

WDFW BUDGET AND POLICY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING SUMMARY

May 9, 2023

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Attendees

BPAG Members

Tom Davis, WA Forest Protection Assoc
Ron Garner, Puget Sound Anglers
Lucas Hall, Long Live the Kings
Jessica Helsley, Wild Salmon Center
Eric Johnson, WA State Assoc. of Counties
Nora Nickum, Seattle Aquarium
Tom O’Keefe, American Whitewater
Butch Smith, Ilwaco Charter Association
Kerston Swartz, Woodland Park Zoo
Rachel Voss, First Hunt Foundation
Lance Winecka, Regional Fisheries Coalition
Alexei Calambokidis, Trout Unlimited

WDFW

Kelly Susewind
Nate Pamplin
Tom McBride
Morgan Stinson
Commissioner Anderson
Commissioner Ragen
Jon Neville
Chalee Batungbacal
Kristina Hill

Public

Robinson Low, WA Conservation Action
Rein Attemann, WA Conservation Action

Welcome, Introductions, and Agency Update with Director Susewind

Nate Pamplin welcomed the Budget and Policy Advisory Group (BPAG) members and other guests to the meeting.

WDFW Director, Kelly Susewind, provided agency updates including the retirement of Region 1 Director Steve Pozzanghera and the announcement of WDFW’s new Region 5 Director, Rian Sallee. Kelly also shared gratitude for a successful legislative session. The appropriations for the Biodiversity Decision Package is a highlight for the agency.

Nate reported that WDFW Director of Conservation, Jeff Davis, accepted a new position as the Director of Colorado Parks and Wildlife. The position is vacant but will be filled.

2023 Legislative Session De-brief

Tom McBride provided an overview of the 2023 Legislative Session.

Tom highlighted eight bills.

- 1085- Reducing plastic pollution. Includes that WDFW must carry out a study and make findings and recommendations to the Legislature by November 1, 2025, related to the durability of air-filled and foam-filled water-based structures other than the foam structures and products that are subject

to the restrictions.

- 1122- Grants Washington Management Service (WMS) employees the right to collective bargaining, except for WMS employees in positions with salary bands three, four, and medical, and other specified WMS managers. Provides that bargaining over wages is limited to salary band levels. Provides that collective bargaining agreements with WMS employees may not take effect before July 1, 2025.
- 1181- Adds climate change and resiliency as a goal and planning element under the GMA. Land use to address environmental justice, greenhouse gases, and wildfires risk. The goals and policies of the shoreline management act shall be considered an element of the county's or city's comprehensive plan. WDFW involved in drafting model climate change and resiliency element.
- 1216- Creates an interagency clean energy siting coordinating council. WDFW is a member. Creates within Ecology a permitting project for identified projects, and amends SEPA application.
- 1758- Provides that routine hatchery maintenance is exempt from permitting under the SMA. It requires prior notice to local governments and Ecology.
- 1775- Provides some liability protection for projects meeting standards, except for gross negligence and wanton or willful actions, to Regional Fishery Enhancement Groups (RFEGs) to help with their problem obtaining insurance.
- 5371- A 1000-yard vessel restriction around SRKWs becomes effective January 1, 2025. Extensive outreach efforts involving WDFW must be made. Commercial licensing structure and fees are amended.
- 5390- DNR may administer a programmatic SHA for the northern spotted owl for any forestland owner. Participation in this agreement by forestland owners is strictly voluntary. DNR must consult with WDFW for technical assistance regarding habitat assessments of candidate parcels and implementation of the SHA.

2024 Legislative Session Preview

Tom shared that the following issues will likely appear in the 2024 legislative session:

- Elk crop damage
- Pinniped predation on salmon
- Wildlife crossings
- Coastal steelhead
- Lands management

WDFW requested legislation for 2024 will be presented to the F&W Commission on June 23, 2023 and will be considered for adoption on August 11, 2023.

Please contact Tom McBride at Thomas.McBride@dfw.wa.gov for additional information regarding proposed agency request legislation.

2023-25 Budget Highlights

Morgan Stinson presented an overview of the 2023-25 biennial budget. Funding for WDFW increased more than 15% from the current biennium and included funding for biodiversity, toxics monitoring and analysis, and funding to provide support for tribal hatcheries and fish passage.

2024 Supplemental Preview

Morgan also presented on the 2024 supplemental budget. WDFW tends to not submit capital requests in short session but will be focusing on unfunded and underfunded operational items.

Please contact Morgan Stinson at Morgan.Stinson@dfw.wa.gov for additional information regarding the WDFW biennial and supplemental budget.

Closing

Nate announced that BPAG member appointments are nearing the end of term. Members who are interested in extending another two-years are encouraged to email Nate at Nathan.Pamplin@dfw.wa.gov.

Director Susewind ended the meeting with gratitude for BPAG members contributions and engagement with the Department.

The next meeting will be in-person on July 25, 2023, from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Please email Kristina Hill at Kristina.Hill@dfw.wa.gov for assistance if travel support is needed.