



Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Stewards of the state's natural heritage

- ❖ Ensuring the survival of Washington's native fish and wildlife species
- ❖ Providing sustainable fishing, wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities
- ❖ Supporting local communities and small businesses through fish- and wildlife-related recreation and tourism.

These are the mandates of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the agency responsible for protecting and perpetuating our state's biodiversity.

WDFW's Legislative Mandate RCW 77.04.012

"... The department shall preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage the wildlife and food fish, game fish, and shellfish in state waters and offshore waters ... enhance and improve recreational and commercial fishing ... maximize public recreational game fishing and hunting opportunities of all citizens."

More than a million people go sport fishing, hunting or wildlife viewing each year in Washington. These activities contribute nearly \$3 billion annually to the state's economy, while commercial fisheries add another \$3.8 billion. Healthy fish and wildlife populations are central to the quality of life and the heritage of Washington citizens.

But as the state's population grows and natural land is converted to human use, we can no longer assume the animals we enjoy today will be here tomorrow. Dozens of native species are listed for protection as threatened or endangered and many others are candidates for listing. Ensuring their survival and carefully managing fishing and hunting opportunities to sustain the resource, is the daily work of WDFW biologists, lab technicians, enforcement officers, hatchery workers, land stewards and others.

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Protecting fish and wildlife—now and for future generations



Managing fisheries

Razor clam digs on ocean beaches; angling for trout on lowland lakes; pulling pots of Dungeness crab from Puget Sound; reeling in hatchery-produced salmon or steelhead—these harvest opportunities feed Washington families and contribute billions of dollars to the state’s economy each year. WDFW biologists, fishery managers and enforcement officers monitor fish populations and work with citizens, and federal and tribal fishery managers to plan harvest opportunities and protect the resource. As a result of careful management, Dungeness crab provide the state’s most lucrative coastal commercial fishery; recreational razor-clam digs lure more than 30,000 clam diggers in a single day to Washington coastal communities; and lowland lake trout fisheries annually draw more than 300,000 anglers of all ages on the opening day of fishing each year.



Producing fish

For more than 100 years, hatcheries have been an important part of Washington’s economy, releasing millions of fish annually for harvest. WDFW operates 88 hatchery facilities, producing salmon, steelhead trout and other game fish. WDFW’s hatchery workers rear and release juvenile fish and recover broodstock from returning runs. At the same time, they are re-tooling traditional hatchery operations to ensure hatcheries support wild-fish recovery. The result of these efforts are sustainable fishing opportunities that generate billions of dollars annually for Washington’s economy.



Providing safe hunting opportunity

Hunting is a time-honored tradition for hundreds of thousands of people throughout Washington. WDFW maximizes hunting opportunities while ensuring the long-term viability of more than 50 game species. Through field surveys, harvest monitoring and habitat enhancement, the department is able to plan and conduct sustainable hunting opportunities for species ranging from deer and elk to ducks and pheasants. At the same time, WDFW coordinates more than 800 volunteer instructors who teach safety courses to prepare more than 13,000 new hunters annually.

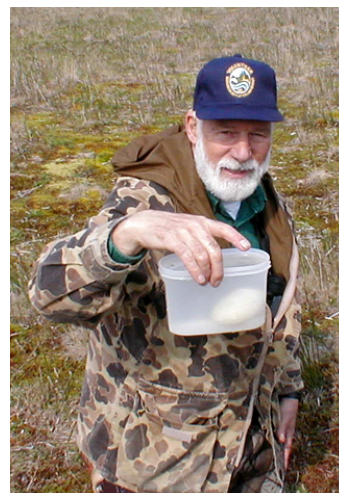
Conserving species

As the state’s human population continues to grow, fish and wildlife species are increasingly at risk from loss and fragmentation of critical habitat and competition from non-native species. WDFW is monitoring more than 150 fish and wildlife state species of concern, including those listed as threatened and endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act. To halt and reverse declines in Washington’s native fish and wildlife, WDFW outlines and implements actions needed for recovery and restores fragile species to historic habitats.

Protecting fish and wildlife—now and for future generations

Recovering salmon and steelhead

Salmon and steelhead are integral to the state's ecological, commercial, recreational and cultural identity. While some populations continue to thrive, other stocks have sharply declined. WDFW works to restore these fish populations under a comprehensive, long-term approach, focused on protecting and restoring freshwater and near-shore habitat, re-tooling hatcheries to support wild fish populations, and crafting fisheries on abundant, hatchery fish. WDFW also develops and implements salmon-recovery plans in watersheds throughout the state. Through a collaborative process, WDFW habitat biologists provide key technical assistance to local and regional projects that restore habitat and remove barriers to salmon and steelhead migration.



Protecting people and animals

WDFW's 125 commissioned enforcement officers protect fish, wildlife and public safety. In more than 225,000 contacts with citizens each year they enforce harvest regulations and habitat-protection rules, and promptly respond to potentially dangerous situations involving bears and cougars.



Preserving habitat

Fish and animals need water and land to survive. As human population grows, that crucial habitat is disappearing to development. Today, when the loss of natural habitat poses the greatest single threat to Washington's native fish and wildlife, state wildlife lands play a critical role in maintaining Washington's ecological diversity. WDFW manages 900,000 acres of state lands for fish and wildlife. Many of these areas also offer year-round recreational opportunities for more than four million people annually who fish, hunt, view wildlife and take part in other outdoor activities. In addition, WDFW reviews prospective projects on or near natural water bodies and conditions permits – about 4,000 a year—to ensure fish and shellfish habitat is maintained. Meanwhile, WDFW also participates in a broad effort to restore shoreline habitat through the Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership. The partnership funds large-scale habitat improvement projects that help restore hundreds of acres of marine estuaries for fish habitat.

Supporting local economies

Wildlife-related tourism is enormously popular in Washington, generating more than \$1.5 billion annually for the state economy. Seasonal wildlife-viewing festivals draw thousands of visitors to rural communities, providing economic activity that supports small businesses and employs residents. WDFW and the state Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development work together to assist local communities by providing advice and support on ways to expand sustainable eco-tourism.



Informing citizens

People looking for information on fish and wildlife conservation, management and recreation make more than five million visits monthly to WDFW's website. The agency's electronic portal offers visitors an array of information about Washington's living natural resources, as well as services such as licensing, recreation reports, maps and descriptions of wildlife areas and water access sites, fishing and hunting seasons and rules, species-recovery plans, scientific reports, department news and factsheets on current issues.



Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife – By the numbers

- 175 million** Salmon, steelhead smolt, trout, and warm water fish such as bass, perch, and walleye are reared at WDFW hatcheries for release into Washington waters each year.
- 95 million** Hatchery-produced coho and chinook salmon and steelhead are marked each year so fishers can distinguish them from protected wild fish and fishing can continue in the era of endangered species listings.
- 25** Shellfish species, such as Dungeness crab, razor clams, oysters and shrimp are managed for commercial and recreational use.
- 8.6 million** Angler days of recreation are provided each year to salmon, steelhead, and warm-water fishers statewide.
- 4.3 million** Hunter days of recreation are provided through WDFW’s management of 55 game species, including elk, deer, bear, cougar, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, moose, waterfowl, upland game birds and small game.
- 4,250** Hydraulic project approval permits were issued in 2007 after WDFW habitat biologists reviewed waterfront construction projects to ensure they maintained fish habitat.
- 300,000** Public contacts were made by WDFW’s enforcement officers in 2008 to educate citizens and ensure compliance with natural-resource laws. Those contacts included 450 citizen complaints about cougars and 669 complaints about black bears.
- 900,000** Acres of state lands are managed by WDFW to provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife and recreational opportunities for citizens.
- 686** Water and land access sites are operated by WDFW to provide hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and other recreational activities.
- 4 million** People visit WDFW lands each year.
- 1.4 million** Acres of land are made available for hunting through WDFW agreements with private landowners annually.
- 63,000** Pheasants are released annually by WDFW game managers.
- 150** Washington fish and wildlife species are threatened, endangered, or considered species of concern. WDFW identifies species in jeopardy, outlines and implements actions needed for recovery and restores fragile species to their historic habitats.
- 83** State-tribal resources or species-harvest agreements are reached between WDFW and co-managers annually.
- 13,000** Acres of habitat for fish and wildlife species are protected through conservation easements or land acquisitions by WDFW annually.
- 348** Selective salmon fisheries were provided through mass-marking efforts by WDFW in 2008.
- 113,000** Hours of WDFW-coordinated volunteer efforts benefit fish and wildlife annually.
- 13,000** Prospective hunters complete WDFW’s Hunter Education course each year.

By the numbers:

Fish and wildlife benefit
Washington’s economy every year:

- \$1.5 billion** Wildlife viewing *
- \$1.1 billion** Sport fishing *
- \$313 million** Hunting *
- \$3.8 billion** Commercial fishing +

* Source US Fish and Wildlife Service, 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation

+ Source: Fisheries Economics of the United States 2006 (NOAA)