Anderson Woody Myers Melanie Rowland</p>	<p>Staff Eric Gardner cc: Heather Bonagofski</p>
<p>Big Tent Seeking common ground and promoting collaborative work among fishers, hunters, wildlife appreciators, and the conservation community. Work to increase the cross - programmatic interface within the agency.</p>	<p>Commissioners Barbara Baker (Chair) Lorna Smith John Lehmkuhl Melanie Rowland</p>	<p>Nate Pamplin Margen Carlson cc: Tami Lininger</p>

COMMISSION COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

FWC approved: December 2008

The Commission establishes standing committees from time to time as well as ad hoc or special committees when the need arises. Committees are advisory in nature and do not set policy for the full Commission.

The Commission Chair, subject to Commissioner consensus, appoints members of committees. Appointments should be made in January of odd numbered years following election of the Commission Chair and otherwise only as necessary. Standing committees typically will include two (2) to four (4) Commission members. Committee members select the committee chair and vice chair, if necessary. Committees should meet as often as necessary, as determined by the committee chair or a majority of the committee members. The Commission Chair can also request a committee to meet. The Department shall designate a Department employee to facilitate the committee's work, including scheduling, keeping the committee apprised of relevant issues and coordinating staff or other presentations at committee meetings.

Within their purview, committees are to address issues brought by the Department, referred by the Commission or raised at the committee level. Items originating with the committee shall not involve or result in significant staff or committee time and effort until the committee has received Commission approval to proceed.

The purpose of established committees is to allow a more detailed analysis of issues than can be accomplished during regular Commission meetings. Committees are designed to provide a forum that allows for more informal discussion with staff, interested individuals or groups. Committees may evaluate issues to determine if the full Commission should hear and consider them. Committees should explore potential impacts of suggested policies or direction and when appropriate, explore alternatives. Enforcement does not have a stand-alone committee as their work is integral to all of the standing committees and their engagement will be sought by those committees.

Committee chairs shall provide regular reports, at scheduled Commission meetings, regarding the committees' activities. Such reports should include topics addressed, policy direction considered, alternatives explored and committee recommendations. Committees cannot make decisions binding on the Commission. Rather, committee decisions or agreements are merely recommendations for full Commission consideration or action at open public meetings.

NOTE: If the committee process is to work effectively, it is absolutely critical that there be a considerable level of trust among and between Commission members. Committee makeup should include, where possible, members with diverse views. Committee members need to be willing to consider various proposed alternatives or directions. The Commission must have faith that the committees will examine details, ramifications and alternatives, and present the committee views fairly and completely to the Commission.

If the necessary level of trust does not exist, it will result in the full Commission making its own evaluation. This will render the committee's work and time of little value. This does not imply that the Commission should not ask questions to understand the issues. However, if the committee work is replicated at the Commission level, it will negate the need and usefulness of the committee structure.