

# Wildlife Conflict Section

Fenner Yarborough  
Landowner Services Division Manager  
3/20/2025



# Wildlife Conflict Section

- Landowner Services Division of the Wildlife Program
- Headquarters staff (3)
- Regional Staff (23)
  - Wildlife Conflict Specialists and Technicians
  - Support from District Biologists and Regional Program Managers

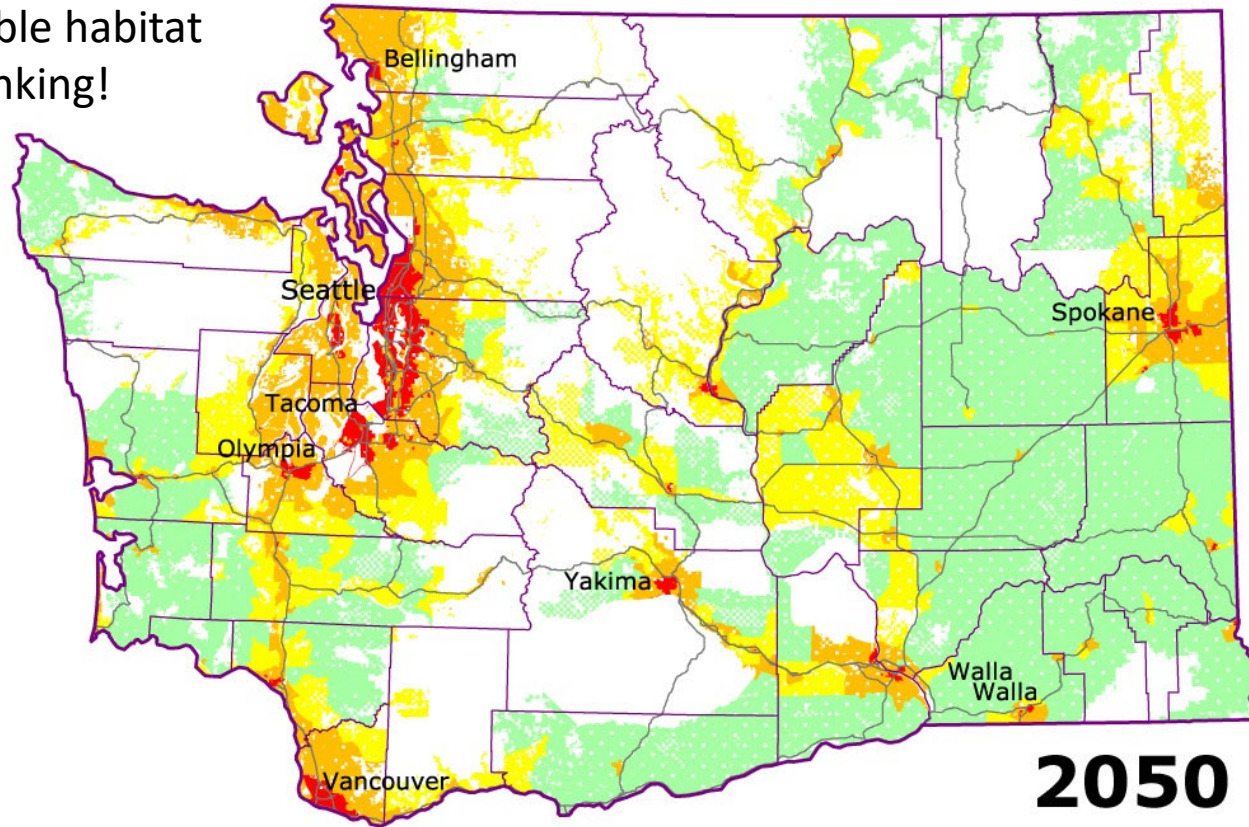




**We are about “managing” for adverse  
Human-Wildlife interactions,  
to provide for better co-existence  
in a shrinking space for both!**

# Conflict is not going away

Available habitat  
is shrinking!



Center of the American West  
University of Colorado (2001)

#### Land Use Categories

- Urban/Suburban (>2 units per acre)
- Low Density Suburban (1 unit per 0.5 to 10 acres)
- Exurban (1 unit per 10 to 40 acres)
- Rural (less than 1 unit per 40 acres)
- Unbuildable (public land, open water, too steep)
- County Line
- Major Highway



# “Managing” what?

*People’s expectations* – Public Education

Helping people find solutions

Provide advice and resources

Take action to reduce conflict (emphasis on non-lethal)

Facilitate hunter/Master Hunter assistance

Permitting for removal

Staff perform removals

Range riding contracts (wolf conflict)

Crop and livestock damage claims



# Headquarters Work

- Administrative Branch
- Policies, grants, and budget management
- Special Trapping Permit process
- Wildlife Control Operator (WCO) program training and certification
- Black Bear Timber Damage permitting process
- Administers and processes commercial crop and livestock claims
- Budgets and contract payments for a variety of topics





# What do Conflict Specialists do?





# What types of conflict do we see?

## Human-carnivore interactions, or conflicts

- Cougar
- Bear
- Wolf

## Commercial crop damage

- Deer
- Elk
- Waterfowl (Snow Geese)—mostly federal response
- Bears damaging timber (no compensation)

## “Nuisance” Wildlife

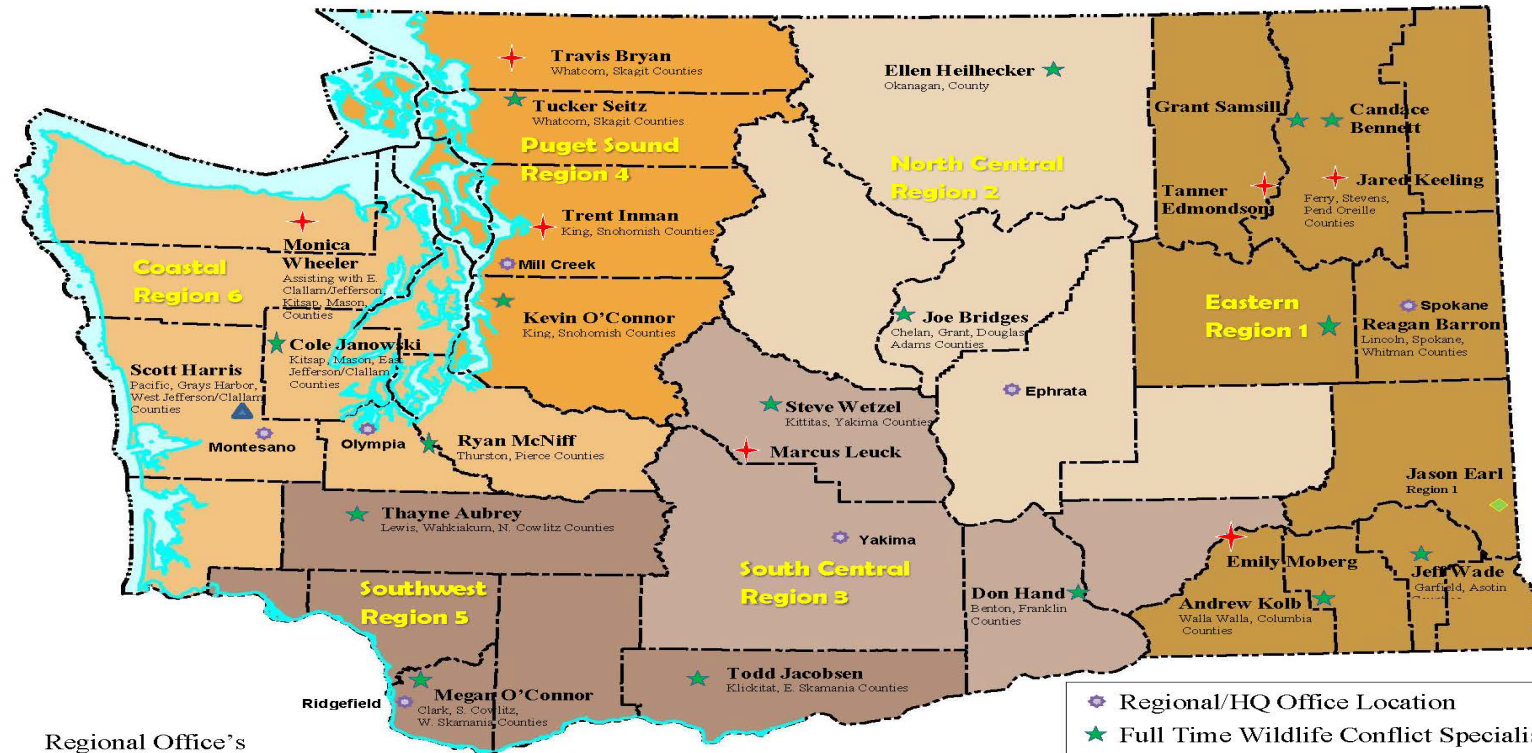
- Small animals harming (typically) non-commercial things





# Field Staff Deployment

## WILDLIFE CONFLICT STAFF – January 2025



- Regional Office's**
- Region 1, Spokane – (509) 892-1001
  - Region 2, Ephrata – (509) 754-4624
  - Region 3, Yakima – (509) 575-2740
  - Region 4, Mill Creek – (425) 775-1311
  - Region 5, Ridgefield – (360) 696-6211
  - Region 6, Montesano – (360) 249-4628

- 📍 Regional/HQ Office Location
- ★ Full Time Wildlife Conflict Specialist
- ▲ Split Conflict and Private Lands
- ✚ Conflict Related Worker
- ◆ Supervisor Performing Conflict Field Work



# What tools do we have?

## Negative human-carnivore interactions

- Hunting seasons for game species
- Range riding to reduce wolf-livestock conflict
- Non-lethal tools (fox lights, fladry, others by agreement) and education
- Fencing and other barriers
- Trap and relocate
- Special permits
- Lethal action by staff



# What tools do we have?

## Commercial crop damage by deer and elk

- Hunting seasons
- Non-lethal tools (Zon guns, scare devices, cracker shells, screamers)
- Herders and hazers
- Fencing, where practical, or allowed by local ordinance (limited funding)
- Master Hunters
- Kill permits to landowner, typically under a written agreement
- Commercial damage payment (limits to funding)



# What tools do we have?

## “Nuisance” Wildlife

- Self-help/advice/education
- Wildlife Control Operators (WCO) services – must be certified by WDFW and paid by landowner
- Outreach and communication to reduce conflict before it happens
- USDA Wildlife Services handle some issues
  - Urban coyote conflicts, avian conflict, and airport issues





# Where are we headed?

## Priorities

- Increased education and outreach
- Creating partnerships
- Explore additional funding opportunities
- Training for field staff
- Updating WAC's, Policies, SOP's, etc.
- Exploring additional non-lethal deterrents and working with other groups to share information





# Questions?

Request this information in an alternative format or language at [wdfw.wa.gov/accessibility/requests-accommodation](https://wdfw.wa.gov/accessibility/requests-accommodation), 833-885-1012, TTY (711), or [CivilRightsTeam@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:CivilRightsTeam@dfw.wa.gov).

# Policy and Procedure 5401 Update

Fenner Yarborough and Captain Mike Jewell  
Landowner Services Division Manager and Region 2  
Enforcement Captain

3/20/2025



Washington  
Department of  
**FISH &  
WILDLIFE**



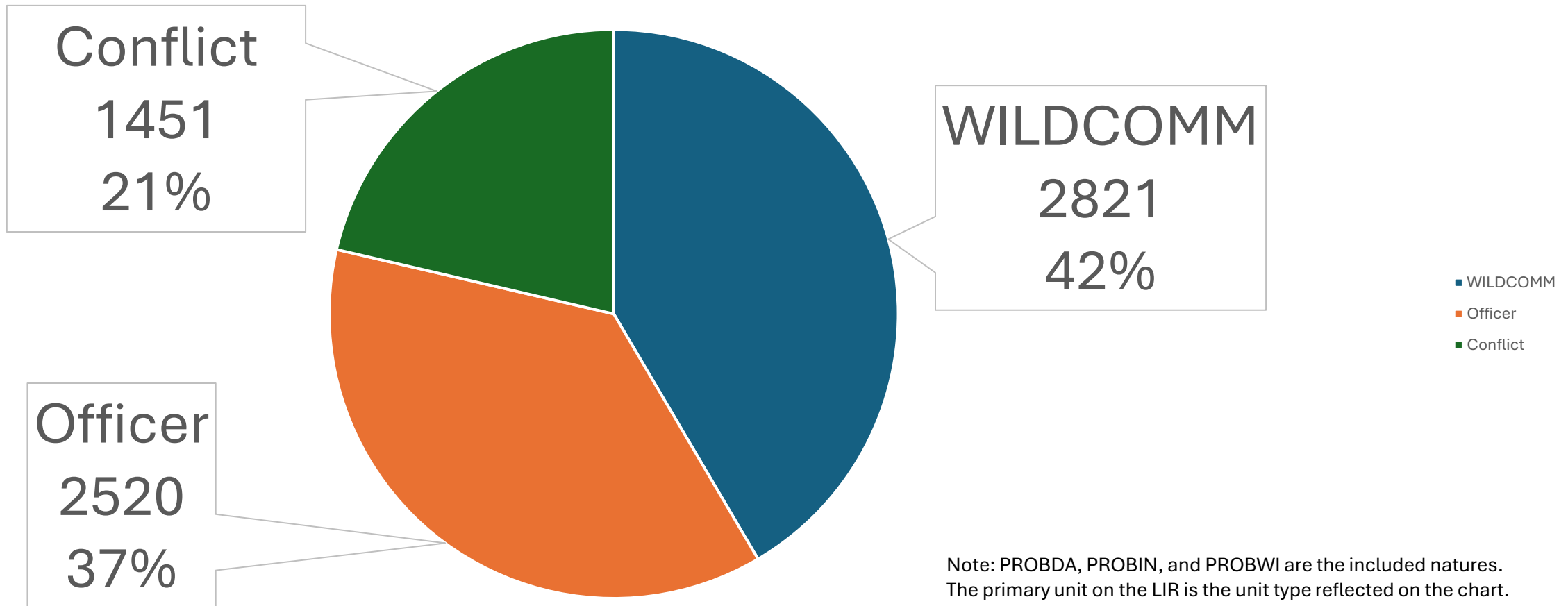
# Current Efforts



# Current Challenges

- Increased human-wildlife conflicts statewide
- County codes on fencing heights
- Sharing tips on Living and Wildlife and reducing conflict
- Trends in human population growth
  - Staffing levels have not kept pace
  - More home cameras is raising awareness of wildlife presence

# 2023 Statewide Wildlife Conflict Incident Reports by Unit Type



# Updating Policy and Procedure 5401

- Team from Enforcement and Wildlife Program
- Current version from 2007
- Renamed to Human-Wildlife Interaction Policy and Procedure
- Incorporating Wildlife Conflict Specialists as responders
- Focusing on behavior and not specific species
- Increased proactive education (animal husbandry, wildlife feeding, living with wildlife, etc.)

# DRAFT Timeline

## Policy and Procedure

- Team created – 8/2023
- Work began – 9/2023
- EMT review 7/2025
- Director Review – 9/2025
- End of Team – 10/2025





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