



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

Meeting date:

August 8, 2024

Agenda item:

Beaver Relocation Permit Program Rule

Presenter(s): Shawn Behling, Wetland Wildlife Species Specialist

Background summary:

This rule proposal is responding to RCW 77.32.585 is a significant legislative rule permitting the agency to release wild beavers. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife proposes to create a new section in WAC Chapter 220-450, Wildlife in captivity and wildlife rehabilitation. The agency's purpose for this proposed rule is to create a permit program allowing individuals to offer relocation as an alternative to lethal removal of conflict beaver.

The Beaver Relocation Permit Program has existed as a pilot program since 2019. The program offers an alternative to lethal removal of conflict beavers and provides education and support for individuals and non-profits as they perform relocations around the state. It is a requirement of the program that only conflict beavers can be relocated and only after all coexistence options have been exhausted.

This new section will codify the aspects of the pilot program we have found successful, such as:

- Specify the requirements for permittees and subpermittees, including qualifications, training, husbandry facilities, and reporting.
 - Identify which beavers are candidates for relocation, which must be conflict-causing and have exhausted all methods of coexistence.
 - Specify the requirements for release sites, which must be assessed for a combination of abiotic and biotic factors to determine the suitability of the site in addition to the factors listed in RCW 77.32.585 and with the agreement of the landowner.
 - Specify the conditions during temporary captivity, including duration, avoiding disease transmission, preventing habituation and imprinting, and outline the steps to take when a beaver shows illness, injury, or mortality.
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Staff recommendation: Approve the WAC proposal and allow the Beaver Relocation Permit Pilot to become a permanent program

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

No policy issues.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

None.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

WDFW filed a proposed rulemaking on July 3, 2024, WSR 24-14-150. This filing initiated public comment that will close at midnight on August 9, 2024. WDFW also issued a news release as well as posts to multiple media outlets, our website, and emails. Hard copies will be sent to those who request it. WDFW Staff will consider the public comment and return to the Fish and Wildlife Commission in September asking for a decision.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Briefing only. If adopted the proposed amendments would be implemented for the 2025 beaver relocation season beginning April 1, 2025 and will become effective December 7, 2024.

Draft motion language:

Briefing only.

Post decision communications plan:

Briefing only
