

WDFW 2016 Supplemental Operating Budget Requests

For Commission Review

Contents

Maintenance Level Requests

#1 SW Regional Office Relocation	1
#2 Maintaining Technology Access.....	1
#3 Hatchery Utilities/Fish Food Cost Increases	2
#4 Wildfire Costs	2

Performance Level Requests

#5 Improve Maintenance of State Lands	3
#6 Coordinated Fish Barrier Removal.....	3
#7 E2SSB 5996 DOT Project Mitigation.....	4
#8 WDFW Website Re-build.....	4
#9 Marine Vessel Grant.....	5
#10 Use of Wildlife Account Fund Balance.....	5

Fund Source Key

Abbreviation	Title
GF-S	General Fund – State
GF-F	General Fund – Federal
WL-S	Wildlife – State

Maintenance Level Requests

#1 SW Regional Office Relocation

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	\$0	\$545,000

Fund Sources: GF-S, WL-S

Recommendation Summary:

After an unsuccessful attempt last biennium, the Department continues to search for a new location for its Southwest Regional Office. The Facilities Division of the Office of Financial Management has released a new request for proposals to help evaluate available options in the area. Currently this request only reflects one-time anticipated moving costs. When the budget for the new location is determined this request will also include any ongoing adjustments necessary to account for the new lease rate.

#2 Maintaining Technology Access

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>

Fund Sources: GF-S, WL-S

Recommendation Summary:

Costs to provide certain basic technological tools increase every year, such as Microsoft Office software and support, network access for staff located in off-site locations, and email access and storage. The Department missed an opportunity to request authority for cost increases in the 2011-13 biennium, and has been operating at a staffing deficit in order to cover those costs. WDFW requests authority to support its technology rate base and to cover cost increases that have occurred since our last budget request.

#3 Hatchery Utilities/Fish Food Cost Increases

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	\$80,000	\$80,000

Fund Sources: Various Funds

Recommendation Summary:

State hatcheries produce fish that support Washington’s tribal, commercial and recreational fisheries and contribute to fish recovery efforts listed under the Endangered Species Act. WDFW requests funding to meet increased utility costs at hatchery facilities. This request supports electricity, natural gas, water, sewer, garbage, and oil heat costs. Increases in the cost of fish food will be addressed as needed.

#4 Wildfire Costs

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	\$395,000	0

Fund Sources: GF-S

Recommendation Summary:

WDFW is required to pay fire suppression costs to local fire districts and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for their support in fighting wildfires on Department owned lands. Funding is requested for fire suppression, habitat rehabilitation and infrastructure costs associated with wildfires occurring during FY 2016 and for those fires occurring from March-June in FY 2015 that were not addressed in the enacted biennial budget. Fire suppression and restoration funding is necessary to preserve investments in fish and wildlife habitat, to protect human health and safety, and to defend facilities and structures in affected areas of the state.

Performance Level Requests

#5 Improve Maintenance of State Lands

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>FTEs</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	\$100,000	\$350,000	3.0

Fund Sources: WL-S

Recommendation Summary:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) 700 water access sites and 1 million acres of wildlife lands need continuous maintenance and enforcement presence. To fund this work, eight percent of Discover Pass sales revenue is deposited into the State Wildlife Account. WDFW requests authority to spend available fund balance from Discover Pass Sales on efforts that keep lands and access sites open, maintained, and safe for recreation.

#6 Coordinated Fish Barrier Removal

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>FTEs</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	\$58,000	\$214,000	1.4

Fund Sources: GF-S

Recommendation Summary:

Repairing fish passage barriers is among the most beneficial and cost-effective means of rebuilding salmon and steelhead runs because large areas of spawning habitat can be opened to these ESA-listed species. In response to a federal court injunction, the State of Washington has begun replacing all state-owned barriers. Other non-state barriers occur on the same rivers and streams as state systems and need to be removed to create functioning salmon and steelhead habitat. Funding is requested to coordinate with local restoration organizations and municipalities to identify and correct the highest priority fish passage barriers. When barriers have been identified and assessed, the Fish Passage Barrier Removal Board, chaired by WDFW will recommend a coordinated project list and monitor and advise on the correction of those fish barriers.

#7 E2SSB 5996 DOT Project Mitigation

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>FTEs</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	\$100,000	\$90,000	0.75

Fund Sources: GF-S

Recommendation Summary:

The 2016 Legislature passed E2SSB 5996 directing the departments of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Ecology, and Transportation (DOT) to work together and consult with other relevant entities to develop a policy framework for encouraging local government fish passage barrier mitigation as compensation for DOT project impacts. The three agencies are directed to develop and implement a formal statewide streamlined mechanism to facilitate compensatory mitigation in which the adverse impacts to one habitat type are mitigated through creation, restoration, or enhancement of another habitat type. Additionally, the agencies are directed develop a statewide in-lieu fee program or other formal process to provide a streamlined mechanism to facilitate this compensatory mitigation. E2SSB 5996 passed after the operating budget was passed, though, so no funding was provided to implement the bill. WDFW requests spending authority to fulfill the new requirements described in this legislation.

#8 WDFW Website Re-build

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>FTEs</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	\$60,000	\$440,000	2.0

Fund Sources: GF-S, WL-S

Recommendation Summary:

The WDFW website is the Department's most important communication, outreach, and marketing tool. It contains about 9,000 pages that receive an average of 32 million visits per year. It is Washington state's primary source of fishing and hunting information; descriptions of WDFW programs, policies, and regulations; and the portal to the Department's online license sales system. However, the current site has major shortcomings and lacks features that have become standard – and legally required – across business and government. Specifically, it lacks mobile functionality and does not comply with federal and state standards for use by people with visual impairments. In one of the country's most multi-lingual states, the site provides virtually no content in a language other than English. Funding is requested to create a new website that is mobile-friendly, accessible to people with disabilities, and that presents technical and scientific information clearly and concisely for all users.

#9 Marine Vessel Grant

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>FTEs</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	\$750,000	0	0

Fund Sources: GF-S, WL-S, GF-F

Recommendation Summary:

The Enforcement Program has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for a grant to replace one of their aging marine vessels in the Puget Sound. The new 38-foot command and control vessel will enforce recreational and commercial fishery regulations, provide boating safety response, and will be used for search and rescue missions. The Department requests one-time funding for the 25 percent state match and corresponding federal authority to acquire this vessel.

#10 Use of Wildlife Account Fund Balance

	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>FTEs</u>
Estimated Cost & FTEs:	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	TBD

Fund Sources: WL-S

Recommendation Summary:

The Department proposed legislation last session to increase fees on commercial and recreational fishing licenses to support increased workload associated with a deteriorating hatchery system, higher standards for fishery monitoring, challenges in ESA permitting, and declining federal support for lower Columbia River salmon production. The proposed legislation was not enacted. However, in discussions with leaders in the House and Senate they advised spending down available fund balance in the State Wildlife Account to maintain current service levels during the 2015-17 biennium. Additionally, the enacted operating budget included language directing the Department to spend down the State Wildlife Account fund balance during the 2015-17 biennium but the requisite expenditure authority was not provided. This decision package proposes to obtain the necessary spending authority to continue to maintain service levels while work continues on a fee bill for consideration by the 2017 Legislature.